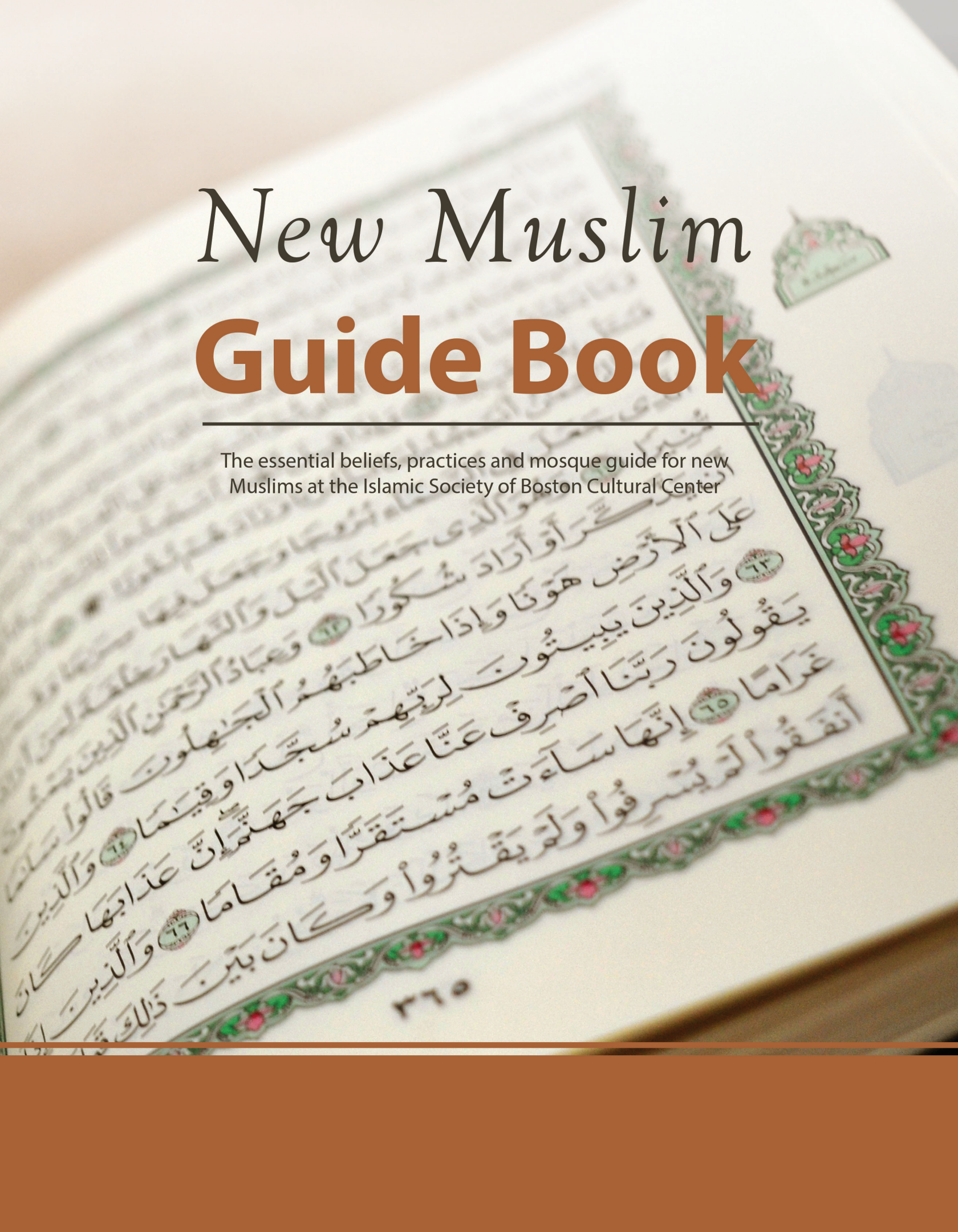


# New Muslim Guide Book

The essential beliefs, practices and mosque guide for new Muslims at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center







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## Introduction

Assalamu `alaykum and may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon you,

I ask Allah to enable this handbook to be an enlightening and welcoming resource. I wish for you to find comfort in its reminders, in the Quran, the example of the beloved Prophet Muhammad, and in the community we cultivate here at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center.

The functions of the new Muslim handbook are to explain the Oneness of Allah, His Prophets and Messengers; to give concise guidance on prayer, and other cornerstones of our faith. It also answers simple (although not easy) questions and sparks deeper thought and meditation, provides beautiful, detailed visuals to aid in remembrance and learning, directs to further resources, and, perhaps its most essential function, welcomes new Muslims into our community. The efforts spent gathering and distilling this knowledge into handy breakdowns and resources is a reminder that our new Muslim brothers and sisters are not far from our minds. The carefully crafted details sewn into this yearlong project are a work of care, love and peace.

This book has exchanged many hands and been poured over by many eyes before reaching you, a loving endeavor. May it be a help and guide. May it open doors and incite questions. Welcome to this concise study, welcome to a path of questioning and ijtihad (a wholehearted and humble application of the self to a pursuit judged by the journeyer to be beloved, enlightening and necessary), and welcome, of course, to our community here at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center.

I hope you find yourself absorbed in a corner of the café with a spellbinding book, or engaging with heart-opening revelations in classes, or perhaps most of all, I wish this handbook to become a well-worn companion that you come to reference less frequently and remember fondly.

