



AUSTRALIA
LIGHT FOUNDATION
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Muslim Handbook



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Welcome to the Muslim Handbook prepared by Australia Light Foundation!

This handbook has been prepared to aid our Muslim Brothers and Sisters, both those who have newly entered our religion of Islam and our Brothers and Sisters who are drawing closer to their faith and rediscovering their Islamic journeys!

We have tried to cover areas of importance with basic simplified information in this handbook so that you are able to form a strong foundation to build your Islamic knowledge upon.

We pray that this handbook provides you a starting point for your journey to help with clarity and applying understanding in this beautiful religion of Islam.

With a vast amount of information to take in, it is crucial to remember that being a Muslim is an ongoing commitment to learning more, improving oneself and simply trying to do our best with sincerity to become a better Muslim.

Like all great endeavours, learning everything about Islam takes time. So, do not rush - enjoy the process, and take time to research each aspect that resonates with you and that you feel ready to implement.

Also, just a reminder that sometimes the best way to learn is just to pop into your local Masjid and ask the imam!



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THE 5 PILLARS OF ISLAM

Pillar 1 The Shahadah

The Shahadah (The Declaration of Iman (Belief in Islam))

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ ط

I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship but Allah, and the one alone, with our partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad (PBUH) is his servant and Messenger

The Shahadah is a statement which one pronounces with the firm conviction and belief in one's heart that Allah (God) is One, and the final Prophet is Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).

The most important thing to remember here is that Islam teaches us that there is only one single God and no other deity apart from Him (God) alone. This is called Tawheed.

The second most important thing is to remember that Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is the final messenger of God.

For the Shahadah to be accepted, one must sincerely believe the Shahadah in his heart and utter the declaration by tongue.

Once the shahadah has been uttered in the manner described above, the person who has uttered the shahadah is accepted as a Muslim. Also, this is an amazing moment to remember because Allah forgives all of your previous sins and accepts you into Islam with a fresh clean slate!

In the Qur'an, Allah says in Surah Al-Anfaal (Chapter Anfaal), verse 38:

"Say to those who disbelieved, if they cease (from disbelieving in Islam), their past will be forgiven."

So, congratulations on your completely brand new fresh clean slate with Allah!

THE 5 PILLARS OF ISLAM

Pillar 2 The Salah (The Prayer)

Salah (Prayer) is the second pillar of Islam and a daily obligation upon all Muslims above baligh (mature) age. Salah plays a fundamental role in Islam which provides a direct connection with Allah (God) five times a day. This topic will be covered again in "Topic 3: Wudu (Ablution) and Salah (Prayer)", as it is a fundamental daily duty in Islam. It is obligatory and includes finer details, such as Jumu'ah (Friday) prayers, Fard (obligatory) prayers, Sunnah (voluntary) prayers, and the proper manner to perform them.

Salah is prayed five times a day each with a different name, time, and amount of Rakaats (Repetitions). They are as follows:

Fajr (Morning Dawn) Prayer:	2 Obligatory Rakaats
Dhuhr (Midday) Prayer:	4 Obligatory Rakaats
Asr (Afternoon) Prayer:	4 Obligatory Rakaats
Maghrib (Evening) Prayer:	3 Obligatory Rakaats
Isha (Night) Prayer:	4 Obligatory Rakaats

Although it may seem like quite a bit to take in initially, it eventually becomes a simple, uplifting, fulfilling and sought-after part of your day, where you strive to pray to Allah (God) and genuinely enjoy the prayer.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Say, if there were a river at the door of one of you in which he takes a bath five times a day, would any soiling remain on him?" They replied, "No soiling would be left on him." He, Muhammad (PBUH) said, "That is the five (obligatory) Salat (prayers). Allah obliterates all sins as a result of performing them."

How beautiful, wholesome, and rewarding is that?

We will cover this matter again in Topic 3 to discuss *wudu (ablution)* and *salah (prayer)* more in depth to form a better understanding regarding the matter.

THE 5 PILLARS OF ISLAM

Pillar 3 The Sawm (The Fasting)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

O believers! Fasting is prescribed for you—as it was for those before you¹—so perhaps you will become mindful of Allah.

Sawm (fasting) is the third pillar of Islam, which obligates Muslims who have reached age of maturity (baligh) to abstain from eating or drinking from dawn to dusk for the sake of Allah in the month of Ramadan.

