



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
GHANA ASSOCIATION OF  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATORS**



# **Islamic Religious Studies**

## **for Senior High Schools**

**Year 1**



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Kabiru Soumana  
Muhammed-Muniru Abdulai

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STUDIES**

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Ghana Education  
Service (GES)





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# FOREWORD

Ghana's new Senior High School Curriculum aims to ensure that all learners achieve their potential by equipping them with 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, knowledge, character qualities and shared Ghanaian values. This will prepare learners to live a responsible adult life, progress to further studies and enter the world of work. This is the first time that Ghana has developed a Senior High School Curriculum which focuses on national values, attempting to educate a generation of Ghanaian youth who are proud of our country and can contribute effectively to its development.

The Ministry of Education is proud to have overseen the production of these Learner Materials which can be used in class and for self-study and revision. These materials have been developed through a partnership between the Ghana Education Service, teacher unions (Ghana National Association of Teachers- GNAT, National Association of Graduate Teacher -NAGRAT and the Pre-Tertiary Teachers Association of Ghana- PRETAG) and National Subject Associations. These materials are informative and of high quality because they have been written by teachers for teachers with the expert backing of each subject association.

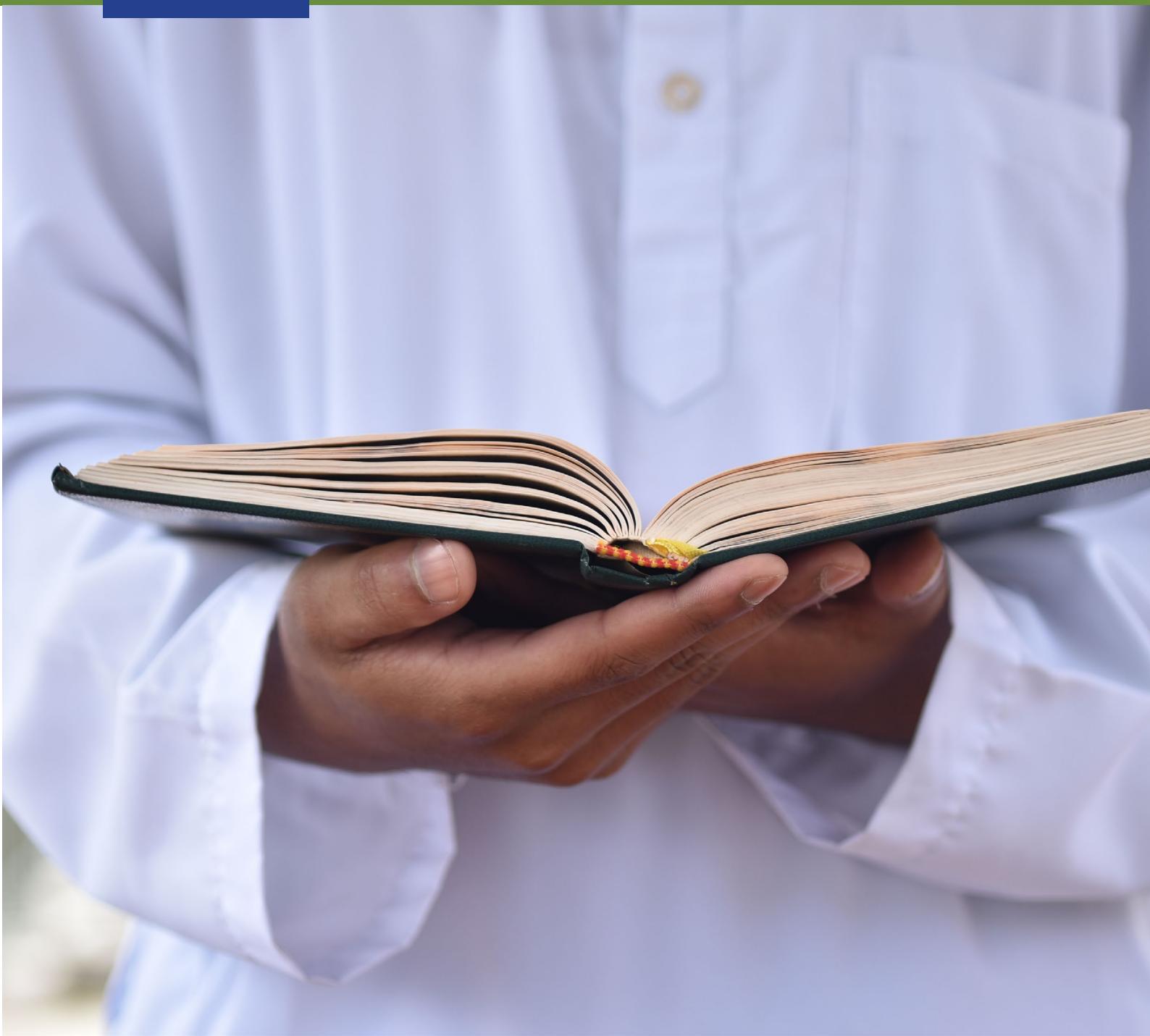
I believe that, if used appropriately, these materials will go a long way to transforming our Senior High Schools and developing Ghana so that we become a proud, prosperous and values-driven nation where our people are our greatest national asset.

**Haruna Iddrisu MP**  
*Minister for Education*

SECTION

1

# MEANING AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION



# STUDY OF RELIGION, GOD'S CREATION AND HUMANKIND

## Background to the Study of Religion

### INTRODUCTION

In this section, you will explore the meaning of religion and its importance to individuals and society. You will examine how different people define religion; study common features found in religious traditions and reflect on why religion is studied in school. The section also introduces you to classical definitions of religion by scholars, while showing how Islam views religion as a complete way of life guided by belief in one God (Tawheed), moral conduct and social responsibility.

You will learn to think critically about common misconceptions about religion and engage in respectful dialogue with others, regardless of their faith background. By the end of the section, you should understand how religion influences identity, behaviour and values and how the study of religion can support personal growth, peaceful coexistence and even future career paths. Everyone is encouraged to participate actively and share their views in a respectful learning environment.

#### KEY IDEAS

- Different people understand and practise religion in different ways across the world.
- Learning about religion helps us think clearly, respect others and live peacefully in society.
- Religion affects how people behave, make decisions and treat others.
- Religion gives people a sense of identity and brings communities together.
- The study of religion helps learners understand both their own beliefs and those of others.
- To Muslims, religion is a complete way of life guided by belief in one God and good character.

### UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING OF RELIGION FROM A LEARNER'S PERSPECTIVE

You may already have your own ideas about what religion means. That's a good place to begin. In fact, this lesson encourages you to think about your understanding of religion before learning other people's views. Common views:

*“Religion is how I worship Allah.”*

*“It is about how I treat people and behave in society.”*

*“Religion teaches me to live in peace and obey God.”*

*“It’s a way of life that shapes what I do and think.”*

*From these responses, we learn that religion means different things to different people. Your understanding may come from:*

*Your family or home (how you were raised)*

*Your religion (e.g., Islam, Christianity, African Indigenous Religion)*

*Your community (what others around you do or believe)*

*Your personal experiences (e.g., praying, fasting, reading the Qur'an)*

**NOTE:** Religion is not just about rituals or rules. It is about beliefs, values and behaviour that influence a person's whole life.

### Activity 1.1 What Is Religion to Me? (Collaborative Learning)

1. Write your own definition of religion in your exercise book.
2. Then ask two friends (or family members) how they define religion.
3. Compare their answers with yours. Are they the same or different?
4. Debate with the large group (class) members which definition is best.

**My definition of religion**

### Reflection

5. Can you now write a one-sentence definition of religion that includes belief, worship, morals and social life? Try it — you will see how hard it is!

Why can't everyone agree on one definition of religion? It is challenging for people to agree on a single definition of religion. Even scholars and religious leaders have different views. Here are the three main reasons why:

#### 1. People belong to different religions

Every religion has its own understanding of what religion is.

Muslims may say religion is submission to the will of Allah.

Christians may say it is faith in God through Jesus Christ.

Traditionalists may focus on ancestor worship and spiritual forces.

Because each group views religion from its own perspective, it isn't easy to find a definition that fits all.

#### 2. Religion is studied from different academic fields

Different fields of study explain religion differently.

**Table 1.1:** Explanation of religion based on different religious fields of study

Field of study	How it views religion
Theology	Studies beliefs about God and divine matters
Sociology	Looks at how religion shapes society and social behaviour
Psychology	Focuses on how religion affects human thoughts and feelings
Ethics	Examines the moral values taught by religion

Each of these fields offers a unique perspective. No single definition can cover them all completely.

### 3. Religion is complex and broad

Religion includes beliefs, rituals, feelings, community and even culture. It is difficult to write one short sentence that includes all these.

### Activity 1.2 Observe and Reflect (Experiential Learning)

1. In your school, community or home, observe any two activities that people do daily.
  - a. One should be religious and the other nonreligious.
  - b. Write short notes on what you saw and why you think one is religious, and the other is not.
  - c. In small groups, discuss similarities and differences.

No.	Activity	Religious	Nonreligious
1.			
2.			
<b>Discussion</b>			

### Things that may look like religion – but are not

Some things can look religious, feel religious or even act like religion — but they are not actually religion.

Let us look at a few of them in the table below.

**Table 1.2:** Examples of actions that may look religious, but are not actually religious.

Example	What makes it look religious	Why is it not religion
Humanism	Teaches moral values, respect and peace	Does not involve belief in God or the sacred
Football teams	Fans are loyal, chant, wear uniforms, and gather regularly	It is about sport and identity, not spiritual or divine matters
Ethnic or national identity	Has flags, songs, deep emotions, and celebrations	It focuses on people and culture, not the sacred or divine

These things are not bad. They may even promote peace or unity. But they lack a connection to the sacred or to a belief in God or gods, which is a key part of religion.

**REMEMBER THIS:** Not everything that looks religious is actually a religion. A real religion always includes a connection to the sacred, the divine or something beyond the physical world.

### Activity 1.3 Differentiate between religious and non-religious activities





1. Look at the pictures above or think of different daily activities (e.g., praying, eating, cheering at a football match, attending mosque or watching TV).
2. Tick which ones are religious.
3. For each one, write one sentence explaining your choice.

## What Makes Something Religious? Understanding Sacred And Profane

One helpful way to identify religion is to learn the difference between two important words: sacred and profane.

### What is sacred?

The word sacred means holy, special, or connected to God.

Sacred things are often treated with respect and used in worship or prayer.

Examples of sacred things are:

1. The Qur'an
2. A prayer mat
3. The Ka'bah in Makkah
4. Fasting during Ramadan

### What is Profane?

Profane refers to ordinary, everyday things that are not used for worship. They are useful, but not religious.

Examples of profane things are:

1. A classroom chair
2. A mobile phone
3. A football
4. A textbook (unless it's a religious book)

Term	Meaning	Examples
<b>Sacred</b>	Holy, spiritual and used in worship	Qur'an, Ka'bah, prayer, Hajj, Eid al-Fitr

Profane	Ordinary, not religious or spiritual	Shoes, books, pens, desks, games
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**THINK ABOUT IT:** *In your daily life, can you name one sacred thing and one profane thing?*

### Activity 1.4 Worship or Football? (Problem-based Learning)

1. Read the following two short descriptions
  - a. *"Ama wakes up every day at 4:30 a.m. to pray. She wears a special cloth that covers her entire body, faces a particular direction and says some specific words."*
  - b. *"Abu loves football. He wakes up early, wears his favourite team's jersey and sings their anthem before every match."*
2. In groups, do the following tasks.
  - a. Which of the descriptions in **point 1** is religious? Why or why not?
  - b. List 2 similarities and 2 differences between the descriptions in **point 1** above.