May we approach each day as a new servant of God, taking in fresh observations with new eyes and questions. May you find knowledge, wisdom, enlightenment, comfort, and curiosity in this book and in seeking Allah subhanaho wa ta`allah.

We are happy to answer any questions or ideas sparked by your journey and the reminders you find here in this handbook. You may find the office hours of our Senior Imam, Sheykh Yasir Fahmy, at <http://isbcc.org/our-spiritual-team/> or direct questions to x resources.



# What is Islam?

Islam is a religion which purifies the heart through the remembrance of Allah. Hadith Jibril which remains one of the most foundational narrations in Islam illustrates the three core dimensions of our faith. It describes Islam, which means to submit to Allah; Iman, which is faith, an internal state and essential characteristic of a believer; Ihsan, means awareness of Allah in one's heart. All three, in tandem, instruct Muslims on rituals they must practice, religious knowledge they must believe and how they should worship Allah.

Narrated by Umar, one of the closest sahaba (companions) of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Hadith Jibril presents the most concise understanding of Islam:

“One day while we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, a man appeared before us whose clothes were exceedingly white and whose hair was exceedingly black; no signs of travel were to be seen on him, and none of us knew him. He walked up and sat down by the Prophet ﷺ. Resting his knees against the Prophet’s and placing the palms of his hands on the Prophet’s thighs, he said: “O Muhammad, tell me about Islam.’

- The Messenger of Allah said ‘Islam is
- 1. **Shahada** (The Testimony of Faith) - that you should testify there is nothing worthy of worshiping except of Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah
  - 2. **Salat** (Prayer) - to perform the five daily prayers
  - 3. **Zakat** (Charity) - to pay the purifying alms
  - 4. **Sawm** (Fasting) - to fast in the month of Ramadan
  - 5. **Hajj** (The Pilgrimage) - to make pilgrimage to the Sacred House if you are able to do so.”

He said, “What you said is truthful.” And we were amazed at him asking the Prophet and affirming that the Prophet had spoken rightly. He then said, “Tell me about Iman.”

The Prophet ﷺ replied, ‘It is to believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day, and to believe in divine decree, both the good and the evil thereof.’

He said, ‘What you said is truthful.’ He then said, ‘Tell me about Ihsan.’

The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘It is to worship Allah as though you are seeing Him, for even if you cannot see Him, He indeed sees you.’

He said, ‘Then tell me about the Hour (the Day of Judgement)’

The Prophet ﷺ replied, ‘The one being questioned is no more knowledgeable than the questioner.’

He then said, ‘Then tell me about its signs.’

The Prophet ﷺ replied, ‘That the slave-girl will give birth to her mistress and that you will see the barefooted, naked, destitute herdsman competing in constructing lofty buildings.’

Then the man left and I stayed behind for a time. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked, ‘Umar, do you know who the questioner was?’

I replied, ‘Allah and His Messenger know best.’

He said, ‘That was the Archangel Jibril (Gabriel) who came to teach you your religion.” (Sahih Bukhari)

In the hadith of Jibril, we see that Islam is composed of three parts; islam (actions), iman (faith), ihsan (spiritual excellence). The chart below summarizes these parts and outlines what falls under them.

# Our Religion

Islam	Iman	Ihsan
<b>Shahada</b> The Testimony of Faith	Belief in Allah	To worship Allah as though you see him
<b>Salat</b> The five daily prayers	Belief in the Angels	
<b>Sawm</b> Fasting during the month of Ramadan	Belief in Divine Books	
<b>Zakat</b> Alms giving	Belief in the Prophets	
<b>Hajj</b> Pilgrimage to Mecca	Belief in the Day of Judgement	
	Belief in Divine decree	





## What do Muslims Believe?

### Shahada

Our beliefs are based upon the Shahada, which is a verbal acceptance of Islam:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

*Ash-hadu an la ilaha ill-Allah*

I testify that nothing is worthy of worship except Allah,

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

*Wa ash-hadu anna Muhammad-an rasul Allah*

And I testify that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.

As narrated in Hadith Jibril, Iman means “to believe in the oneness Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, and to believe in divine decree, both the good and the evil thereof.”

### Tawhid

Tawhid or the oneness of Allah is the most important aspect of Islam. The first half of the Shahada attests to the foundational nature of Tawhid to the Muslim faith. A Muslim’s most important relationship is with his creator. Understanding and believing in the attributes of Allah is key to strengthening our relationship with Him. The Qur’an states in Chapter 112 (Surah al-Ikhlās): “Say, He is Allah the One, Allah is the complete. He neither begot nor was He begotten. No one is comparable to Him.” Allah exists outside of creation, and His mercy is limitless.

### Angels

Muslims believe in the existence of angels. In fact, the Qur’an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through Archangel Jibril. Angels are noble beings created from light by Allah. They exist solely to worship Allah and carry out His command.

### Divine Books

The Divine Books of the Abrahamic faiths are important to Muslims. Allah sent down The Taurat (Torah) of Prophet Musa (Moses), the Zabur (Psalms) of Prophet Dawud (David), the Injil (Gospel) of Prophet Isa (Jesus) and the Quran which was revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. However, scriptures revealed before the Quran have been altered throughout history and present versions of those books are imperfect. The Quran is the Word of God and has been protected from modification.

### Prophets & Messengers

Allah chose the best of his creation as messengers. Many of the events and lessons pertaining to the lives of messengers are described in the Qur’an. Muslim scholars consider “Nabi” (Prophet) to be someone who received a revelation from Allah and “Rasul” (Messenger) as someone who received the revelation and scripture.