During the time of fasting, one does not eat, drink, or have sexual intercourse from the moment Fajr salah (morning prayer) enters in till the time of Maghrib salah (evening prayer) begins/enters. **Also, if we eat or drink forgetfully/accidentally one should not panic and should just complete his fast, for what he has eaten or drunk, has been given to him as a gift from Allah.**

It is important for the one who is fasting to carry out religious duties and avoid haram (prohibited) things in word and deed. So, we should avoid backbiting people, telling lies, spreading malicious gossip, engage in haram transactions, and we should try stay away from haram actions.

Eid is the celebration which Allah (God) has bestowed upon us as Muslims when we complete the month of Ramadan. **The first day of the month of Shawwal (the day after Ramadan ends) is the day of the Eid (celebration).**

There will be premade Ramadan timetables which will simplify the matter of times to follow from your local masjid or online. It is important to also follow your local mosque which you attend in regard to which date they begin Ramadan and also for Eid Al-Fitr (Eid that marks the end of Ramadan).

During the month of Ramadan, there is a prayer called Taraweeh which is prayed after Isha (night) prayer. Please speak with your local mosque to find out what time this is!

THE 5 PILLARS OF ISLAM

Pillar 4 The Zakaat (The Alms Giving)

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

Establish prayer and pay alms-tax. Whatever good you send forth for yourselves, you will 'certainly' find 'its reward' with Allah. Surely Allah is All-Seeing of what you do.

Zakaat (alms giving) is an annual obligation upon every sane Muslim who owns over a certain amount of wealth (nisab) which is calculated each year. Muslims commonly observe the practice of paying their Zakaat in the month of Ramadan each year. This serves as a convenient reminder to ensure their Zakaat is paid in an orderly and consistent manner.

Zakaat is compulsory for every sane, adult Muslim who owns wealth over a certain amount for more than 1 year. They must pay a minimum of 2.5% of their wealth as Zakaat. Additional details regarding individual circumstances may affect the required zakaat amount. A representative from a local zakaat organisation or mosque will be able to assist in determining the exact required amount for your case.

Eg. If you have \$10,000.00 (which you have held for over 1 year) and the Nisab (threshold) amount is \$4,000.00 (The threshold will be determined by Islamic bodies according to Islamic sources) then you will pay 2.5% of \$10,000.00 as you surpass the nisab amount. Therefore, you will pay \$250.00 in zakaat. This zakaat is an obligation upon every Muslim and must be paid.

However, **if one does not have wealth that meets the Nisaab (threshold) amount in his possession for more than 1 year, then zakaat is not obligatory upon him** as he does not meet the criteria to give Zakaat.

There are also two types of zakaat, Zakat Ul Maal (Alms of Wealth) and Zakat Ul Fitr (Alms of Human Nature).



The Zakat Ul Fitr is a second compulsory alms/donation of a specific amount which is obligatory upon all Muslims and must be paid if one has enough provisions for himself and dependents. The Zakatul Fitr amount will be determined by an Islamic body and all you will need to do is make payment before the Eid Prayer after Ramadan!

The wisdom of Zakaat is that it purifies the wealth and can be understood as humility and gratitude offering of a small 2.5% for all of the wealth which Allah has bestowed upon you!

THE 5 PILLARS OF ISLAM

Pillar 5 The Hajj (The Pilgrimage)

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّءْيَا بِالْحَقِّ لَتَدْخُلَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ ءَامِنِينَ
مُحَلِّقِينَ رُءُوسِكُمْ وَمُقَصِّرِينَ لَا تَخَافُونَ فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا فَجَعَلَ مِنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ
فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا ﴿٢٧﴾

Indeed, Allah will fulfil His Messenger's vision in all truth: Allah willing, you will surely enter the Sacred Mosque, in security—`some with` heads shaved and `others with` hair shortened—without fear. He knew what you did not know, so He first granted you the triumph at hand.

Hajj is the annual pilgrimage to the House of Allah in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. The literal meaning of the word "Hajj" is 'to intend a journey.' **Allah has obligated all able Muslims to perform Hajj at least once in their lifetime if they have the means to complete it.** If one does not have the means (i.e. wealth) required to perform the Hajj, then this obligation is lifted from him by the grace of Allah.