## Key Terms to Know and Use

Word	Meaning (in simple terms)
<b>Religion</b>	A way of life based on belief in God and moral teachings that guide behaviour
<b>Theology</b>	The academic study of God, beliefs and religious teachings
<b>Sacred</b>	Something holy, respected and used in worship
<b>Profane</b>	Something ordinary, not connected to worship or the divine

These terms are useful for your schoolwork, exams and personal understanding. Try to use them when writing or speaking about religion.

How definition is defined, as well as the differences in perspectives, is summarised in the list below.

1. People define religion based on personal beliefs, background and experience.
2. People from different religions define religion differently.
3. Scholars from different fields (like theology, psychology or sociology) define religion in various ways.
4. Some things (like football or nationalism) may seem religious but are not.
5. The difference between sacred and profane helps us understand what is truly religious.
6. Key terms such as religion, theology, sacred and profane will help you in future lessons.

## Self-Assessment

1. Can I explain the difference between religious and nonreligious activities?
2. Can I define religion in my own words?
3. Can I explain why people define religion differently?

Keep your work safe. You will use your own ideas later to compare them with others as you learn more!

# CLASSICAL DEFINITIONS OF RELIGION AND WHAT THEY REVEAL ABOUT THE NATURE OF RELIGION

## What Are Classical Definitions of Religion?

Throughout history, both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars have tried to define religion in a way that captures its nature and purpose. These efforts produced what we call classical definitions of religion.

Each definition reflects a particular worldview or way of understanding what makes something “religious.” By studying them, we can understand what religion means in different traditions and how Islam relates to this broader discussion.

In this lesson, you will study definitions from two sections.

1. Western academic scholars (Tylor, Durkheim, Schleiermacher) and
2. Islamic classical scholars and texts, including Qur’anic verses.

## Why Study These Definitions?

Understanding classical definitions helps you:

1. Explain religion clearly from different angles
2. Compare Islamic and non-Islamic views
3. Appreciate how Islam offers a complete view of religion — combining belief, practice, morality and community

Think critically about how religion shapes your life and society.

## Non-Islamic/ Western Classical Definitions of Religion

Here are three well-known classical definitions from non-Muslim scholars:

Scholar	Field	Definition
Edward Tylor	Anthropology	<p>Tylor believed religion began with belief in spirits. He explained religion as the human attempt to understand invisible forces.</p> <p>(Focus on Belief)</p> <p>Limitations: It ignores the moral, emotional and communal aspects of religion.</p>
Émile Durkheim	Sociology	<p>Durkheim saw religion as a way for people to come together through shared beliefs and rituals. <b>He focused on the sacred — things that people set apart as holy.</b></p> <p>Limitations: It may overlook personal and emotional experiences of faith.</p>
Friedrich Schleiermacher	Theology	<p>Schleiermacher described religion as the deep feeling of dependence on a higher power — a personal, emotional experience.</p> <p>(Focus on Emotion)</p> <p>Limitations: It says little about religious laws, rituals, or social roles.</p>

Although none of these definitions offers a full picture, they help us understand that religion can be studied as:

1. Belief in the unseen
2. A source of social unity
3. An emotional and spiritual experience

## Islamic Classical Definitions of Religion (Dīn)

In Islamic thought, dīn (religion) is understood in a much deeper and more comprehensive way. It is not just belief or emotion — it is a complete way of life, revealed by Allah, covering the following points.

1. Belief in one God (tawhīd)
2. Worship ('ibādah)
3. Morality (akhlāq)
4. Law (sharī'ah)
5. Spiritual connection (taqwā)
6. Community life (ummah)

## Islamic Scholars and the Qur'an: Definition of Religion Across Four Dimensions

### 1. Theological Definitions: Religion as Submission to Allah

Islamic theology sees religion as divinely revealed guidance. It is based on full submission and obedience to Allah's will.

“Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam.” (Qur'an 3:19)

Theological Scholars:

- a. **Al-Ash'arī** described dīn as submission in belief, worship and law.
- b. **Al-Juwaynī** confirmed that only the divinely revealed religion (Islam) leads to salvation.

This reveals: Religion is not invented by people — it comes from Allah. Its purpose is to guide human beings to truth and success in this life and the hereafter.

### 2. Moral Definitions: Religion as a System of Ethics

Islamic scholars also define religion as a guide for moral behaviour and justice. “Righteousness is not turning your faces towards the East or the West, but it is to believe in Allah... and give charity...” (Qur'an 2:177)

Moral Scholars:

- a. Al-Shātibī explained that religion protects five essential things: religion, life, intellect, lineage, and wealth.
- b. Al-Ghazālī described religion as a system that promotes benefit and prevents harm.

This reveals: Religion aims to create a just society and upright individuals. It teaches us how to live with fairness, kindness and responsibility.

### 3. Psychological Definitions: Religion as Spiritual Fulfilment

In Islamic spirituality, religion fulfils the inner need (fitrah) of the human soul for peace, purpose, and connection with the Creator.

“Truly, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find peace.” (Qur'an 13:28)

Psychological Scholars:

- a. Ibn al-Qayyim saw religion as the path to inner tranquillity through worship and divine love.
- b. Ibn 'Arabī described religion as the soul's journey back to Allah.

This reveals: Religion is not just external — it touches the heart. It gives meaning, direction and healing.

### 4. Sociological Definitions: Religion as the Foundation of Society

Islam also presents religion as the basis for a strong, united and just society.

“You are the best nation raised for mankind: you enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong...” (Qur'an 3:110)

Sociological Scholars:

Ibn Khaldūn argued that religion holds society together and strengthens the state.

This reveals:

Religion is not private or isolated. It builds community, promotes justice and creates social balance.

### Activity 1.5 Categorising definitions

1. Below are four definitions. In small groups of four, read each one carefully and decide what type it is:

No.	Definition
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

2. Write these four definitions in your notebook and sort them into categories: Theological/Moral/Psychological/Sociological

No.	Definitions	Category
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

3. In your groups, study one of the four categories of definitions. Look for further examples of this type of definition, both from Islam and from other religions and from non-religious sources.

In Islam, religion is not just a belief or a feeling — it is a full way of life given by Allah to benefit individuals and society.

## Activity 1.7 Compare and Reflect

1. Form groups of 2 or 4 of your classmates and do the following tasks.
  - a. Ask one friend in your group to define religion.
  - b. Write their definition.
  - c. Compare it to what the scholars say.
  - d. Do they focus more on beliefs, feelings, or society?
2. After reviewing different definitions, think about your own: Which type (theological, moral, psychological, sociological) is closest to your personal view?
3. Write a short paragraph (in not more than 7 lines) explaining why you think that way.

### Summary

1. Classical definitions come from both Islamic and non-Islamic scholars.
2. Most but not all Western scholars focus on belief (Tylor), social unity (Durkheim), or emotion (Schleiermacher).
3. Islamic definitions include theology, morality, spirituality and social justice — based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah.
4. Religion in Islam is divinely revealed, complete and applies to all areas of life.
5. Understanding different definitions helps us appreciate the richness of religion and the depth of Islamic teachings.

## Self-Assessment

1. Can I match definitions of religion with their categories?
2. Can I find and explain other definitions using the internet or reading?
3. Can I explain what the different definitions tell us about religion?

Keep your notes safe. You'll use these to discuss how religion connects with personal, social and spiritual life in later weeks.

# CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGION

## What Makes Something a Religion?

Throughout time, religious scholars and learners like you have asked: What are the features that make something a religion? What separates a religious belief or activity from something that is merely cultural, social or philosophical?

In this lesson, you will explore the essential characteristics that most religions share. Understanding these characteristics will help you with the following;

1. Recognise the features that unite all religions
2. See how Islam includes and expands on these features
3. Compare religious and nonreligious systems
4. Understand the deeper meaning and role of religion in human life

You will also learn that not all systems that appear religious are truly so, and not all religions share every feature in the same way.

### Activity 1.8 Think and Talk (BoWOS Style)

1. What makes something religious?
  - a. Share your answer with a friend.
  - b. Listen to their ideas and build on what they said by adding more information.
  - c. Try to reach an agreement about at least 3 characteristics.

### Activity 1.9 Quick List (Collaborative learning)

Write down 5 things you think make religion different from everyday life. Share with a friend or classmate. Tick which ones you both agree on.

No.	Things I think make religion different from everyday life
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

## Key Characteristics of Religion

Most religions share certain common characteristics. These characteristics can be found in Islam, Christianity, Traditional African Religion, and many others. Let's explore some of the key features in Table 1.3.

**Table 1.3:** Characteristics of Religion

Characteristic	Description	Example in Islam
<b>Belief in the sacred or divine</b>	Religions believe in a higher power (God or gods).	Belief in Allah, the One true God.
<b>Sacred texts or teachings</b>	Religions often have holy books or teachings considered divine.	The Qur'an and Hadith.
<b>Moral values and ethical code</b>	Religions provide rules for right and wrong behaviour.	Shariah law, which guides justice, honesty, and charity.
<b>Rituals and worship</b>	Regular religious practices like prayer, fasting, and festivals.	Daily Salat, fasting in Ramadan, Hajj pilgrimage.
<b>Community and fellowship</b>	Religions build a sense of belonging among followers.	The Muslim Ummah worldwide.
<b>Spiritual experience or connection</b>	Religion involves connecting with the unseen or divine.	Taqwa (God consciousness), Du'a (supplication).

These features may differ slightly from one religion to another, but they provide a helpful framework for identifying what counts as a religion.

### Activity 1.10 Exploring Characteristics of Religion- Internet Hunt

1. If you have access to a phone, tablet or computer, search for “key characteristics of religion.”
2. Write down any five you find.
3. Match them with what you have already learnt.

## ISLAM AND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGION

Islam does not only contain these features, but it also gives them deep meaning and clear purpose:

1. **Belief** is centred on Tawhīd (Oneness of Allah).
2. **Revelation** is preserved in the Qur'an and Sunnah.
3. **Morality** is based on divine guidance (halal and haram).
4. **Worship** is both individual and communal, with specific forms revealed by Allah.
5. **Spirituality** is linked with discipline, remembrance of Allah, and inner peace.
6. **Community** is essential – the Ummah supports each other and strives for justice.

In short, Islam offers a complete expression of the characteristics of religion, grounded in divine revelation and lived experience.

## What Is Not Religion?

Some social or cultural systems may have similar features to religion, but are not religions. These include;

1. **Political ideologies** (e.g., nationalism)
2. **Social movements** (e.g., environmental activism)
3. **Philosophies** (e.g., humanism)
4. **Fan cultures** (e.g., football supporters)

While these may inspire devotion, rules, or even emotional experiences, they lack the sacred dimension, revelation or belief in the divine that religions have.

### Activity 1.11 Watch and Reflect

Watch a video or look at pictures of people practising Christianity, Islam and African Indigenous Religion.