### Judgement Day

Judgement Day is another core tenet of the Muslim faith. This dunya (life) serves as a test from Allah, to see whether we choose righteousness or stray from His path. All souls will be resurrected for judgement by Allah, upon which a person will be granted Jannah (Paradise) or Jahannam (Hell).

### Qadr

Allah is the creator of all things. Therefore, Allah’s wisdom is perfect and nothing can change His command. All that He wills comes to pass and nothing exists outside of His decree. Muslims believe in divine predestination because we believe in Tawhid.text





## Who is Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the final messenger of Allah sent with the simple yet profound message: there is nothing worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad ﷺ is His messenger. Born in Makkah in 570 AD, he grew up as an orphan. His father Abdullah died before he was born and his mother Amina died when he was six years old. At the age of forty, Muhammad ﷺ received revelation (the Qur'an) from Allah through the Archangel Jibril. During this time Makkah was a polytheistic society ruled by merchant tribes whose power rested within the status quo. When our beloved messenger began publicly preaching to worship Allah alone, the ruling Makkan tribes persecuted him and drove him out of the city. Islam threatened their wealth and their polytheistic way of life. The Muslims, along with our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ migrated to Madinah to establish the first Muslim community. Our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ founded a state, laid down a moral code and brought reform to the Arabian peninsula. His spiritual leadership cannot be separated from his role as a statesman or his exemplary character as a man. The Qur'an, the literal word of Allah, provides the foundational text of Islam, but Muslims learn how to practice our faith through the guidance of the Prophet and his traditions.

Hadith (narrations) provided by the Prophet's sahaba along with Sunnah (The Prophetic Way) teach Muslims how to practice good character and the way a believer should conduct himself or herself. These sources stress a love for humanity, responsibility towards one's family, community and a commitment to justice. The Qur'an states, "There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah ﷺ an excellent example for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah often" (33:21). The importance of our beloved Prophet ﷺ as a guide in all aspects of our life cannot be overstated. Muslims are encouraged to foster love for our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ by learning about his life through the sirah (biography), his personal characteristics through hadith, and through practicing his sunnah.

عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

The character above, which is used throughout this book where the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is mentioned, translates to "prayer of Allah be upon him and his family and peace". This is done out of our immense love and respect for the Prophet ﷺ. Allah says in Chapter 33 (Surah al-Ahzab) of the Qur'an:

"Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace."



## What is the Quran?

The Qur'an is the divine word of Allah transmitted through the Archangel Jibril to our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The Qur'an is only considered to be original in the Arabic language and has remained unchanged since it was revealed to the Prophet . It is said in the Qur'an about this miraculous nature:

"And this Qur'an is not such that it could possibly be fabricated by one in attribution to Allah, but it is a (Divine Book) confirming (the Divine origin of and the truths that are still contained by) the Revelations prior to it, and an explanation of the Essence of all Divine Books—wherein there is no doubt, from the Lord of the worlds." (Quran 10:37)

"We send it down this Qur'an (discourse) in Arabic so that you may reflect (on both its meaning and wording and understand." (Quran 12:2)

"And, indeed, (by revealing it through human language) We have made the Qur'an easy for remembrance (of Allah, and taking heed). Then is there any that remembers and takes heed?" (Quran 54:17)

The revelation of the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ began in the month of Ramadan 609 CE and continued over a period of 23 years. The Qur'an consists of 114 surahs (chapters) and each chapter is comprised of ayat (verses). The surahs are classified as Meccan and Medinan, depending on the time frame they were revealed. Muslims should make a lifelong commitment to learn, recite and reflect upon the message of the Qur'an.

"This Qur'an surely guides (in all matters) to that which is most just and right, and gives the believers who do good, righteous deeds the glad tidings that for them there is a great reward." (Quran 17:9)



## What are Hadith?

The narrations provided by the sahaba of our beloved Prophet ﷺ regarding the Prophet's ﷺ actions, words and tacit approvals are called hadith. These reports have been collected over time and their authenticity verified by hadith scholars. Hadith illustrate Islamic tradition and how our Prophet modeled our religion. The Qur'an and hadith both serve as the sources of Islamic law.

### Sunnah

The teachings and lessons from the life of our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ are called Sunnah. Our Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah is known through hundreds of thousands of hadith that have been narrated by his sahaba. Muslims are encouraged to emulate the prophetic character of our beloved Muhammad for he serves as the best guide to mankind, and the best way to do so is through our Prophet's ﷺ sunnah.





# The Prayers

The term “salat” in this book refers to the ritual act of prayer in Islam and the term “dua” (supplication) means to address Allah with a certain need.

Muslims practice gratitude and submission to Allah by performing salat five times a day, based on the position of the sun throughout the day. Salat is obligatory for all believers who are of sound mind and maturity. It’s a blessed opportunity to speak directly to our creator and ask for forgiveness for our shortcomings and ease from our hardships.

The following requirements must be met in order to perform salat properly:

## Preparation for Prayer

### Wudu Ritual Wash

Wudu is the process of washing the body with clean water in preparation for prayer.