Hajj is completed in the final month of the Islamic lunar calendar between the 8th and 13th day in the month of Dhul Hijjah.

Muslims prepare themselves to complete this duty as it comes with a financial burden in the current age. However, it is an obligation upon every Muslim to complete this pilgrimage at least once in their lifetime and the obligation becomes incumbent the moment you have enough wealth to complete this pilgrimage.

Hajj is one of the most significant and encapsulating times for Ummah (Muslim nation), when many travel from all four corners of the Earth to complete the pilgrimage as one body and one family, regardless of ethnicity, colour, race. It is a visual proof of the unity, togetherness and oneness of the people who follow this beautiful religion and adhere to the rules of Allah and guidance of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

When a Muslim wishes to perform Hajj, they can contact local organizations to obtain detailed information and training on how to perform the pilgrimage, along with guidance for traveling with their chosen group. Alhamdulillah, Hajj has now become more accessible with the help of reliable tour guides who provide guidance on how to complete Hajj.

The 6 Principles of Imaan (Faith)

Principle 1 – Belief in Allah

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ (١) اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ (٢) لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهٗ
وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝ (٣) وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهٗ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ۝ (٤)

Say, O Prophet, "He is Allah—One and Indivisible. Allah—the Sustainer needed by all. He has never had offspring, nor was He born. And there is none comparable to Him.

To believe in Allah (God) is the first and most significant principle in Islam. To believe in Allah and to understand Allah as He describes Himself with his ninety-nine names and titles which are mentioned in the Quran is the pinnacle belief in Islam. This Chapter gives a succinct yet powerful explanation of Allah and Tawheed (Oneness of Allah).

One must believe that there is only one God (Allah) who is worthy of worship, with no partner, or son. This concept is known as Tawheed. Tawheed is to believe in the Oneness of Allah, and to know and understand that He is the Master of all the universe and beyond and has control over all things. One must believe that there is nothing like Allah and that He is nothing like that which He has created. One should refrain from trying to imagine Allah, rather one is advised to try and understand Allah and His attributes. For example, contemplating the beauty of a waterfall and recognizing it as a creation of Allah allows one to see the attributes of Allah's wisdom, beauty, exaltedness, glory, and majesty.

One must believe that Allah is the Bestower of Life and Death, The Most Powerful, The All Knowing, The All Hearing, The All Seeing, with Will to do however He wishes and that He has the Highest of All Speech. Allah is the one who creates, sustains, brings into being all creatures. One must also understand that Allah is not within the bounds of His creation and that time does not apply to Him. Anything associated with Allah is also timeless as He is the Creator of both time and creation.

The concept of Tawheed and belief in Allah is vast and requires significant amount of studying and development to truly comprehend. If you have some questions regarding the concept of tawheed, feel free to ask your local imam for a greater explanation and understanding!

The 6 Principles of Imaan (Faith)

Principle 2 – Belief in Malaikah (Angels)

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَاعِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُولِي أَجْنِحَةٍ مَّثْنَى وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبْعَ يَزِيدُ فِي الْخَلْقِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١﴾

All praise is for Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, Who made angels as His messengers with wings—two, three, or four. He increases in creation whatever He wills. Surely Allah is Most Capable of everything.

Much like other religions such as Judaism and Christianity, malaikah (angels) are the honoured slaves of Allah. They are free from disobeying Allah and do whatever Allah asks of them to do as angels do not possess free will. They are honoured with the duties of conveying Allah's message. The previous books and scriptures of Prophets, such as Dawood (David), Musa (Moses), and Isa (Jesus), were revealed to them through angels.

The angels convey and do exactly as Allah instructs of them. There is absolutely no mistake or misunderstanding in their conveying of the message as they solely carry out the orders of Allah directly. The angels are free from eating, drinking, engaging in male and female relationships, and procreating etc. The angels are also constantly in the worship of Allah in different forms and are never weary of worshipping Him as this is their purpose of creation.

Angels are present throughout the heavens and the earth, and they are controlled and supervised by Allah, who is All-Knowing. Some angels are tasked with carrying the Arsh (Divine Throne) of Allah, some are stationed alongside it, and others are making tawaf (circumambulation) around it.