1. List things they do that are the same or similar.
2. What characteristics do these religions share?

## WHY THIS MATTERS

Understanding these characteristics helps us:

1. Identify what qualifies as a religion!
2. Respect the common ground between faiths
3. Reflect on how Islam addresses every area of life
4. Avoid confusion between cultural loyalty and religious truth

In Islamic Religious Studies, this understanding strengthens your ability to reflect critically, appreciate diversity, and defend your beliefs with clarity.

### Activity 1.12 Create Flashcards

Make flashcards from small pieces of cardboard or paper:

1. One side: A keyword (e.g., “ritual”, “worship”, “sacred book”)
2. Other side: A short explanation or an example
3. Use them to quiz yourself or play with a classmate.

### Summary: What have you learned?

1. Religions have shared features such as belief in the divine, sacred texts, worship, morality, and community.
2. Islam contains all these features and more, as a comprehensive, divinely revealed way of life.
3. Some things may look like religion but are not truly religious.
4. Knowing these characteristics helps us recognise real religion and understand its purpose in human life.

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I list and explain some main features of religion?
2. Can I give examples of how these appear in real life?
3. Can I tell the difference between a religious and nonreligious practice?

Let us now explore how these characteristics are applied in real life and reflected in Islam's teachings in our next learning.

## MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY OF RELIGION

### What are misconceptions about studying religion?

A **misconception** is a mistaken idea, belief or understanding about something. It happens when someone forms an opinion based on incorrect or incomplete information. In the case of religious education, misconceptions are common — especially when people don't fully understand what Islamic Religious Studies (IRS) is meant to achieve. For example, some people say, "Muslims only learn religion," "Women don't work", etc.

Across different communities, many learners and adults mistakenly think that the IRS aims to convert, criticise or challenge people's faith. Some believe it promotes only Islamic teachings and is not relevant to others. Others think that studying religion is unnecessary if one already belongs to a faith.

These ideas usually come from:

1. **Lack of information** — People often don't know what the IRS teaches or why it is important.
2. **Cultural habits** — In some families, religion is treated as private, not something to be discussed openly or analysed.
3. **Fear of the unknown** — Learners may feel unsure about studying other religions or fear that their beliefs will be challenged.
4. **Peer and societal pressure** — Friends or adults may discourage participation in religious education due to their own misunderstandings.

These misconceptions can lead to fear, resistance and even rejection of religious studies. Students may avoid IRS classes, miss learning opportunities and carry negative attitudes into adulthood. Correcting these misconceptions is important for developing confident, respectful and informed learners for societal progress.

### Activity 1.13 Our Shower Thoughts Wall

1. Write one sentence that expresses what you think or feel about studying religion.
2. Don't edit it – just write!
  - a. Read what others have written (if done in a group).
  - b. Put stars (\*) next to ones you agree with.
  - c. Add comments or build on someone's thoughts.
  - d. Share your experiences with others, in a group or with the class

## COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS – AND THE TRUTH

Let us now look at some of the most common misconceptions about the IRS — and the correct understanding behind them.

Misconception	Why is it Incorrect
<b>Studying religion is meant to convert you to another faith</b>	IRS is about learning — not converting. It helps learners understand Islamic teachings better and compare them respectfully with other religions. It supports faith, not forces change.
<b>Learning about other religions weakens your own faith</b>	This is false. Learning strengthens confidently and your knowledge, helping you answer questions confidently and teaching you how to interact wisely with people of other beliefs.
<b>Only religious people should study religion</b>	Everyone — religious or not — lives in a world shaped by religious values, laws, and traditions. Understanding religion helps all people become more informed, tolerant and ethical.
<b>Studying religion causes division and arguments</b>	When taught properly, religious education promotes peace and understanding. It teaches respect, unity, and shared values such as honesty and compassion.
<b>IRS is only for Muslims</b>	IRS is open to all learners. It teaches Islamic principles in a way that respects diversity and promotes ethical values. Non-Muslims benefit by learning about Islam as a global religion and understanding the beliefs of their peers.

By understanding and correcting these false beliefs, learners can open their minds, grow in their own faith, and live peacefully in a diverse society.

### Activity 1.14 Shared Reflection (Think Pair Share)

1. Imagine someone tells you, “*Religious studies are boring and useless.*”
  - a. What would you say in return?
  - b. Write your thoughts.
  - c. In pairs of two talk to a friend and share ideas.

**Someone tells me, “Religious studies is boring and useless.”**

My response:

## WHAT ISLAM SAYS ABOUT SEEKING KNOWLEDGE

Islam strongly encourages learning — not only of religious knowledge but also of all useful knowledge. The Qur'an and Hadith show that knowledge is the foundation of personal growth, righteous behaviour and a just society.

1. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: “Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim.” (Ibn Mājah) This hadith teaches that both boys and girls, young and old, must learn. IRS is part of this obligation because it helps Muslims understand their faith more deeply and live better lives.
2. Another verse of the Qur'an says: “Say, Are those who know equal to those who do not know?” (Qur'an 39:9). Here, the Qur'an reminds us that learning brings honour, understanding and closeness to Allah. Those who know are better prepared to face life's challenges and make wise decisions.
3. By studying IRS, learners;
  - a. Understand their religion clearly
  - b. Develop personal discipline and reflection
  - c. Practise Islam more confidently
  - d. Build the ability to explain their faith peacefully
  - e. Learn to respect others through Islamic teachings

### Activity 1.15 A chat with an Islamic Scholar

1. Visit an individual who has studied Islam. Before your visit, do the following.
  - a. Think of 2 questions in your group.
  - b. Try: “How does Islam help you at work?”
  - c. “What did you learn about Islam?”

2. During the visit, make sure the following.
  - a. Listen. Ask your question. Be polite.
  - b. If no guest, watch a video or see pictures.
3. After the visit, write or say 2 things you learnt. Draw if that is what you are comfortable with.

## WHEN MISCONCEPTIONS ARE NOT CORRECTED

If misconceptions about religious education are not corrected, they can cause many problems. Let us explore what may happen — and why:

### 1. Fear and avoidance of learning

Some students may avoid the IRS completely, believing it is dangerous or against their religion. This means they miss important learning, remain uninformed, and may struggle to explain or practise their own beliefs confidently. Their fear limits their growth.

### 2. Prejudice and intolerance

If learners think that learning about other faiths is wrong or harmful, they may develop negative attitudes. They may insult or isolate classmates who are different. This leads to hatred, bullying, and division in school or society.

### 3. Missed opportunities for personal and intellectual growth

IRS teaches critical thinking, debate, moral reasoning, and cultural understanding. These are skills needed for life, leadership, and good citizenship. Learners who ignore IRS miss out on becoming well-rounded, thoughtful people.

### 4. Social and community division

Misunderstanding religion may lead to conflict between groups. If people see religion as a tool of exclusion or superiority, they may look down on others. This damages community peace and national unity.

## Why This Matters

Clearing up misconceptions about the study of religion is not only good for academic success it also shapes the kind of person you become. Here's why this truly matters:

1. You become an open-minded learner
2. By seeing the truth about the IRS, you are more willing to ask questions, listen to others, and engage with your learning deeply.
3. You build self-confidence
4. Understanding your religion gives you the tools to practise it clearly and explain it to others without fear or confusion.
5. You grow in respect for others

6. Knowing your faith well helps you respect the faith and beliefs of others. You learn to disagree kindly and live peacefully.
7. You become a positive force in society
8. Religious education empowers you to promote peace, justice, and unity. In a world of conflict and misunderstanding, you become part of the solution.

## Summary

1. Many of these misconceptions come from fear, social pressure, or limited understanding.
2. Religious education builds peace, respect, and critical thinking.
3. When left uncorrected, misconceptions can cause division, fear, and missed opportunities.
4. As a student, you should embrace the study of religion as a path to knowledge, understanding, and personal growth.

Let us now reflect on how studying religion helps us understand our identity and our role in the wider world.

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I explain why some people avoid studying religion?
2. Can I explain why these ideas are not true?
3. Can I give examples of how religion is useful in real life?

## REASONS FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION AT SHS

### Why do we study religion in Senior High School?

Across the world and in Ghana, religion plays an important role in how people live, think and relate to one another. In Senior High School (SHS), studying religion — especially through Islamic Religious Studies (IRS) — helps learners to understand both their own beliefs and those of others. It prepares them to live as responsible citizens in a religiously plural country and world.

Learning about religion at this level is not about forcing faith or judging other religions. Rather, it is about:

1. Gaining knowledge of one's own faith and others' beliefs
2. Developing a sense of morality and responsibility
3. Promoting peaceful relationships in school and society
4. Understanding how religion shapes culture, history and values
5. Preparing learners to face real life situations with wisdom and tolerance

This lesson will help you reflect on the personal, social, spiritual and intellectual reasons for studying religion.

### Activity 1.16 Digital Search (Digital Literacy)

If you have access to a phone, tablet or computer, search online for:

1. "Why is religion studied in school?"
2. Write down any 3 new reasons you find.
3. Do they match what you already thought?

## Personal Reasons for Studying Religion

Studying religion helps individuals to:

1. **Understand their identity** – Religion shapes how people understand themselves and the world around them. It gives answers to questions like "Who am I?" and "What is my purpose in life?" Through learning about your religion, you discover the values, beliefs, and principles that guide your choices and define your identity.
2. **Grow spiritually** – Religion teaches how to build a personal connection with Allah through worship, remembrance, and reflection. Learners who study religion are more likely to practise regular prayers, fasting, and engage in acts that bring them closer to Allah and strengthen their faith.
3. **Make good life decisions** – Many religious teachings help us to distinguish between right and wrong. They provide examples and rules for living with honesty, respect, discipline, and care for others. This helps learners develop a moral compass for everyday decisions in school, at home, and in their communities.

When learners connect with their faith through study, they build self-confidence, inner peace and a deeper sense of purpose.

## Social Reasons for Studying Religion

In a diverse society like Ghana, understanding religion helps people live peacefully together. Studying religion:

1. **Promotes tolerance and peaceful coexistence** – When learners study different religious beliefs and practices, they become more openminded and respectful. This reduces prejudice, promotes dialogue, and builds bridges between people of different backgrounds.
2. **Builds community values** – Religions teach shared values such as honesty, compassion, generosity, and justice. When these values are studied and practised in schools, learners become good citizens who care for their communities.

3. **Reduces religious conflicts and misunderstandings** – Many social problems, including bullying, violence, and tension, can be traced to ignorance or wrong ideas about religion. Studying religion with accurate knowledge helps learners become peacebuilders who correct misinformation.

Religious education builds trust and unity in classrooms, schools, communities and the country at large.

## Educational and Intellectual Reasons for Studying Religion

Religious studies are an academic subject that helps students think deeply and independently.

1. **Develops critical thinking** – Learners are encouraged to ask questions about existence, morality, life after death, and the purpose of life. These are some of the deepest human questions and exploring them sharpens a learner's thinking and reasoning abilities.
2. **Improves communication and debate skills** – As learners share and compare religious ideas, they practise expressing their thoughts clearly, listening respectfully, and defending their views with evidence. These are useful skills for school and beyond.
3. **Connects with other subjects** – Religion is linked to many school subjects, such as history, literature, social studies, and government. Understanding religion helps learners perform better in these areas by giving them context and meaning.

In this way, religious education trains learners not only to be good people but also to be smart, thoughtful, and informed citizens.