The following should be performed in sequential order during wudu:

1. Begin by making the intention to perform wudu and saying “Bismillah” (In the name of Allah)
2. Wash your right hand up to and including the wrist three times, do the same to left hand
3. Rinse your mouth ensuring no food is left. Repeat three times
4. With your right hand, bring water to the nose. Lightly sniff it in and blow it out right away as you wipe the nose downward with left hand. Repeat three times
5. Wash your face (chin to hairline and ear to ear) three times
6. Wash the right arm from fingertips up to the elbow three times. Do the same to left arm
7. With wet hands, wipe your hairline from the front to the back, and then reverse one time
8. Wash your right foot from tip of toes up to the ankle including in between toes three times. Repeat for the left foot

### Actions that nullify Wudu

These are the actions that necessitate wudu:

- Deep sleep
- Bleeding, vomiting, urinating, defecating
- Engaging in acts of intimacy with one’s spouse

### Ghusul

Major impurities cannot be removed by wudu and require ghusl (a ritual bath) to be taken in order to attain a state of ritual purity. The following are considered major impurities:

- Menstruation
- Postpartum bleeding
- Ejaculation
- Sexual intercourse (impurity applies for both parties)

### Ghusul Ritual Bath

- Begin with the intention to perform ghusl
- Wash your hands from fingertips to wrist
- Wash your private parts, ensuring any impurities is washed off
- Perform wudu as outlined above
- Pour water over your head three times
- Then divide the body into four parts and wash in the following order: top right, top left, bottom right, bottom left

After ghusl, one is considered to be in the state of ritual purity. Performing ghusl replaces wudu, however, wudu does not replace ghusl.

### Rites Particular to Women

There are guidelines within Islam particular to women during their menstrual or postpartum bleeding. Women during these states are required to abstain from acts of worship which require ghusul or wudu. This includes the following:

- Salat
- Fasting during Ramadan (must make up missed days)
- Touching the Arabic copy of the Qur’an

After bleeding has ended, ghusul must be performed before any of those acts of worship may be observed.

# Prayer Instructions





# Prayer

## Instructions

Prayer consists of rakats (cycles). Each rakat includes the following sequential positions:



### Qiyam

Standing facing the qibla (Mecca).



### Ruku

Bow while the back is parallel to the floor.



### Sujud

Prostration - There are five points that must touch the ground while prostrating, the forehead, nose, palms, knees and toes.



### Julus

Sit with your left side on the floor and your left foot under your left shin. The toes of the right foot should be facing qibla and your palms resting on your thighs.

1. All prayers should start with the niyyah (intention) to make the specific prayer that you are about to pray
2. Raise your hands above your shoulders and saying the opening proclamation - Allahu Akbar (Allah is great)
3. Stand straight with right hand folded over the left hand above the navel.
4. Recite the first chapter of the Qur'an, Surah Al-Fatihah ("The Opening").

## Surah Al-Fatihah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

*Alhamdu lillahi Rabbil-amin*

Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the Worlds

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*Arrahmani-Rahim*

The Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

*Maliki Yawmid-Din*

Master of the Day of Judgement

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

*Iyyaka na`budu wa Iyyaka nasta`in*

You alone do we worship, and You alone do we ask for help

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

*Ihdinas-siratal-mustaqim*

Guide us to the straight path

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

*Siratlal-ladhina an`amta alayhim*

*Ghayril-maghdubi alayhim wa lad-daallin*

The path of those You have blessed, those who incur no anger and who have not gone astray

5. Once you finished reciting Surah Al-Fatihah, close it by saying "Ameen"
6. In the first two rakats of any prayer, after Surah Al-Fatiha, you must recite one more additional verse from the Qur'an of your choosing
7. Say Allahu Akbar (Allah is greater) while transitioning into ruku
8. While in ruku, you silently say Subhana Rabbil-azim (Glorified is my Lord, the Magnificent) three times \*\*check transliterations and translation
9. Move back to qiyam
10. Say Allahu Akbar (Allah is greater) while transitioning to sujud
11. While in sujud, say Subhana Rabbil-a`la (Glorified is my Lord, the Exalted) three times \*check transliteration and translation

12. Say Allahu Akbar while transitioning to julus
13. Move back into sujud and repeat the same invocation: Subhana Rabbil-a`la (Glorified is my Lord, the Exalted) three times
14. This completes one rakat of prayer
15. Prayers vary from two to four rakats
16. After two rakats of any prayer, only Surah Al-Fatihah is recited; no additional verses are added
17. After every two rakat, you raise from sujud to julus. In this position you must recite at-Tashahhud (the testimonial Invocation).

## At-Tashahhud

*At-tahiyyatu lil-lah*

All salutations of authority belong to Allah

*was-salawaatu wat-tayyibatu*

and prayers and good deeds

*As-salamu `alayka ayyuhan-nabiyyu*

Peace be upon you, O Prophet,

*Wa rahmatul-lahi wa barakatuh*

with the mercy of Allah and His blessings

*As-salamu `alayna wa ala ibadil-lahis-sailihin*

Peace be upon us and upon all the righteous servants of Allah

*Ash-hadu al-la ilaha ill-Allah, wahdahu la sharika lah*

I bear witness that there's nothing worthy of worship, except Allah, He has no partner

*Wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan `Abduhu wa rasuluhu*

And I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger

18. In the last rakat of any prayer, in the final sitting position you repeat the Testimonial Invocation once again along with the Abrahamic Prayer



as-Salat al-Ibrahimiyyah

Allahumma salli ala Muhammadin  
O Allah: Send blessings upon Muhammad

Wa ala ali Muhammad  
And the family of Muhammad

Kama sallayta ala Ibrahim  
As you sent sent blessings upon Abraham

Wa ala ali Ibrahim  
And the family of Abraham

Wa barik ala Muhammadin  
O Allah: Bless Muhammad

Wa ala ali Muhammad  
And the family of Muhammad

Kama barakta ala Ibrahim  
As you blessed Abraham

Wa ala ali Ibrahim  
And the family of Abraham

Fil alamin innaka Hamidun Majid  
In all the worlds, surely, You are the praised, the All-Glorious

19. After the recitation of the Abrahamic prayer, while in the sitting position, you finish the prayer by turning your head to the right and saying “as-salamu `alaykum wa rahmat Allah”. Then you turn your head left and repeat “as-salamu `alaykum wa rahmat Allah”. This signifies the conclusion of your prayer.

Prayer Times and Length

There are five obligatory prayers performed daily and each of those prayers has a designated time when it begins and when it should end. The prayer times are calculated according to the position of sun and are available online at <http://isbcc.org/prayer-times/> or in any masjid. Each prayer has specific amount of rakats listed below:

Fajr - Dawn Prayer  
Fajr consists of two rakat, both of which Qur’an is recited aloud. The two rakats are followed by the last sitting position during

which at-Tashahhud and the Abrahamic prayer are recited.

Dhuhr - Midday Prayer  
Dhuhr consists of four rakats in which Qur’an is recited silently. In each of the first two rakat, Surah Al-Fatihah and any other verse from the Qur’an of your choosing is recited silently. The two rakats are followed by the middle sitting position, during which at-Tashahhud is recited. Surah Al-Fatihah is recited silently in the final two rakats. This is followed by the final sitting during which at-Tashahhud and the Abrahamic prayer are recited.

Asr - Afternoon Prayer  
Asr consists of four rakats in which Qur’an is recited silently. In each of the first two rakat, Surah Al-Fatihah and any other verse from the Qur’an of your choosing is recited silently. The two rakats are followed by the middle sitting position, during which at-Tashahhud is recited. Surah Al-Fatihah is recited silently in the final two rakats. This is followed by the final sitting during which at-Tashahhud and the Abrahamic prayer are recited.

Maghrib - Sunset Prayer  
Maghrib consists of three rakats and is recited aloud. Each of the first two rakats consist of Surah Al-Fatihah and any verse from the Qur’an of your choosing. Those rakats are followed by the middle sitting position, during which at-Tashahhud is recited. In the third rakat, Surah Al-Fatihah is recited silently and concluded by the final sitting position during which at-Tashahhud and the Abrahamic prayer are recited.

Isha - Night Prayer  
Isha consists of four rakats and is recited aloud. Each of the first two rakats consist of Surah Al-Fatihah and any verse from the Qur’an of your choosing. Those rakats are followed by the middle sitting position, during which at-Tashahhud is recited. In the last two rakats, Surah Al-Fatihah is recited silently and concluded by the final sitting position during which at-Tashahhud and the Abrahamic prayer are recited.





A two unit prayer (fajr)

First Rakaat



Second Rakaat



Final Sitting



A three unit prayer (maghrib)

First Rakaat



Second Rakaat



Middle Sitting



Third Rakaat



Final Sitting



A four unit prayer (dhuhr, asr and isha)

First Rakaat



Second Rakaat



Middle Sitting



Third Rakaat



Fourth Rakaat



Final Sitting





# What is Ramadan?

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Hijri Calendar (Islamic lunar calendar) and the holiest month of the year. The first verses of Qur'an were revealed to our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ during Ramadan. Muslims are encouraged to increase in their abstinence from sins and to increase their acts of worship through fasting, reading Qur'an, praying supplementary salat, giving charity and being of service to their community. Good deeds and supplications are especially multiplied in reward during Ramadan. It's important to take advantage of every moment to worship Allah during this blessed month.

## Fasting

Muslims fast from sunrise to sundown during Ramadan. This means abstaining from food, drink, smoking and intimacy with one's significant other. It's especially important to abstain from harmful or sinful behavior. While fasting is obligatory for all able bodied adults there are exceptions for individuals who are sick, pregnant, breastfeeding or traveling. Women who are menstruating or experiencing postpartum bleeding are also exempt from fasting. Those who miss days of fasting during Ramadan are obligated to make them up.

Fasting during Ramadan is one of the key ways Muslims show submission to Allah. It takes physical and spiritual discipline. Each fast begins by making the intention to fast. Muslims prepare to fast with a pre-dawn meal called Suhur which should consist of enough nutrients to get through the day. The fast is broken at sundown with dates and a drink. After Maghrib prayer, Muslims share a post-fast meal called Iftar with family and friends. Ramadan is a month of community and reflection. Both Suhur and Iftar provide an opportunity to share a communal meal.

## Taraweeh

Our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ routinely performed Qiyam al-Layl (night prayers) to supplement the five obligatory prayers. During Ramadan, Muslims perform Qiyam al-Layl in congregation called Taraweeh. Taraweeh takes place after Isha prayer and provides an additional opportunity to remember Allah. Praying Taraweeh in congregation is a great way to become spiritually closer to Allah and to one's community.

## Eid al-Fitr

Eid al-Fitr is the holiday that marks the end of Ramadan. Muslims mark the end of their fast by celebrating with their community. It's sunnah to wear one's best clothes, eat prior to attending the congregational Eid prayer in the morning and spend time with family and friends. Eid al-Fitr is also an occasion to continue the good deeds of Ramadan specifically charity and strengthening the ties of community.