Angels are creatures which are different to humans, and they are created from Light. Furthermore, each human has two angels which accompany him on each shoulder who notes down and records all their actions at each moment.

Jibreel (Gabriel), Mikaeel (Michael), Israfil (Raphael) and Malak Ul Mawt (Angel of Death) among many others.

The 6 Principles of Imaan (Faith)

Principle 3 – Belief in Kutub (The Books)

﴿ وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَرَائِ
جِبَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴾

It is not "possible" for a human being to have Allah communicate with them, except through inspiration, or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger-angel to reveal whatever He wills by His permission. He is surely Most High, All-Wise.

Belief in the books of revelation which Allah has revealed is one of the six principles of Iman (Belief). In Islam, it is a part of faith to believe all the books that were revealed to the messengers. There have been many scriptures revealed throughout the history of mankind. Allah tells us about a few of the names of the scriptures in the final revealed revelation which is the Qur'an.

The revealed scriptures of past periods include the Tawraat (Torah) which was sent to Musa (Moses), the Injeel (Gospel/Bible) which was sent to Isa (Jesus), the Zaboor (Psalms) which was sent to Dawood (David), the scriptures of Ibrahim (Abraham), and the Qur'an which was sent to Muhammad (peace be upon them all). We as Muslims must believe all the revelations Allah sent to his messengers.

Believing in the books that were revealed to the Messengers includes acknowledging that they were revealed by Allah. For example, the Qur'an was revealed by Allah to Muhammad (peace be upon him) through the angel Jibreel (Gabriel) and this is the final revealed revelation for the whole of humanity until the end of time.

An important point to note is that the previous revelations to other Messengers were for specific time periods and particular communities, addressing the needs of their eras and people, and were not intended for the entire humanity nor to last until the end of time. Furthermore, as time progressed from those periods, changes and additions were made to the original texts that were not revealed by Allah, resulting in alterations to the scriptures. **However, the Qur'an is miraculous in that it has retained its original form, in its original Arabic language since its revelation, remaining unchanged and unaltered.** A significant amount of Tafseer (Exegesis) of the Quran proves this point and can be explained to you by your local Imam.

In a nutshell, the Qur'an is the speech of Allah Most High: written in texts, memorized by hearts, recited by tongues, and revealed upon the Prophet (upon him be blessings and peace).

The 6 Principles of Imaan (Faith)

Principle 4 – Belief in Messengers & Prophets (The Rasool & Anbiya)

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا ءَامِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهِۦ ۚ وَالْكِتٰبِ الَّذِيْ نَزَّلَ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِۦ ۚ
وَالرَّسُوْلِ الَّذِيْ اَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتِهٖۙ وَكُتُبِهٖۙ وَرُسُلِهٖۙ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْاٰخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلٰلًاۢ بَعِيْدًا ﴿١٣٦﴾

O you who have believed, believe¹ in Allāh and His Messenger and the Book that He sent down upon His Messenger and the Scripture which He sent down before. And whoever disbelieves in Allāh, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day has certainly gone far astray.

In Islam we believe in all previous prophets. The Holy Qur'an distinguishes two types of prophets: **Rasool** and **Nabi**. The term Rasool means a 'Messenger' and the term Nabi means one who gives news of events unknown to people. Prophets (Nabi) who were revealed a Scripture from God are known as a Rasool (Messenger), whereas for a Nabi (Prophet) who was not revealed a Scripture, he is known only as a Nabi (Prophet).

Prophets are selected by Allah to guide mankind to the right path. Their core aim and mission are to bring people from their tribe or area, closer to Allah. Muslims believe that Prophets have been sent by Allah to all nations so that those nations can understand what Allah wants from them. There are some prophets which are mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, but many others are not mentioned.

Belief in all Prophets of Allah is a fundamental principle of Iman. While previous prophets were sent to a particular nation, tribe or people, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sent by Allah to the whole of mankind till the end of time.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the most important prophet as he is the final prophet and messenger. He is our prophet. In his high moral qualities, his unwavering resolve, the excellence and perfection of his Sunnah (practices and teachings), his exemplary character, and the acceptance of his prayers - in short, in every aspect of his life- he demonstrated the ideal example of what Allah desires from us as Muslims and as a human, both today and until the end of time.