## National and Global Reasons for Studying Religion

Religion is not just a personal matter — it shapes society, politics, and international relations. Studying religion helps:

1. **Promote national unity** – Ghana is a multifaith country where Muslims, Christians, and Traditional African believers live side by side. Studying religion teaches appreciation for this diversity and helps learners see all citizens as equally valuable.
2. **Prepare for global citizenship** – In today's world, people travel, study, and work across countries and cultures. Understanding religion prepares learners to live peacefully and respectfully with others from different backgrounds, promoting global peace and cooperation.
3. **Combat extremism and misinformation** – Extremist groups often use false religious claims to recruit and influence people. When learners are taught the true teachings of religion, especially the peaceful teachings of Islam, they are less likely to be misled. They become advocates of peace, fairness, and justice.

Thus, IRS equips learners to be confident, responsible citizens of both Ghana and the world.

## Activity 1.17 Create a Flier (Creative Art learning)

1. Design a colourful flier to convince other students that studying religion is important. Include drawings, reasons and a slogan like:

“Religious Studies: Learning for Life!”, etc.

Share your flier with a peer and ask for feedback.

### 2. Why This Matters

Studying religion at the SHS level is not a waste of time — it is essential for personal growth, academic excellence, and national progress. When you engage with IRS seriously:

- a. You develop a strong moral compass to guide your actions.
- b. You become more open, understanding, and respectful of others.
- c. You improve your thinking, speaking, and writing skills.
- d. You contribute to building a peaceful and prosperous society.

In short, religious studies help shape better human beings — those who are confident in their beliefs and respectful of others. It prepares learners for real-life challenges, both in Ghana and globally.

### Summary

1. Religion shapes people’s identity, behaviour, and values.
2. Studying religion builds both spiritual and moral character.
3. IRS helps learners understand themselves and others, promoting peace and unity.
4. Religious studies develop thinking, communication, and academic skills.
5. IRS prepares learners to live as responsible citizens in Ghana and the global community.
6. The study of religion is a valuable part of education and life.

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I explain 3 good reasons to study religion?
2. Can I describe how religion connects with real life and careers?
3. Can I create a poster or flier about the benefits of religious education?

# CAREER AVENUES IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION

## What Career Opportunities Can Come from Studying Religion

In today's world, the study of religion — especially Islamic Religious Studies (IRS) — is more relevant than ever. Far from being a 'redundant' subject, IRS equips learners with valuable knowledge, skills, and attitudes that prepare them for a wide range of careers. Religion intersects with many aspects of life — from ethics and education to media, law, and international relations. Employers in the 21st century are increasingly looking for people with strong moral grounding, intercultural competence and communication skills — all of which IRS nurtures.

In this lesson, you will explore how IRS can lead to successful careers in:

1. Religious leadership and education
2. Public service and community development
3. Law, diplomacy, and conflict resolution
4. Media, journalism, and cultural affairs
5. Counselling, psychology, and social work

### Activity 1.18 Class Debate

1. Write one argument for and one against.
2. Which side do you agree with? Why?

### Activity 1.19 What Schools Say

Visit a university website (or get a flyer) that talks about Religious Studies.

1. Analyse the institution's requirements for studying religion
2. Find out what jobs (opportunities) their religion graduates can do.
3. List 3 job examples with a sentence each on what they do.

# CAREERS IN RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATION

IRS builds a strong foundation for learners who wish to guide others in matters of faith, ethics, and learning. Career options include the following listed below.

1. **Islamic Education Teacher:** You can teach IRS at various levels — from madrasahs to SHS and even colleges. With technology-based education growing, you can also offer online classes, write eBooks, or produce digital Islamic content for global audiences.
2. **Imam or Religious Leader:** Beyond leading prayers, today's Imams are expected to offer family counselling, youth mentorship, and community leadership. Strong IRS knowledge helps you fulfil these roles responsibly and effectively.
3. **Da'wah Officer or Interfaith Educator:** Modern da'wah work includes participating in interfaith forums, using social media for outreach, and promoting peaceful coexistence in multicultural settings.

In all these roles, IRS prepares you to speak wisely, act ethically, and lead communities with compassion.

## Careers in Public Service and Community Development

Religious education provides a solid background for work in civil society and development sectors. Examples include:

1. Community Development Officer – Use your understanding of social justice and moral values to design inclusive programmes for education, youth empowerment, or poverty reduction. Religion teaches service to others, which is key to this work.
2. Civic Education or Peacebuilding Officer – Many national and international agencies recruit people with religious literacy to lead conflict-sensitive education, voter awareness campaigns, and peace dialogue initiatives.
3. NGO and Humanitarian Worker – IRS helps you understand human dignity, rights, and responsibility. You can work with NGOs to promote gender equity, mental health, education, or disaster relief — all grounded in ethical values.

The IRS lens helps you act justly, support the vulnerable, and improve lives in both rural and urban communities.

## Careers in Law, Diplomacy, and Conflict Resolution

Religious knowledge is critical in professions that deal with justice, peace, and governance.

1. **Legal Officer or Paralegal:** If you pursue law, the IRS enriches your understanding of moral justice, human rights, and ethics. Some lawyers also specialise in family law or Shariah-compliant finance.
2. **Diplomat or Cultural Attaché:** Many embassies and cultural institutions value candidates who understand global religions and can represent their country respectfully in diverse environments. IRS offers cultural and interfaith awareness essential to these roles.

3. **Mediator or Conflict Resolution Specialist:** Religious conflicts are common in many societies. With IRS knowledge, you can become a neutral and informed peacebuilder who bridges differences and promotes understanding.

## Careers in Media, Journalism, and Cultural Affairs

In today's digital age, religion is a frequent topic in the news, film, and public debate. IRS enables learners to:

1. Religious or Ethical Journalist – Report accurately on religious issues, correct misinformation, and educate the public on religious values. With training in journalism, you could write for newspapers, radio, or online outlets.
2. TV/Radio Presenter or Producer – Host religious or moral education programmes on local media. You can also produce culturally relevant content on festivals, ethics, or interfaith discussions.
3. Digital Content Creator – Many young people are now creating blogs, YouTube channels, and podcasts. With IRS, you can generate faith-based content to inspire and educate global audiences.

IRS helps you combine truth, creativity, and responsibility in shaping media narratives that promote peace, tolerance, and understanding.

## Careers in Counselling, Psychology, and Social Work

Religious insight is vital when working with people's emotions, family issues, or life crises.

1. School or Faith Based Counsellor – IRS helps you guide youth through personal and academic stress using faith based approaches. You offer comfort rooted in Islamic values and empathy.
2. Trauma or Recovery Support Worker – Religious guidance can be part of therapy for those recovering from addiction, abuse, or grief. With psychology training, your background in IRS strengthens your work in healing and hope.
3. Social Worker – Whether working in hospitals, prisons, or communities, IRS helps you support vulnerable people with respect, care, and cultural sensitivity.

Religion addresses the human soul, making IRS a powerful tool in emotional and social wellbeing careers.

### Activity 1.22 Career Brainstorm and Poster (Collaborative Learning)

1. Your teacher will put you into groups. Make a list of jobs you know. Then mark which of them would benefit from religious knowledge.
2. What skills does religion give which help in those jobs?

3. In smaller groups of not more than four, create a poster titled: “Studying Religion Can Help You Become...”
4. Add 4–6 professions. Under each, write 1 skill or benefit that religious studies support.
5. Be creative with colour and design!

### Why This Matters

Studying IRS is not outdated or irrelevant — it prepares learners for modern careers that require strong ethics, people skills, and cultural understanding. In Ghana and around the world, there is a growing need for professionals who are:

- i. Spiritually grounded and morally responsible
- ii. Able to navigate diversity with respect
- iii. Skilled in communication, ethics, and community leadership

IRS students can develop these qualities. They are well equipped to work in both traditional and modern sectors, from classrooms and communities to government, media and international agencies. Rather than being ‘limited’ by IRS, you are empowered to make a meaningful impact in the world — guided by truth, compassion and purpose!

### Summary

1. IRS prepares learners for many career paths — not just religious ones.
2. You can serve as a teacher, Imam, civic worker, counsellor, journalist, or peacebuilder.
3. The skills you gain in IRS — such as ethics, critical thinking, and cultural awareness — are useful in all professions.
4. Studying religion can lead to meaningful careers that improve lives and promote peace.

Let us now explore how religious studies train you to live responsibly and contribute meaningfully to your community and the world.

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I mention 3 careers that use religious studies?
2. Can I explain the skills religion helps me build?
3. Can I give real-life examples of religion in work settings?

These lessons will help you appreciate how religion relates to life, work, and community service. Keep learning!

## EXTENDED READING

- “World Religions: A Voyage of Discovery” by Jeffrey Brodd
- AllIslam.org – <https://www.alislam.org>
- Selections from AL Ghazali’s *Iḥyā’ ʻUlūm alDīn* (The Revival of Religious Sciences)
- Ibn Kathīr – Simplified Qur’anic Commentary  
*Recommended via: https://quran.com and https://www.alim.org/quran/*
- Islam – Islamicity.org  
<https://www.islamicity.org/education/>

# REVIEW QUESTIONS 1

## Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which of these best explains why it is challenging to define religion?
  - A. There is only one religion
  - B. Religion is just a private belief
  - C. People and disciplines define it differently
  - D. Religion and culture are the same
2. Which of these is *not* considered a religion even though it may look like one?
  - A. Humanism
  - B. Christianity
  - C. Islam
  - D. African Traditional Religion
3. Edward Tylor defined religion as
  - A. A system of sacred rituals
  - B. Worship of Allah
  - C. Belief in spiritual beings
  - D. The feeling of dependence
4. According to Islamic scholars, religion (Dīn) is primarily:
  - A. A tradition passed down by ancestors
  - B. A way of life based on divine guidance
  - C. A scientific theory
  - D. A collection of superstitions
5. Which of these is a key characteristic of religion?
  - A. Competition
  - B. Sacred texts
  - C. Entertainment
  - D. Fashion
6. What makes a system truly religious?
  - A. Its political influence
  - B. Its popularity
  - C. Belief in the sacred and connection with the divine
  - D. Support from celebrities
7. Which of the following is a misconception?
  - A. Religion helps develop moral values
  - B. Religion has no job opportunities

- C. Religion supports peaceful living
- D. Religion strengthens communities

**8.** Which of the following is a result of correcting misconceptions about religion?

- A. More divisions in society
- B. Better understanding and respect
- C. Hatred of other faiths
- D. Increased conflict

**9.** One key reason for studying religion is to:

- A. Criticise other religions
- B. Increase fashion sense
- C. Understand personal beliefs and others' views
- D. Avoid moral responsibility

**10.** The study of religion helps learners develop:

- A. Immorality
- B. Selfishness
- C. Ethical reasoning
- D. Laziness

**11.** Which of the following is a career related to religious studies?

- A. Mechanic
- B. Imam
- C. Engineer
- D. Football coach

**12.** Islamic Religious Studies can help you become a:

- A. Gambler
- B. Peace ambassador
- C. Pop singer
- D. Boxer

## Simple Essay Questions

1. Explain why people find it difficult to agree on a single definition of religion.
2. Describe two ways classical Islamic scholars define religion (Dīn) and what each teaches us about the nature of religion.
3. List and explain three characteristics that most religions share.
4. Identify and explain one major misconception about religion and suggest how it can be corrected.
5. Explain how the study of religion helps learners understand themselves and others better.
6. Choose one career from the study of religion and explain how IRS prepares you for it.