## Eid al- Adha

Eid al-Adha, the 2nd major holiday on the Hijri Calendar, takes place on the 10th of Dhul Hijjah and lasts for 4 days. This Eid commemorates the willingness of Prophet Abraham to sacrifice his son as an act of submission to Allah. It is sunnah to fast the first nine days of the month and to increase your acts of worship. Similar to Eid al-Fitr, Muslims attend congregational Eid prayer in the morning and celebrate with their families, friends and larger community. text

# What is Zakat?

Zakat means "to purify" and refers to alms-giving as an obligation upon each believing adult. This is not a voluntary charity but a religious responsibility to purify one's wealth. Allah provides Muslims with abundance and Muslims worship Him by taking care of the poor and the needy. Zakat is a central pillar of Islam and both types must be fulfilled each year.

## Zakat al-fitr

Zakat al-Fitr is a set amount paid during Ramadan and must be paid before Eid al-Fitr prayer. This Zakat is usually paid in staple foods such as grains or dates and given directly to the poor. The head of a household must pay Zakat al-Fitr for themselves and each of their dependents. Since Zakat al-Fitr is a set amount regardless of income level, it tends to be a much lower amount than Zakat al-Mal. It's to make sure communities feed their needy and the poor have resources to properly celebrate Eid al-Fitr.

## Zakat al-Mal

Zakat al-Mal is paid each lunar year and consists of 2.5% of one's wealth excluding living expenses. This includes any property, crops or livestock, gold, savings and liquid assets that an individual possesses at the end of each lunar year. Zakat al-Mal can be paid directly to the poor, to masajids or to institutions employed to administer Zakat.



# Character of a Muslim

## Etiquette

Islam is expressed through the character of a Muslim. The importance of adab is directly connected to the Sunnah and manners of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. A Muslim should always strive towards excellence and beauty by following the guidance of our beloved Prophet ﷺ. Proper adab is required in every act of worship. It is also an obligation in how Muslims interact with one another because proper adab strengthens the bonds of community and brotherhood. Below are a few rights of adab that a Muslim owe to their fellow Muslims:

### Salam

Muslims should greet one another by saying “As-Salamu Alaykum” - “May peace be upon you.” The response is required and should be “Wa Alaykum as-Salam.” A person entering to a gathering of people should initiate the greeting first

### Responding to invitations

When one is invited to a gathering or celebration by a fellow Muslim, it is proper adab to accept the invitation unless there is a valid reason one is unable to attend

### Visiting the sick

Muslims have a social responsibility to visit the sick, both those they know and those who are strangers. Spending time with the sick helps to alleviate their loneliness. It is proper adab to make supplication for their return to good health

### Attending funerals

It is obligatory for Muslims to pray Janaza (funeral prayer) for another Muslim if one hears of their death. Muslims pray for the dead and ask Allah to forgive their sins. There is additional reward for following the funeral procession until the body is buried.

### Responding to a sneeze

When a Muslim hears another Muslim sneeze, it is obligatory to say “yarhamukAllah” (may Allah have mercy on you).

## Modesty

Modesty in speech, actions and dress is considered to be an outer reflection of faith and has a central importance in Islam.

Muslims are required to abstain from harmful speech or actions such as backbiting or aggressive behavior.

The Qur’an instructs both men and women on modesty: “Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty”(Quran 24:30) “And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty.” (Quran 24:31)

It is required for men to cover between the navel and the knee both in public and in private. It is required for women to cover the body and the hair in public. A woman’s hair does not need to be covered from other women or male relatives.

The following are prohibited:

- Tight or revealing clothing for either men or women
- Silk and gold are prohibited for men
- Clothing or accessories belonging to a specific religion that is different from Islam
- Wearing clothes for the sake of pride and prestige

## Modesty between Men and Women

Islam views both genders as having equal status in front of Allah. However, there are guidelines for interactions between men and women set to protect both in this world and the hereafter.

A Muslim must always guard his or her modesty and the best way to ensure that is to lower one’s gaze and to practice good character. Islam forbids two unrelated persons of the opposite gender from touching each other or interacting in a heedless manner. This includes flirting, hugs and handshakes.

Islam also forbids two unmarried people of the opposite gender from being isolated together in a secluded space. However, they are allowed to interact in public around other people.

# Islam & Food

Along with modesty in action and dress, Muslims are also required to maintain a halal (lawful) lifestyle in food and drink. Similar to the Jewish tradition of Kosher, the halal designation clarifies what is permissible to consume and what is not. In fact, there is so much overlap that most Kosher designated items also fulfill guidelines of what is halal. The following are the most basic forbidden categories within halal dietary laws:

## Intoxicants

“O you who believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying...” (4:43).

Islam forbids consumption of any amount of intoxicant including alcohol and recreational drugs. This is intended reduce physical and spiritual harm to believers and society.

## Prohibited Meat

Consumption of pork and pork related products (e.g. pork-based gelatin) is strictly prohibited in Islam. The following meat are also prohibited:

- Carrion or the decaying flesh of an animal
- Animals sacrificed to anything other than Allah
- Animals that are killed inhumanely

“Believers, eat the wholesome things which We have provided for you and give thanks to Allah, if it is to Him you worship. He has forbidden you only carrion, blood, and the flesh of swine; also any flesh that is consecrated other than the name of Allah.” (Quran 2:172-173).