Islam makes it compulsory for every Muslim to believe not just in the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) but also to believe in all other prophets that came before him.

The 6 Principles of Imaan (Faith)

Principle 5 – Belief in Yawmul Akhir (The Last Day)

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ
مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَسِيبِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

We set up the scales of justice for the Day of Judgment, so no soul will be wronged in the least. And even if a deed is the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it forth. And sufficient are We as a vigilant Reckoner.

The Day of Judgment is the day when Allah judges' mankind for their deeds which they have committed during their time on Earth. Every human being will be resurrected from their graves and will be given their Book of Deeds. In there, they will view all their deeds from this lifetime and be rewarded accordingly to the sins and obediences they acted upon.

Believing in the Last Day includes belief in the punishment or bliss of the grave, belief in the resurrection, belief in the judgment of the Mizan (scales) which will balance your deeds, and belief in Jannah (Paradise) and Jahannam (Hell). In summary, belief in the last day encompasses and incorporates complete belief in the Akhirah (The Hereafter).

Muslims must believe in the Akhirah (The Hereafter) as we believe that we will be resurrected after being in the grave in a new realm where all of humanity will be present and will be judged by Allah for their deeds and actions from the time of Prophet Adam to the very last of mankind.

Although Judgement Day may be difficult to grasp and understand, a simple analogy is the Sun rising and setting each day and being reborn the next. Additionally, the changing seasons and plants fading at the approach of autumn and being reborn with spring - these similitudes can help us grasp how resurrection after death is logically sound, possible, and real.

The topic of the hereafter is a significant topic within Islam and Iman and countless works have been produced to aid the understanding of Muslims on this principle. One of these works is *The Tenth Word* from the *Risale-i Nur* collection by Said Nursi, in which he demonstrates the reality of the Akhirah (the Hereafter) using religious texts, rational proofs, and logic to help readers understand and believe in it with greater ease and conviction.

The 6 Principles of Imaan (Faith)

Principle 6 – Belief in Qadr (Divine Decree)

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ
فِي كِتَابٍ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

Do you not know that Allah 'fully' knows whatever is in the heavens and the earth? Surely it is all 'written' in a Record. That is certainly easy for Allah.

Qadr (Divine Decree) is what Allah decrees for every single creation based on His Knowledge and Power in accordance with His Wisdom. Belief in this pillar is to believe that everything that happens, whether good or bad, occurs according to Allah's divine decree.

Everything that happens, from the atomic level to human life and beyond, is due to the Will, Power, and decree of Allah. However, Muslims also understand that they are given free will and have the ability to distinguish between good and evil.

The belief in Qadr (Divine Predestination) includes belief in four things:

- Allah created everything,
- Allah knows everything; the past and present,
- There is a record of everything that has happened and will happen,
- Whatever Allah decrees to happen will occur, and whatever Allah wills not to happen will not occur.

Similar to the topic of the Akhirah (Hereafter) the topic of Qadr is also a concept which may be difficult to comprehend and understand. On this topic of Qadr there have been many significant works explaining what Qadr is and explain its nature and understanding. One such work is *The 26th Word*, in which Said Nursi elucidates Qadr using Islamic texts and rational proofs to provide a comprehensive understanding of its framework.

In summary, Qadr refers to the events that occur in our lives, while our free will pertains to how we respond to these events throughout our lives. Allah is The Most Powerful and He is the One who controls everything, yet He has bestowed upon us the ability to make our own decisions. Allah knows all our decisions as he is The All Knower however humans have complete freedom to make whatever decisions they choose. **Allah will then judge us based on the decisions and actions we do with that free will.**

Topic 3

Wudu (Ablution) and Salah (Prayer)

Wudu (Ablution)

Wudu is a special way of washing yourself before you pray your salah. It is mandatory to be in a state of Wudu before standing in prayer. Here is a simple guide to performing Wudu according to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence:

1. **Intention:** Start by making the intention in your heart that you are performing Wudu for the sake of Allah.
2. **Bismillah:** Say "Bismillah" (In the name of Allah).
3. **Wash Hands:** Wash both hands starting with the right, up to the wrists three times, making sure the water reaches between your fingers.
4. **Rinse Mouth:** Rinse your mouth three times, swirling the water inside.
5. **Nose:** Gently inhale water into your nose and blow it out three times.
6. **Face:** Wash your face from the hairline to the chin and from ear to ear three times.
7. **Arms:** Wash your right arm from the fingertips to just above the elbow three times, then do the same for the left arm.
8. **Wipe Head:** Wet your hands and wipe your entire head once, from the front to the nape of your neck and back to the front again.
9. **Ears:** With the same wet hands from the head wipe, clean the inside and outside of your ears.
10. **Feet:** Wash your right foot including the ankle three times, making sure water goes between the toes. Do the same for the left foot.