## Fill-in-the Blanks

1. One reason religion is hard to define is that \_\_\_\_\_ define it differently.
2. According to AlAsh‘arī, religion means complete \_\_\_\_\_ and obedience to Allah.
3. One key characteristic of religion is the use of \_\_\_\_\_ texts or teachings.
4. A misconception is a \_\_\_\_\_ idea or belief about something.
5. Studying religion promotes \_\_\_\_\_, tolerance and peaceful coexistence.
6. A person who leads prayers and guides Muslims is called an \_\_\_\_\_.

## Short Answer Questions

1. What are two reasons why defining religion is a challenge?
2. Name one Western scholar and one Islamic scholar who defined religion and briefly state what they said.
3. Give any two features that make something a religion.
4. What is one negative result of believing false things about religion?
5. Why should learners study religion in Senior High School?
6. How can knowledge of religion help in peacebuilding or community work?

SECTION

2

# HISTORICAL AND CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND OF ISLAM



# STUDY OF RELIGION, GOD'S CREATION AND HUMANKIND

## Background to the Study of Religion

### INTRODUCTION

This section explores the historical development of Islam and its spread to West Africa and Ghana. It begins with a study of Pre-Islamic Arabia, examining the religious, social, political and moral conditions before the emergence of Islam. It then traces the life, mission and leadership of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the role of the Rightly Guided Caliphs in expanding Islam. Learners will also examine how Islam spread to Africa through trade, migration and scholarship. The section concludes with a study of African Indigenous Religion (AIR), the interaction between AIR and Islam in Ghana and how religion shaped Ghana's moral, educational and national development. Through this section, learners will build historical knowledge and appreciate the values, leadership and contributions of Islam to society.

#### KEY IDEAS

- Islam began in Arabia and emerged as a response to the difficult conditions of life before the Prophet's mission.
- Learning about Pre-Islamic Arabia helps us understand why Islam brought strong moral, social, and spiritual reforms.
- Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) life shows great leadership, compassion, and commitment to truth and justice.
- The Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn (the Rightly Guided Caliphs) helped preserve and expand the teachings of Islam after the Prophet's death.
- Islam spread into West Africa and Ghana peacefully through trade, education, and good moral conduct.
- Learning about how Islam reached Ghana shows its contributions to Ghana's culture, education, law, and community life.

### KEY FEATURES OF PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA

#### What Was Arabia Like Before Islam?

Before the rise of Islam, Arabia was home to a diverse and complex society. The period before Islam is called the **Jāhiliyyah**, which means the “age of ignorance.” This lesson explores the major features of Pre-Islamic Arabia to help you understand the environment into which Islam was revealed.

Understanding this background helps you:

1. Appreciate the major changes brought by Prophet Muhammad (SAW)
2. Reflect on how Islam addressed the challenges of the time
3. Understand the Qur'anic references to pre-Islamic life and practices

## Key Characteristics of Pre-Islamic Arabia

Characteristic	Description	Example or Notes
<b>Geography</b>	Arabia is a vast and mostly arid desert, surrounded by seas and mountains, with little rainfall and limited fertile land. This shaped the lifestyle of the people.	The harsh environment encouraged nomadism (moving from place to place with livestock) and led to the creation of trade caravans connecting key towns like Makkah and Yathrib.
<b>Political Structure</b>	There was no central government. Instead, the region was fragmented into various independent tribes, each ruled by its own chief or elder.	The absence of a unified legal or political system caused frequent wars and conflicts among tribes. People gave primary allegiance to their tribe, not to a state.
<b>Social Life</b>	Society was based on strong tribal loyalties. Social classes were unequal, and women and orphans often suffered discrimination and neglect.	Female infanticide, slavery, and a lack of rights for women were common. Despite this, honour, bravery, hospitality, and poetry were admired and preserved through oral traditions.
<b>Economic Life</b>	Arabia's economy was driven by trade, herding animals like camels and goats, and limited farming in oasis regions. Makkah was the centre of commerce.	Merchants travelled long distances in caravans. The Kaabah's presence in Makkah made it a religious and economic centre, attracting pilgrims and traders.
<b>Religious Beliefs</b>	Most Arabs practised polytheism, worshipping many idols kept in the Kaabah. Only a small number followed monotheistic religions like Christianity and Judaism.	Superstitions, idol worship, fortunetelling, and ancestor worship were widespread. The Kaabah had over 300 idols before Islam.
<b>Moral Condition</b>	Society had widespread moral problems such as gambling, drinking, corruption, and sexual immorality. Justice was often denied to the poor and weak.	Islam later condemned these behaviours and replaced them with values like honesty, chastity, fairness, and social responsibility.

## How Islam Responded to These Conditions

Islam came as a complete way of life that responded to the many social, economic, political, and moral challenges of the Jahiliyyah period. It provided a divine message of reform that addressed injustice, idolatry, and inequality. Below are some key reforms:

Pre-Islamic Feature	Islamic Reform
<i>Tribalism</i>	Islam emphasised the unity of all believers (ummah) regardless of tribe or race. Brotherhood and justice were placed above family or tribal loyalty.
<i>Idol Worship</i>	Islam replaced idol worship with the belief in one God (Tawḥīd), removing all images and idols from the Kaabah and teaching worship of Allah alone.
<i>Gender Injustice</i>	Islam uplifted the status of women by granting them rights to inheritance, education, marriage, and protection from harmful practices like female infanticide.
<i>Economic Exploitation</i>	Islam prohibited interest (ribā), dishonest trade, and economic oppression, while promoting fair trade, zakāt (charity), and care for the poor.
<i>Moral Corruption</i>	Islam introduced clear ethical teachings that promoted virtues such as honesty, humility, self-control, modesty, and respect for others.
<i>Lawlessness</i>	Islam established the Shari‘ah — a divine legal system that ensured justice, protected rights, and provided peaceful means of settling disputes.

## Why This Matters

Studying the key features of Pre-Islamic Arabia allows us to understand why Islam was revealed at that time and in that context. Arabia needed deep spiritual, moral, and social transformation. Islam brought not only religious belief but also a vision for a just and compassionate society. Understanding this helps us to:

1. See the relevance of religion in addressing real-world problems.
2. Understand that Islam came as a reform movement rooted in the realities of the time.
3. Appreciate the divine wisdom in revealing Islam when and where it was most needed.
4. Reflect on how these historical challenges still appear in modern societies and how Islamic values continue to offer guidance.

This historical insight strengthens our grasp of Islam’s mission and its deep concern for social justice, human dignity, and moral upliftment.

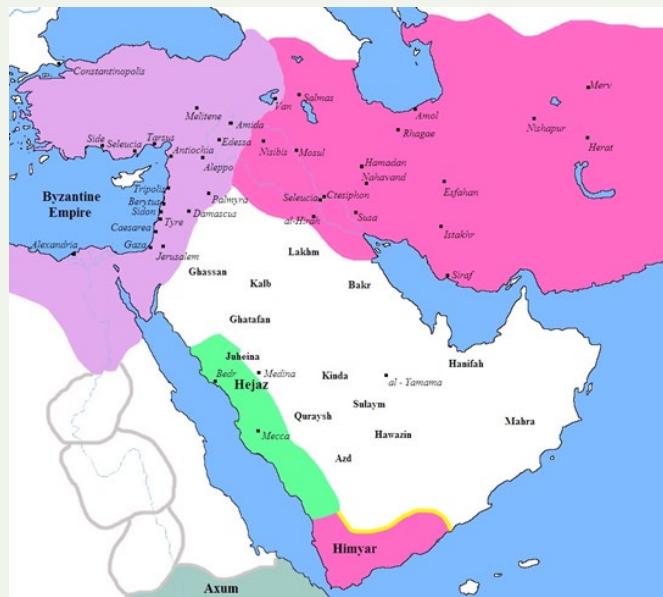
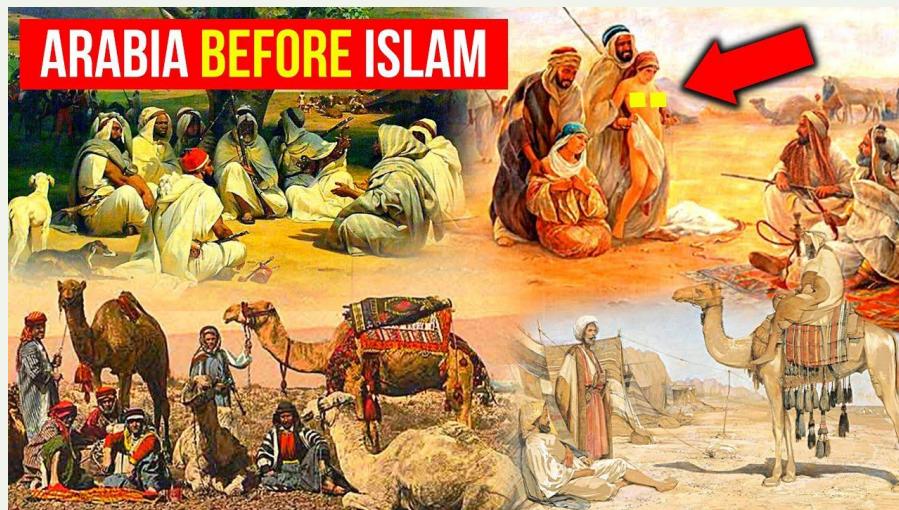
## Summary