## Your Mosque

### Office Hours

Shaykh Yasir Fahmy and Imam Abdul-Malik Merchant both conduct regular office hours to help answer your spiritual questions. Visit [isbcc.org/our-spiritual-team](http://isbcc.org/our-spiritual-team) to schedule an appointment.

### Shaykh Yasir Fahmy

Shaykh Yasir Fahmy is ISBCC's Senior Imam through which he is the spiritual architect of our institution.

### Imam Abdul-Malik Merchant

Imam Abdul-Malik Merchant is ISBCC's Associate Imam providing on the ground pastoral care for the community and support for New Muslims.



## New Muslims

### Islam 101

Mondays 7 pm - 8 pm

The Islam101 program is a 5-week series that covers the basics of Islam: the Articles of Faith, the Prophet's Life, the Acts of Worship, the Qur'an, and Islamic Ethics. This is the recommended first step for non-Muslims seeking an introduction to Islam. Classes meet in classroom 104 to the left of the prayer hall.

### Living Islam

Wednesdays 6 pm - 8pm

The Living Islam program is an on-going weekly discussion on how the Qur'an and the Principles of Islam can be translated and implemented in our daily lives. This class is recommended for recent converts to Islam and/or non-Muslims who have completed either the Islam101 series or the Islam in Focus program. Classes meet in classroom 104 to the left of the prayer hall.





# Main Programming

## Jummah Khutbah

Fridays 1 pm

Jumu'ah, the arabic word for Friday, is the holy day of devotion for Muslims. In several hadith, our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ refers to Jumu'ah as the best of days and the day of joy. Dua and good deeds are particularly accepted on Jumu'ah. It gives us an opportunity to grow in piety and be closer to Allah. The following narration describes the etiquettes of Jumu'ah:

"Any person who takes a bath on Friday, purifies himself as much as he can, then uses his (hair) oil or perfumes himself with the scent of his house, then proceeds (for the Jumu'ah prayer) and does not separate two persons sitting together (in the mosque), then prays as much as (Allah has) written for him and then remain silent while the Imam is delivering the Khutba, his sins between the present and the last Friday would be forgiven." (Sahih Bukhari)

Jumu'ah also refers to the Friday congregational prayer that takes the place of the midday prayer of Dhuhr. Jumu'ah has two parts: the Khutbah (a sermon) and then the salat consisting of two rakats. Usually the Khutbah lasts from fifteen to thirty minutes and it's split into two halves with a brief pause in between. In the sermon, the prayer leader reminds Muslims of their duties to Allah and selects a topic of religious life to highlight. The purpose of the Khutbah is to inspire the congregation to grow in taqwa (God consciousness). Once the Khutbah is over, the Iqama (2nd call to prayer) is made and the Friday congregational prayer is observed.



## Friday Nights at the Mosque

Fridays 7:30 pm

"Friday Nights at the Mosque" is ISBCC's Friday evening program where community members come to together to take part in a uniquely spiritual and enlightening program. The evening begins with a recitation of the Qur'an by Imam Muhammad Nabeel and is followed by a discussion led by Shaykh Yasir Fahmy. The discussions are ways to expand and reflect on the lessons from the Jummah Khutbah and also touch on contemporary issues that affect our community and society at large. The program ends with a question and answer session and may also include group discussions and other ways to grow as a community.





# Islamic Terms

In this section you will find Islamic terms that you will encounter in religious programming and through interacting with fellow Muslims.

**Adhan** is the Islamic call to worship, recited by the muezzin at prescribed times of the day.

**Alhamdulillah** is an Arabic phrase meaning “Praise be to God”.

**Ansar** is an Islamic term for the local inhabitants of Medina who took the Islamic Prophet Muhammad and his followers (the Muhajirun) into their homes when they escaped from Mecca (hijra).

**Aqeeda** is a term that means creed or theology.

**Aqiqah** is the Islamic tradition of the sacrifice of an animal on the occasion of a child’s birth.

**Aya** (plural: ayat) means “evidence” or “sign”. In the context of Islam’s principal scripture, the Quran, ayah is used to mean “verse”, i.e. each statement or paragraph marked by a number.

**Dua** literally meaning “invocation”, is an act of supplication.

**Dhikr** is the name of devotional acts in Islam in which short phrases or prayers are repeatedly recited silently within the mind or aloud

**Eid** is a Muslim festival, in particular. Eid al Fitr, the feast marking the end of the fast of Ramadan. Eid ul Adha, the festival marking the culmination of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and commemorating the sacrifice of Abraham.

**Fi sabilillah** is an Arabic expression meaning “in the cause of Allah”, or more befittingly, “for the sake of Allah”.

**Fiqh** is an Islamic term meaning “deep understanding” or “full comprehension”. Technically it refers to the body of Islamic law extracted from detailed Islamic sources (which are studied in the principles of Islamic jurisprudence) and the process of gaining knowledge of Islam through jurisprudence.

**Ghusul** is a term referring to the full body washing ablution

mandatory before the performance of various rituals and prayers, for any adult Muslim after having sexual intercourse, orgasmic discharge (e.g. semen), completion of the menstrual cycle.

**Hadith** is a report describing the words, actions, or habits of the Islamic prophet Muhammad.

**Hajj** is the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, and a mandatory religious duty for Muslims that must be carried out at least once in their lifetime by all adult Muslims who are physically and financially capable of undertaking the journey, and can support their family during their absence.