Once the wudu is completed, you are now ready to pray and proceed to the prayer area where you will be praying. Here is beautiful hadith (saying of our Prophet Muhammad PBUH) which shows the mercy of Allah and the importance of wudu:

Abu Huraira reported: Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: When a Muslim or a believer-washes his face (in Wudu), every sin he contemplated with his eyes, will be washed away from his face along with water, or with the last drop of water; when he washes his

hands, every sin they wrought will be effaced from his hands with the water, or with the last drop of water; and when he washes his feet, every sin towards which his feet have walked will be washed away with the water or with the last drop of water with the result that he comes out pure from all sins.

Salah (Prayer)

Salah is the Muslim's way of connecting with Allah and is the obligatory ritual prayers as previously mentioned in the 5 Pillars of Islam earlier. It is performed five times a day at specific times. Each prayer consists of a set number of units called Rakaats. Here is a simple guide to performing a basic prayer:

1. **Intention:** Stand facing the Qibla (direction of the Ka'bah in Mecca) and make the intention to pray.
2. **Takbir:** Raise your hands to your ears and say "Allahu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest).
3. **Qiyam:** Stand and recite Surah Al-Fatiha, followed by any other surah or ayat from the Quran.
4. **Ruku:** Bow down with your hands on your knees and say "Subhana Rabbiyal Azeem" (Glory is to my Lord, the Most Great) three times.
5. **Qiyam:** Stand up straight again and say "Sami'Allahu liman hamidah" (Allah hears those who praise Him). Then say "Allahu Akbar" and go into Sujood.
6. **Sujood:** Prostrate on the ground with your forehead, nose, palms, knees, and toes touching the floor, and say "Subhana Rabbiyal A'la" (Glory is to my Lord, the Most High) three times.
7. **Jalsa:** Sit up from the prostration for a moment.
8. **Sujood:** Perform a second prostration in the same manner.
9. **Qiyam:** Stand up to proceed to the next Rak'ah, repeating steps 3 to 8.
10. **Tashahhud:** After the second Rak'ah, sit and recite the Tashahhud (Attahiyyat) and other specified Dua's.
11. **Salam:** End the prayer by turning your head to the right and then to the left, saying "Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullah" (Peace and mercy of Allah be upon you).

The times of salah change based on the lunar calendar, however it is very accessible and user friendly to find the salah times using the internet. Basic salah guidance videos are also available on platforms such as YouTube, where step-by-step instructions on how to pray are demonstrated with visuals. As you are slowly learning the religion, it is okay to not know the verses which are required however it is crucial that you endeavour to learn and memorise them to recite in the Salah!

Quran Surahs for Prayer Transliteration

Fatiha: This surah is recited every rakaat (Unit) first.

1. *Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem*
2. *Alhamdu lillaahi Rabbil 'aalameen*
3. *Ar-Rahmaanir-Raheem*
4. *Maaliki Yawmid-Deen*
5. *Iyyaaka na'budu wa Iyyaaka nasta'een*
6. *Ihdinas-Siraatal-Mustaqeem*
7. *Siraatal-lazeena an'amta 'alaihim ghayril-maghdoobi 'alaihim wa lad-daaalleen*

Kauthar: This is a short surah which can be recited after Surah Al Fatiha.

1. *Innaaa a'tayna kal kauthar*
2. *Fasalli li rabbika wanhar*
3. *Inna shaani'aka huwal abtar*

Ikhlaas: This is a short surah which can also be recited after Surah Al Fatiha.

1. *Qul huwal-laahu ahad*
2. *Allahus-samad*
3. *Lam yalid wa lam yoolad*
4. *Wa lam yakul-lahoo kufuwan ahad*

Attahiyat: This a short dua which is read when you sit down every 2 Rakats (Units).