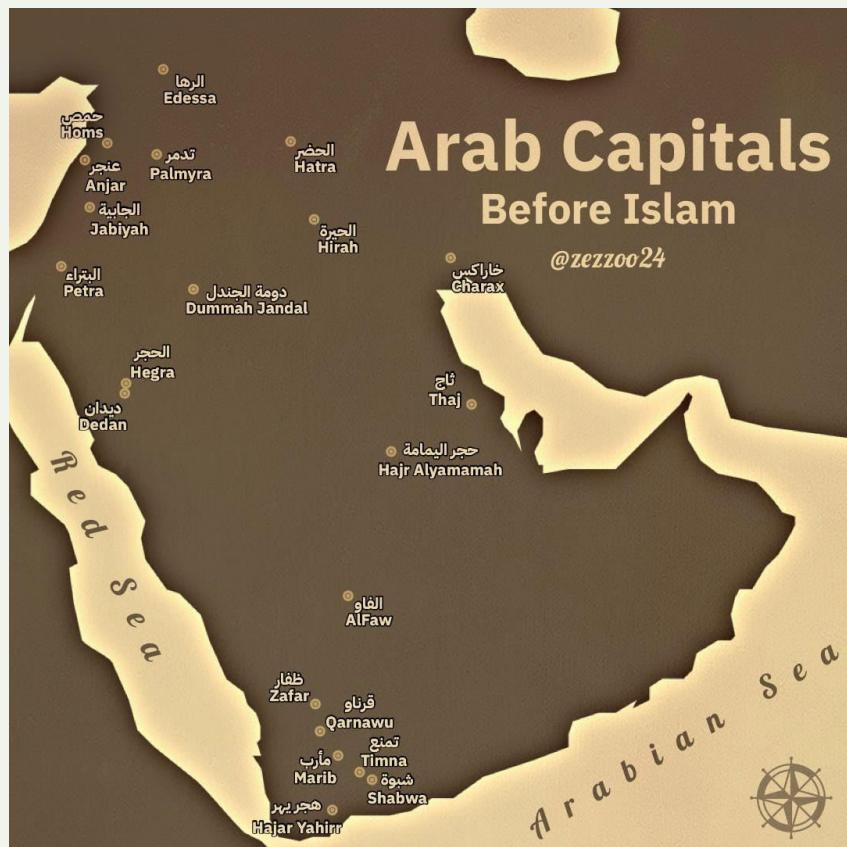
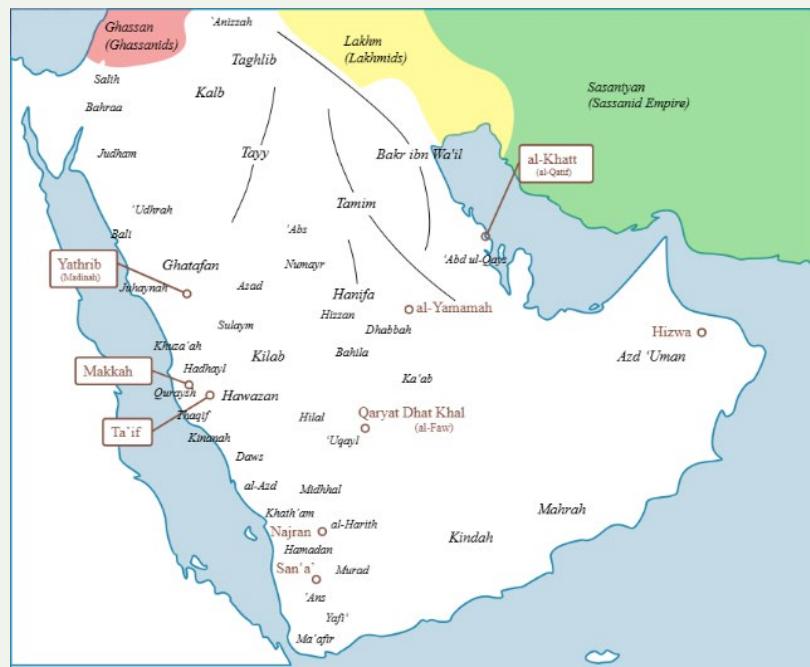
1. Pre-Islamic Arabia was marked by tribalism, idol worship, injustice, and social inequality.
2. Islam came to reform the moral, political, economic, and religious conditions of the time.
3. Understanding Jahiliyyah helps us appreciate the values and teachings of Islam.
4. Islam addressed the realities of its time with compassion, justice, and divine guidance.

5. The reforms brought by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) remain relevant in today's world.
6. Learning about this period builds our understanding of how Islam promotes human dignity and social harmony.

### Activity 2.1 Arabia Before Islam

1. Look at a map (pictures) of Arabia on the internet (Alternatively, look at the maps and pictures below). "What kind of society existed in Arabia before Prophet Muhammad (SAW)?"
  - a. Your teacher will describe life in Jahiliyyah Arabia.
  - b. Listen carefully to the stories of tribal wars, idol worship, poetry, and family life.
2. In your small groups from any of the previous activities;
  - a. Discuss what Islam later reformed.
  - b. Which practices did Islam continue or improve?







## Activity 2.2 Exploring Jahiliyyah Themes

1. Form six groups. Each group will study a theme from the list below.
  - Group 1: Geography
  - Group 2: Politics
  - Group 3: Social life
  - Group 4: Economic life
  - Group 5: Religion
  - Group 6: Morality
2. Use notes, textbooks, and peer research to learn about your theme.
3. Present how Islam addressed each issue to the whole class.
4. This promotes teamwork and understanding of reform.

## Activity 2.3 Life in Pre-Islamic Arabia

1. Brainstorm as a class: What do you already know about life in Arabia before Islam?
2. In your group, draw a concept map titled "Life in Pre-Islamic Arabia." Include branches like:
  - a. Tribalism
  - b. Idol worship
  - c. Poetry
  - d. Economic activity
  - e. Social injustice
3. Add how Islam reformed each one. Display maps for a gallery walk.

## Activity 2.4 Watching Arabia's Past

Watch a short video or documentary ([Click this link](#)) on life in Mecca before Islam.

1. Take notes on trade routes, idols, family life, and poetry.
2. Reflect in writing or discussion: What values did Arabs hold? Which of them did Islam accept or reject?

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I describe how Arabia was before Islam?
2. Can I explain what Islam changed or improved?
3. Can I visualise and present my ideas using concept maps?

## THE EARLY LIFE OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW) Who Was Muhammad (SAW) Before Prophethood?

Understanding the early life of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) helps us appreciate the personal qualities and life experiences that prepared him for his mission as the final messenger of Allah. He was born into a society troubled by injustice, idol worship, and inequality. Yet, his life stood out due to his remarkable honesty, compassion, and trustworthiness. These qualities made him a respected figure long before receiving divine revelation.

In this lesson, you will explore the following.

1. The family and birth circumstances of Muhammad (SAW)
2. His childhood experiences and moral upbringing
3. His reputation and character in society before becoming a Prophet
4. His marriage and role in Makkah's socioeconomic life

These early experiences were not just background details but essential elements that shaped the Prophet's later mission. They highlight how his upright character was already evident before the Qur'an was revealed to him.

### Key Aspects of the Prophet's Early Life

The early life of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) can be understood by examining the following key aspects:

#### 1. His Birth and Noble Lineage

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was born in the city of Makkah in 570 CE, a year known as 'AamulFil (The Year of the Elephant), associated with an attempted attack on the Kaabah. He belonged to the Banu Hāshim clan of the Quraysh tribe, known for its honour and leadership in Makkah. Though noble by birth, his father, Abdullah, passed away before his birth, and his mother, Āminah, died when he was just six years old. Thus, he began life as an orphan, facing both honour and hardship.

## 2. Guardianship and Early Care

Following his mother's death, young Muhammad (SAW) was cared for by his grandfather, Abdul Muṭṭalib. After his grandfather's passing, custody passed to his uncle, Abū Ṭālib, who supported him with love and protection despite financial hardship. These early experiences built his patience, humility, and empathy for the poor and vulnerable.

## 3. His Work and Reputation in Society

As a youth, Muhammad (SAW) worked as a shepherd — a job that taught him responsibility, perseverance, and kindness. Later, he took part in trading caravans, gaining experience and building a strong reputation. Due to his truthfulness and fairness, he became known as AlAmīn (The Trustworthy). His excellent moral character was recognised by the people of Makkah, even before he received revelation.

## 4. Marriage to Khadījah and Social Role

At the age of 25, Muhammad (SAW) was employed by Khadījah, a wealthy and respected businesswoman, to manage her trade. His honesty and success in her affairs led to their marriage. Their union was built on mutual respect and trust. Khadījah became his strongest supporter. He also became known for supporting justice and the weak, including participating in Ḥilf al-Fudūl, a pact to uphold justice and protect the oppressed.

## 5. Personal Qualities and Public Trust

Muhammad (SAW) was admired for his wisdom, truthfulness, and fairness. He often helped resolve disputes peacefully, such as during the rebuilding of the Kaabah, where he was asked to settle a conflict among tribes. His leadership was recognised not because of wealth or power, but because of character and integrity.

## 6. His Role in Makkah's Society

Despite living in a society filled with idol worship, tribalism, and moral decline, Muhammad (SAW) never engaged in such practices. He lived a clean life, avoided falsehood and injustice, and was deeply concerned with the welfare of others. His upright conduct served as a shining example to those around him.

# Why This Matters

Studying the early life of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is essential for learners because it offers timeless lessons in character, leadership, and resilience. His life shows us that greatness is not measured by wealth or popularity, but by service, honesty, and care for others.

1. Understanding his orphanhood and humble beginnings teaches us that challenges can shape empathy and strength. Even though he had no parents, he rose to become a trusted and respected leader. This inspires young people to see value in their own struggles and to persevere with dignity.
2. His honesty and trustworthiness in business remain relevant in today's world, where ethical leadership is needed. His example encourages students to embrace sincerity

and transparency in schoolwork, business, and relationships.

- His role as a just and kind family man and citizen shows that religious life involves supporting family, standing up for justice, and being involved in community affairs. This makes Islam practical and life-oriented, not limited to rituals alone.
- The Prophet's involvement in social justice causes like *Hilf alFudūl* inspires civic responsibility. In today's world, where injustice, inequality, and conflict are common, his actions show that faith must go hand in hand with fairness and compassion.
- His early avoidance of immoral acts in a corrupt society is a strong reminder that young people can live upright lives even when surrounded by bad influences. His example proves that youth can lead positive change by choosing integrity.

## Summary

- Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was born into the noble Quraysh tribe and faced early hardship as an orphan.
- He was raised with love and care by his grandfather and uncle, learning humility and patience.
- As a youth, he worked hard, was honest in business, and earned the title "AlAmīn."
- His marriage to Khadījah provided stability and support as he served his community.
- His early life reflected excellent character and made him a role model even before prophethood.
- These experiences prepared him for his future mission and showed that strong moral values are the foundation for leadership.

### Activity 2.5 Story of the Early Years before Islam

- Listen as your teacher narrates the story of the Prophet's (SAW) early life, including his birth, childhood, his marriage, loss of parents and his work life.
- In your group, retell a specific part of the story in your own words. Help each other get the order right.
- Share with the class and answer: "What values do we learn from this part of the Prophet's early life?"

### Activity 2.6 Timeline of the Prophet's Life

- Work in pairs or small groups to create a timeline showing
  - His birth in 570 CE
  - Foster care with Halimah
  - Time with grandfather and uncle
  - First trade journey
  - Marriage to Khadijah (RA)

2. Present your timeline to the class and explain how each event prepared him for Prophethood.

### Activity 2.7 Understanding His Qualities

1. Arrange yourselves into four groups, each focusing on one of the following areas:
  - a. Group 1: Family background
  - b. Group 2: Economic life
  - c. Group 3: Personal qualities
  - d. Group 4: Social relations and reputation
2. Research and prepare a short group presentation on your assigned topic.
3. Each group shares how their topic contributed to the Prophet's success as a leader.

### Activity 2.8 Roleplay the Prophet's Character

1. In your assigned roles based on scenes from the Prophet's life, such as:
  - a. Comforting someone in need
  - b. Trading fairly in the market
  - c. Resolving a tribal conflict
2. Act out your assigned scene with your group.
3. Reflect in writing or in a circle: "What did I learn about being kind, fair, or brave from this scene?"

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I retell a part of the Prophet's early life?
2. Can I show how each event prepared him to lead?
3. Can I reflect on his values and relate to them?

# THE CALL AND PROPHETIC LIFE OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW)

## Understanding the Prophetic Mission

The mission of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) marks a turning point in human history. At the age of 40, he received divine revelation that not only changed his life but also transformed Arabia and the world. His prophetic life—from the moment of the first revelation in the Cave of Hira to his final public sermon—was filled with struggle, leadership, reform, and spiritual guidance. In this lesson, learners will explore the major events in his prophetic life, appreciate his endurance, and reflect on how he guided society through justice, compassion, and truth.