**Halal** is any object or action which is permissible to use or engage in, according to Islamic law. The term covers and designates food and drink as well as matters of daily life.

**Haram** is any object or action which is forbidden to use or engage in, according to Islamic law. The term covers and designates food and drink as well as matters of daily life.

**Hasanat** is credit for good deeds, which Allah weighs up against one’s bad deeds at the final judgement after death.

**Hijra** is the migration or journey of the Islamic prophet Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Yathrib, later renamed by him to Medina, in 622 CE.

**Iftar** the meal eaten by Muslims after sunset during Ramadan.

**Ihsan** is the Muslim responsibility to obtain perfection, or excellence, in worship, such that Muslims try to worship God as if they see him, and although they cannot see him, they undoubtedly believe that he is constantly watching over them.

**Imam** is an Islamic religious leader.

**Insha’Allah** is an Arabic phrase meaning “Godd willing”.

**Iqama** is the second call to Islamic Prayer, given immediately before the prayer begins.

**Jahannam** is the Islamic word for hell

**Janazah** is the Islamic funeral prayer; a part of the Islamic funeral ritual. The prayer is performed in congregation to seek pardon for the deceased and all dead Muslims.

**Jannah** is the Islamic word for heaven.

**Jazak’Allah khair** is a term used as an Islamic expression of gratitude meaning “May Allāh reward you [with] goodness.”

**Jummah** is a congregational prayer that Muslims hold every Friday immediately following the khutbah (sermon).

**Ka’aba** is the most sacred site in Islam, the first monotheistic house of worship and the site which Muslims direct their prayers toward.

**Khateeb** is a person who delivers the sermon (khutbah), during the Friday prayer and Eid prayers.

**Makruh** is something which is a disliked or offensive acts

**Masha’Allah** is an Arabic phrase that expresses appreciation, joy, praise, or thankfulness for an event or person that was just mentioned. The literal English translation is “God has willed it”.

**Masjid** (plural masajid) is the arabic word for mosque.

**Mecca** is the holiest city in Islam and the birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad .

**Medina** is the second holiest city in Islam and the location of the Prophet’s mosque (Al-Masjid an-Nabawi) and the grave of the Prophet Muhammad .

**Muazzin** (alt. muadhin) is the person appointed at a mosque to lead, and recite, the call to prayer for every event of prayer and worship in the mosque.

**Mus’haf** is a physical copy of the Quran.

**Nikkah** is the Islamic marriage ceremony

**Qibla** is the direction that should be faced when a Muslim prays. It is fixed as the direction of the Ka’aba in Mecca.

**Quraish** were a powerful merchant tribe that controlled Mecca and its Ka’aba during the time of the Prophet Muhammad .

**Rakat** is the prescribed movements and words followed by Muslims while offering prayers.

**Ramadan** is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, and is observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting to commemorate the first revelation of the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad .

**Ruku** refers to the bowing down following the recitation of the Qur’an in the standing position while praying

**Sadaqa** encompasses any act of giving out of compassion, love, friendship (fraternity), religious duty or generosity.

**Sahaba** are the companions of the Prophet Muhammad

**Salat** is the Arabic word for the five daily prayers.

**Sawm** is the Arabic word for fasting.

**Shahada** is the Islamic testimony of faith in which one declares their belief in one God and that Muhammad is the messenger of God.

**Shaykh** (alt. Sheikh) is an Islamic religious leader.

**Shirk** means to associate partners with Allah.

**Seerah** (alt. sirah) is the biography of the Prophet Muhammad .

**Subhan’Allah** is an Arabic phrase, meaning “Glory be to God”.

**Suhoor** is the meal consumed early in the morning by Muslims before fasting, before dawn during or outside the Islamic month of Ramadan.

**Sujud** is an Arabic word meaning prostration to God in the direction of the Kaaba at Mecca which is usually done during the daily prayers (salat).

**Sunnah** is the verbally transmitted record of the teachings, deeds and sayings, silent permissions (or disapprovals) of the Islamic prophet Muhammad, as well as various reports about Muhammad’s companions.

**Surah** is what chapters are called in the Qur’an.

**Tafseer** are commentary or explanations of the Qur’an.

**Takbir** is the term for the Arabic phrase Allahu akbar, usually translated as “God is [the] greatest”.

**Taqwa** is an Islamic term for being conscious & cognizant of Allah, of truth, of the rational reality, “piety, fear of God”.

**Taraweeh** is extra prayers performed by at night, after isha, during Ramadan.



**Tasawuf** is the inward manifestation of Islam.

**Tawba** is the Islamic term of repentance.

**Tawhid** is the belief in the oneness of God.

**Ummah** is the entirety of the community of Muslims.

**Wudu** is the ritual washing to be done before prayer if a person is in a state of impurity.

**Yathrib** is the former name of the city of Medina.

**Zabihah** is the ritual slaughter of animals.

**Zakat** is a form of alms-givingt

# Recommended Reading

Below are books recommended for further study of Islam.

## Qur’an Translation

The Qur’an  
*M.A.S. Abdel Haleem*

## Biography of Muhammad

Muhammad: His Life from the Earliest Sources  
*Martin Lings*

## Practice & Belief

Being Muslim: A Practical Guide  
*Asad Tarsin*

## Supplications

Fortress of the Muslim  
*Darussalam Publication*



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