Attahiyyaatu lillaahi wassalawaatu, wattayyibaatu , assalaamu 'alayka 'ayyuhan-Nabiyyu wa rahmatullaahi wa barakaatuhu, assalaamu 'alaynaa wa 'alaa 'ibaadillaahis-saaliheen. 'Ash-hadu 'an laa 'ilaaha 'illallaahu wa 'ash-hadu 'anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa Rasooluhu.

It is very important to not be overwhelmed with the information and to understand that with time you will learn and memorise it with ease. Allah will make it easy for you and with some time it will be very natural. Allah wants you to do your best, and as long as you do your best for Him sincerely, He will accept from you, especially at the start of your journey!

Topic 4

Prophet Muhammad & Understanding Him in Islam

Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the final prophet in Islam. We believe that he was chosen by Allah to guide humanity to the right path. Here is an extremely simple introduction to his life and why he is so important in Islam:

1. **Birth:** Prophet Muhammad was born in the city of Mecca. His father, Abdullah, passed away before he was born, and his mother, Amina, passed away when he was very young.
2. **Early Life:** Prophet Muhammad was known for his honesty and trustworthiness, earning him the nickname "Al-Amin" (the Trustworthy).
3. **Revelation:** At the age of forty, while meditating in the Cave of Hira, Muhammad received the first revelation from Allah through the angel Jibreel (Gabriel). These revelations continued for 23 years which we now know as the Quran.
4. **Message:** Prophet Muhammad's message was to worship one God (Allah) and to live a life of righteousness. He preached about Tawheed, Nubuwwah (Prophethood), Akhirah (Afterlife), Ibadah (worship) and Adalah (Justice).
5. **Migration:** Facing persecution in Mecca, Prophet Muhammad and his followers migrated to the city of Medina. This event is known as the Hijra and marks the beginning of the Islamic lunar calendar.
6. **Medina and Beyond:** In Medina, Prophet Muhammad established a Muslim community and continued to spread the message of Islam. He also set examples of leadership, peace-making, and compassion.
7. **Return to Mecca:** Muhammad returned to Mecca with a large following which are called the Sahaba (his Companions) and peacefully took control of the city, dedicating the Ka'bah to the worship of Allah alone.
8. **Death:** Prophet Muhammad like all other humans passed away. However, his Sunnah (teachings / dealings), his action and hadith (sayings) continue to be the ultimate guidance of all Muslims around the world, alongside the Quran.

Understanding Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) in Islam

1. **Role Model:** Muslims view Prophet Muhammad as the best example of how to live a good and faithful life. His actions and sayings, known as the Sunnah, are second only to the Quran in guiding Muslims.
2. **Mercy and Kindness:** Prophet Muhammad was known for his compassion and mercy. He treated people with kindness, regardless of their background or beliefs.
3. **Justice and Fairness:** He was fair and just in all his dealings. He emphasized the importance of justice and equality, saying that all people are equal in the eyes of Allah.
4. **Family Man:** Prophet Muhammad was a loving husband and father. His life with his family teaches Muslims about the importance of family values.
5. **Leader and Teacher:** As a leader, Prophet Muhammad showed wisdom and patience. He taught his followers about faith, prayer, charity, and morality.
6. **Prophet for All Mankind:** Muslims believe that Prophet Muhammad is the final prophet, sent for all of humanity. His message is universal and timeless.

Prophet Muhammad (May Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him) is the most important person in the life of a Muslim and is the Prophet of Guidance who will guide one to happiness and salvation in this life and in the next. There has been over millions of books written on our Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and he has been accepted as the most influential person in the course of history even by non-muslim academics and historians such as Michael H Hart who ranked him as number 1 in his book *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*.

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) teaches a comprehensive way of life that leads to true happiness, grounded in imaan (faith), gratitude, community, respect, mutual aid and help, togetherness. Many modern problems were addressed by his teachings, which possess a miraculous wisdom. When you read them yourself, you can truly experience the strength and intellectual insights of his words.

To truly understand Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) status and significance, one must deeply immerse themselves in the perfection and beauty of Islam and remember that Muhammad (SAW) was the one who was entrusted with conveying Allah's message to us.

Two very nice books on the life of Prophet Muhammad are *The Sealed Nectar* and *In the Footsteps of the Prophet* by Tariq Ramadan.



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