## Key Aspects of the Prophetic Life

### The Call to Prophethood

At the age of 40, while meditating in Cave Hira, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) received the first revelation from Angel Jibril. These verses—Surah Al'Alaq (96:1–5)—urged him to read in the name of his Lord. The Prophet was frightened, uncertain, and overwhelmed. His wife, Khadījah, comforted and supported him, taking him to Waraqah ibn Nawfal, a Christian scholar, who confirmed his prophethood. This experience marked the beginning of divine guidance for all humanity through the Prophet.

### Early Mission in Makkah

#### 1. Message of Tawhīd and Reform

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) began preaching Tawhīd—the Oneness of Allah—and called people to worship only Him. He denounced idol worship and urged people to abandon their corrupt practices like injustice, dishonesty, and oppression. His message was simple but revolutionary, promoting moral reform, compassion, and justice in a society plagued by tribal arrogance and inequality.

#### 2. Opposition from Quraysh Leadership

The Quraysh tribal leaders opposed the Prophet's message because it threatened their power and economic interests. They feared the decline of idol worship would reduce pilgrimage profits and undermine their authority. They mocked, insulted, and plotted against him, attempting to stop the spread of Islam through both persuasion and persecution.

#### 3. Steadfastness of the Prophet and Early Muslims

Despite constant pressure, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) remained firm. He continued to invite individuals and families to Islam, often meeting secretly in the house of Arqam. Among the early converts were Khadījah, Abū Bakr, 'Alī, Zayd ibn Hārithah, and Bilāl. Their acceptance reflected the universal appeal of the message, which transcended social class and tribe.

#### 4. Public Declaration and Increased Persecution

After receiving the command to preach openly, the Prophet stood on Mount Ṣafā and invited his tribe to Islam. The public call led to greater hostility. Muslims were beaten, insulted, and imprisoned. Despite the pain, they remained committed to their new faith, knowing that truth and patience would prevail.

### Key Events and Challenges During the Makkah Period

#### 1. Migration to Abyssinia

As persecution intensified, some early Muslims sought refuge in Abyssinia, where a Christian king (the Negus) offered them protection. This act showed Islam's early diplomacy and the shared moral values between Islam and Christianity, like justice and compassion.

#### 2. The Social Boycott

In response to the growing influence of Islam, the Quraysh imposed a boycott on the Prophet's clan, cutting off trade, food, and marriages. For three years, Muslims and their supporters lived in hardship in the valley of Abu Talib. This trial tested their faith and unity under extreme pressure.

#### 3. The Year of Sorrow ('Ām al-Huzn)

This period was marked by two major losses: the deaths of Khadījah, the Prophet's beloved wife and strongest supporter, and Abū Ṭālib, his protective uncle. These deaths left the Prophet exposed to more hostility and deeply saddened, showing the emotional toll of his mission.

#### 4. The Isra' and Mi'raj (Night Journey and Ascension)

In the midst of grief, the Prophet was spiritually uplifted by a miraculous journey from Makkah to Jerusalem and through the heavens. He met previous prophets and was gifted the command for five daily prayers. This event affirmed his status and provided hope to his followers.

#### 5. The Hijrah (Migration to Madinah)

With permission from Allah, the Prophet migrated to Madinah in 622 CE. This marked the beginning of the Islamic calendar and the foundation of an Islamic state. The Hijrah symbolised the shift from persecution to community building and governance.

### Life in Madinah

#### 1. Building the First Mosque and Community

Upon arriving, the Prophet constructed the first mosque in Madinah, which served as a centre for worship, education, and social gathering. He also fostered brotherhood among the emigrants (Muhājirūn) and the local Muslims (Anṣār), creating a strong united community.

#### 2. The Constitution of Madinah

The Prophet established a formal agreement among Muslims, Jews, and other tribes.

It guaranteed religious freedom and mutual protection, setting the foundation for peaceful coexistence. This early document of civic governance highlights the Prophet's foresight and justice.

### 3. Major Battles and Lessons

The Muslims faced significant military challenges:

- a. Battle of Badr (624 CE): A miraculous victory despite being outnumbered, boosting morale.
- b. Battle of Uhud (625 CE): A painful lesson in unity and obedience after initial success turned into a setback.
- c. Battle of Khandaq (627 CE): Victory through innovation; Muslims dug a trench to defend Madinah. Each of these taught resilience, faith, planning and the importance of collective responsibility.

### 4. Treaty of Hudaybiyyah (628 CE)

Although it seemed unfavourable to Muslims at first, the treaty between Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the Quraysh secured ten years of peace. This allowed Islam to spread without conflict and demonstrated the Prophet's commitment to peace over revenge.

## Final Years and Lasting Legacy

1. Conquest of Makkah (630 CE): The Prophet entered Makkah peacefully with an army of 10,000. He forgave his former enemies and cleansed the Kaabah of idols, marking the triumph of truth over falsehood.
2. Farewell Pilgrimage and Sermon (632 CE): During his final Hajj, he delivered a profound sermon highlighting human dignity, equality, women's rights, and adherence to the Qur'an and Sunnah.
3. Passing and Legacy: The Prophet passed away in Madinah, having completed his mission. He left behind the Qur'an, Sunnah, and a model of life that continues to guide Muslims globally.

## Why This Matters

1. **Awakening to Divine Purpose:** The Prophet's response to the divine call in the Cave of Hira demonstrates how spiritual moments can reshape lives. For today's learners, it highlights the need for reflection, clarity of purpose, and moral courage.
2. **Resilience in the Face of Persecution:** The Prophet's steadfastness in Makkah offers a powerful example of standing firm in the face of mockery, threats, and isolation. It teaches learners the importance of patience, dignity, and endurance in standing up for the truth.
3. **Building an Inclusive Society:** In Madinah, the Prophet demonstrated how people of different backgrounds and beliefs can live in peace. His leadership model promotes inclusion, justice, and mutual respect—values essential in diverse Ghanaian communities today.

4. **Ethical Leadership and Strategic Thinking:** The Prophet combined trust in God with strategic planning. His negotiation of treaties and battlefield strategies reveals how faith must be accompanied by intellect and careful action in leadership roles.
5. **Relevance to Today's World:** The Farewell Sermon remains a timeless message for addressing social issues like injustice, tribalism, and inequality. It invites learners to become agents of change who uphold integrity, equity, and community wellbeing.
6. **The Prophetic Model as a Lifelong Guide:** From early youth to his final days, the Prophet embodied honesty, humility, generosity, and resolve. These traits offer learners a guiding light as they grow in faith, learning, and civic responsibility.

## Summary Points: What Have You Learned?

1. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) received the first revelation at age 40 in Cave Hira.
2. His early mission in Makkah faced strong opposition but stressed monotheism and moral reform.
3. Migration to Madinah (Hijrah) marked a new phase of leadership, peacebuilding, and Islamic governance.
4. Major events included key battles, the Constitution of Madinah and the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah.
5. The Prophet's peaceful conquest of Makkah and Farewell Sermon completed his mission.
6. His prophetic life offers a model for spiritual, social, and political leadership.

Let us now reflect on how these life events continue to shape Muslim values and leadership today.

### Activity 2.9 The First Revelation

1. Listen to your teacher narrate the event of the first revelation in Cave Hira. View a visual or listen to Surah Al'Alaq.
2. In pairs, discuss the following points.
  - a. How the Prophet reacted
  - b. Why this moment is important for Muslims today
  - c. What "revelation" means to you
3. Share your reflections as a class.

### Activity 2.10 Mapping the Prophet's Mission

1. Recall key dates of the Prophet's mission.

2. Pair up with a classmate or form a small group with a few classmates to create a timeline showing the following;
  - a. First Revelation (610 CE)
  - b. Migration to Madinah (622 CE)
  - c. Battle of Badr (624 CE)
  - d. Conquest of Makkah (630 CE)
  - e. Farewell Sermon (632 CE)
3. Share your timeline with another group and discuss what made each event significant.

### Activity 2.11 Exploring the Prophet's Mission

1. Your teacher will guide you in dividing the class into 4 main groups. Each group, through a ballot, will be assigned a theme as shown below.
  - a. Group 1: Makkah persecution
  - b. Group 2: The Hijrah
  - c. Group 3: Life in Madinah
  - d. Group 4: Farewell Sermon
2. Research your topic: what happened, who was involved, and what values or lessons can we learn today?
3. Each group makes a presentation to the class.

### Activity 2.12 The Prophet's Model Life

1. Watch a short documentary or animation by searching the internet on the Prophet's interaction with people of other faiths. *Alternatively, if you have a challenge accessing the internet, ask your teacher to help with it.*
2. Discuss in pairs or write a reflection.
  - a. What values did the Prophet show in Madinah?
  - b. What surprised or inspired you?
  - c. What can Muslims today learn from these examples?
3. Share your reflections in a discussion circle.

# THE DEATH OF MUHAMMAD (SAW) AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

## Understanding the Transition After Prophethood

The passing of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) marked a turning point in Islamic history. His death not only saddened the Muslim community but raised questions about leadership and the continuity of the Islamic mission. This lesson explores how the Prophet's (SAW) companions, through deep consultation and commitment, ensured that the religion of Islam not only survived but spread far beyond Arabia. You will examine how the leadership of the Rightly Guided Caliphs (Khulafā' Rāshidūn), strategic governance, and missionary zeal led to the rapid expansion of Islam.

## Key Aspects of the Prophet's Death and the Spread of Islam

### The Death of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

1. In 632 CE, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) passed away after a brief illness. His sudden departure left the Muslim community in grief and confusion. Some companions, like Umar (RA), refused to accept the reality of his death out of shock and emotional pain.
2. Abu Bakr (RA), one of the closest companions of the Prophet, brought calmness and clarity with a powerful reminder: "Whoever worshipped Muhammad, Muhammad is dead. But whoever worshipped Allah, Allah is Ever Living." His statement reminded the believers that Islam is rooted in divine truth, not personal attachment to individuals.
3. This event underscored the importance of strong, clearheaded leadership in times of crisis, and the need for institutional continuity in religious movements.

### Immediate Leadership Transition

1. After the Prophet's death, the Muslim community came together in consultation (shūrā) to select a new leader. Abu Bakr (RA) was chosen as the first Caliph, setting a precedent for succession through consensus rather than heredity.
2. The Ummah faced threats from some tribes who renounced Islam. These groups misunderstood Islam as being tied to the Prophet's life rather than being a continuous divine path. Abu Bakr (RA) took immediate steps to restore unity and protect the newly established Islamic state.
3. The Ridda (apostasy) wars were fought under his leadership to bring these tribes back and preserve the integrity of Islam.

### Contributions of the Rightly Guided Caliphs

1. **Abu Bakr (RA)**
  - a. Led for two years and is remembered for his strong leadership in times of instability.
  - b. Successfully waged the Ridda Wars, reuniting fragmented tribes and reaffirming Islamic authority.

- c. Initiated military expeditions beyond Arabia, setting the stage for Islam's future territorial expansion.

## 2. **Umar ibn Al Khattab (RA)**

- a. Reigned for ten years and was known for his justice, strength, and visionary leadership.
- b. Oversaw vast military conquests into the Byzantine and Persian empires, making Islam a global force.
- c. Developed military tactics and organisational structures admired even today—Umar's methods of maintaining supply lines, rotating forces, and establishing cantonments have been studied in military academies around the world.
- d. Instituted the creation of police departments (Shurtah), regional administrative offices, and welfare systems.
- e. Created new cities like Kufa and Basra as administrative and military centres.
- f. Founded the Hijri calendar and reinforced law and order across Islamic territories.

## 3. **Uthman ibn Affan (RA)**

- a. Continued the expansion into new territories in Africa and Asia.
- b. Collected and compiled the Qur'an into one standard version to prevent differences in recitation. This was crucial in preserving the Qur'an's authenticity.
- c. Strengthened the navy and supported infrastructure development in Muslim lands.
- d. His administrative decisions contributed to the financial and educational development of the Ummah.

## 4. **Ali ibn Abi Talib (RA)**

- a. Faced internal political conflicts and civil war but remained committed to justice and Islamic values.
- b. Tried to unite the Ummah through negotiation and reform, even as factions arose.
- c. Emphasised knowledge, fairness, and piety, contributing to the intellectual growth of the Muslim world.
- d. Supported religious education and judicial integrity, maintaining Islam's ethical foundation during turbulent times.

# Strategies for Expanding Islam

## 1. **Military Campaigns**

- a. Early Muslim armies were well organised and disciplined. Wars were defensive or aimed at removing oppressive regimes.
- b. Peace treaties were offered before combat, and civilians were protected. Conversion was not forced, showing Islam's ethical code in warfare.

## 2. Administrative Governance

- a. Conquered lands were integrated into the Islamic state through just laws and efficient administration.
- b. Taxation was fair, justice systems were accessible, and social services like markets and education were developed.
- c. Governors were appointed with accountability mechanisms in place.

## 3. Missionary Work (Da'wah)

- a. Scholars, merchants, and Sufis travelled to new areas teaching Islam peacefully.
- b. Their honest dealings, humility, and wisdom attracted people to Islam more than words could.

## 4. Cultural Tolerance

- a. Islam accommodated existing cultural practices as long as they did not conflict with Islamic principles.
- b. This approach encouraged peaceful coexistence and made Islam more accessible and relevant in diverse communities.

# Religious and Social Impact

1. Islam was embraced by diverse groups who saw its emphasis on justice, equality, and community welfare as liberating.
2. Arabic became the language of administration, learning, and worship, uniting people across vast regions.
3. Islamic civilisation flourished with the building of mosques, schools (madrasahs), libraries, courts, and hospitals.
4. Islamic values began shaping societal norms—ending tribalism, promoting social justice, and supporting knowledge and art.

# Why This Matters

## 1. Leadership in Times of Crisis

The Muslim response to the Prophet's death teaches us that strong, wise leadership prevents chaos. Abu Bakr's calmness turned panic into purpose. Learners can reflect on how leadership must prioritise unity, clear thinking, and service in difficult times.

## 2. Building Institutions for Growth

True development isn't only military—it's building systems that last. The early Caliphs built courts, schools, and markets that ensured social stability and religious continuity. This helps learners understand how Islam values structure, organisation, and public service.

## 3. Religious Conviction and Duty

The early leaders weren't driven by power or wealth. They saw themselves as continuing the Prophet's trust (amānah). Their sincerity and faith inspired others. Learners can apply this in their own lives—doing what is right even when difficult.

#### 4. Relevance Today

In today's world, where Islam is sometimes misunderstood, it is important to know that the early spread of Islam was based on justice, consultation, learning, and peaceful coexistence. Understanding this helps learners challenge false narratives and develop pride in their heritage.

#### 5. Inspiration from History

The early Muslims' courage and wisdom offer real examples of living with faith and resilience. They weren't perfect, but they showed that with sincerity, sacrifice, and knowledge, a just and caring society can be built.

#### 6. Contributions that Shaped Civilisation

The governance models, military strategies, justice systems, and educational reforms introduced by the early Caliphs laid foundations that continue to inspire modern institutions globally. For example, Umar's (RA) policing system and administrative districts bear resemblance to modern civil services.

### Summary

1. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) passed away in 632 CE, leading to a major leadership transition.
2. Abu Bakr (RA) united the Muslims and became the first Caliph through consultation.
3. The four Rightly Guided Caliphs helped expand and stabilise Islam in various ways.
4. Islam spread through a blend of military, political, administrative, and missionary strategies.
5. The spread of Islam brought spiritual, legal, and educational development across vast regions.
6. The early Islamic leadership offers valuable lessons in justice, governance, and faithfulness.

#### Activity 2.13 The Prophet's Final Days

1. Your teacher will narrate the Prophet's (SAW) final illness, his passing and Abu Bakr's calming speech.
2. In groups, take turns retelling parts of the story, including your emotions.
3. Discuss: "What lessons can we learn from how the Muslims reacted to the Prophet's death?"

### Activity 2.14 The Leadership Timeline

1. List major events under each Caliph.
2. In your group, create a timeline from 632 CE to 661 CE showing:
  - a. Each Caliph's name
  - b. Major events (e.g., Ridda Wars, expansion, Qur'an compilation, etc.)
3. Share and explain (to your group or class) why each Caliph was important.

### Activity 2.15 Who were the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs?

1. Research and present using posters, short stories or digital slides on:
  - a. Major achievements
  - b. How they expanded Islam
  - c. Challenges faced
  - d. One lesson modern leaders can learn presently
2. Class reflects on which Caliph inspired them most and why.

### Activity 2.16 How does the concept of Shura apply to modern-day leadership?

1. Think about what leadership means today.
2. Discuss these questions:
  - a. Why was leadership after the Prophet crucial?
  - b. What made the Caliphs successful?
  - c. How can shura help in our schools or homes today?
3. Write a short reflection on: "How can I practise shura in my life?"

## CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES OF THE EARLY MUSLIMS

### Introduction: Understanding the Early Struggles of Muslims

This lesson invites you to explore the lived realities of the first Muslims. From persecution in Makkah to the difficulties of establishing a new society in Madinah, early Muslims faced enormous trials. These included physical suffering, emotional distress, political isolation,

and economic hardship. Yet, their unwavering faith and resilience laid the foundation for the growth and strength of the Muslim Ummah. The values of *şabr* (patience), *tawakkul* (trust in Allah), unity, and courage were central to overcoming adversity.

## Key Aspects of the Challenges and Successes of the Early Muslims

### Challenges in Makkah

- Physical Persecution:** Muslims were beaten, tied, burned, and tortured by the Quraysh to force them to abandon Islam. Notable among the victims was Bilal ibn Rabah, who, though a slave, demonstrated firm belief by constantly declaring “Ahad! Ahad!” (One! One!) while being whipped on hot desert sand. His resistance inspired other oppressed Muslims.
- Social and Economic Boycott:** Muslims and their supporters from the Banu Hashim clan were forced to live in a valley for three years without access to food or trade. This led to severe hunger and illness. Children cried from starvation, and leaves or dry leather were sometimes eaten to survive. The Quraysh's aim was to weaken the Prophet's movement, but this hardship strengthened the Muslims' resolve.
- Verbal Abuse and Psychological Pressure:** The Prophet (SAW) was insulted in public, labelled a madman, poet, or magician. Believers were mocked, called fools, and threatened by their families. This daily psychological warfare was aimed at humiliating them and making them feel inferior. Yet, they remained dignified and firm.
- Martyrdom:** Sumayyah bint Khayyat became the first martyr when she was murdered by Abu Jahl for her refusal to renounce Islam. Her son, Ammar, also faced torture. These sacrifices reminded Muslims that faith must be upheld even under severe pain.
- Forced Migration to Abyssinia:** To protect his followers, the Prophet (SAW) advised some Muslims to migrate to Abyssinia, where the Christian king, Najashi, welcomed them. This showed Islam's tolerance and ability to build peaceful relations across religions. It was one of the earliest examples of interfaith diplomacy.

### Challenges in Madinah

- Military Threats from the Quraysh:** The Muslims fought several battles, including Badr (victory against odds), Uhud (a painful setback), and Khandaq (a siege with great hardship). These were trials of both physical strength and faith. Each battle taught important lessons in discipline, planning, and reliance on Allah.
- Political Conflicts with Jewish Tribes:** The Prophet (SAW) initially made peace treaties with Jewish tribes in Madinah. However, some broke the agreements and sided with the enemies of Islam. This betrayal led to confrontations, teaching Muslims about justice and the consequences of broken trust.
- Hypocrisy within the Muslim Community:** The *Munafiqun* acted like Muslims but secretly opposed the Prophet (SAW). Their actions, such as spreading rumours and avoiding battle, caused confusion and weakened morale. The Prophet (SAW) dealt with them patiently, showing the importance of integrity.

4. **Economic Strain:** The sudden influx of the Makkan migrants (Muhajirun) created pressure on food, housing, and jobs in Madinah. The Ansar (helpers) of Madinah generously shared their wealth and homes. This cooperation became a model of social solidarity and generosity.

## Response of Early Muslims to Challenges

1. **Deep Spiritual Faith and Trust (Tawakkul):** Muslims believed that Allah's help would come if they remained patient and obedient. Even during hardship, they prayed and trusted that truth would prevail. This trust gave them emotional strength to carry on.
2. **Patience and Endurance (Şabr):** Early Muslims practised şabr by enduring pain without giving up. They did not retaliate with hatred but stayed committed to justice and truth. Their endurance helped Islam survive and spread.
3. **Brotherhood and Unity:** The Prophet (SAW) united the Muhajirun and Ansar through bonds of brotherhood. They shared homes, wealth, and responsibilities. This unity transformed individual sacrifices into collective strength.
4. **Peaceful Migration (Hijrah):** Instead of fighting the Quraysh in Makkah, the Prophet (SAW) moved to Madinah. This was a wise strategy that allowed Islam to grow in a safer space and showed that migration can be a path to success.
5. **Defensive Warfare with Moral Discipline:** When Muslims had to defend themselves, they were taught not to harm innocents, destroy crops, or act unjustly. Islam's rules of war promoted ethics, even during conflict, which distinguished it from other warring groups.

## Notable Figures Who Showed Courage and Leadership

1. **Bilal ibn Rabah (RA):** Bilal became the first muezzin (caller to prayer), a role of high honour. Despite being a slave, he was respected for his voice and courage. His story encourages equality and dignity in Islam.
2. **Sumayyah bint Khayyat (RA):** Her bravery in the face of death made her a symbol of strength for Muslim women and men alike. She proved that courage does not depend on age, gender, or wealth.
3. **Ammar ibn Yasir (RA):** His torture and eventual comfort from the Prophet (SAW) showed that Islam recognises inner belief even when one is outwardly weak. It taught Muslims about mercy and psychological struggle.
4. **Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali (RA):** These leaders protected the Prophet, donated resources, and helped organise the early Muslim community. Their early efforts laid the foundation for the Caliphate system that followed after the Prophet's (SAW) death. Their lives demonstrate how leadership, loyalty, and bravery are essential for community building.

## Why This Matters

1. **Understanding Struggle as Part of Faith:** Learning about the struggles of the early Muslims teaches us that hardship is not a sign of failure. Rather, it often comes before success. This motivates learners to stay focused in times of difficulty.
2. **Building Strength Through Patience:** Practising *ṣabr* helps learners develop emotional maturity and the ability to manage stress. It fosters problemsolving and helps people respond to challenges with clarity and kindness.
3. **Trust in a Higher Purpose:** Tawakkul encourages learners to work hard while trusting the outcome to Allah. It also reduces anxiety, helping learners focus on what they can control while leaving the rest to Allah.
4. **The Power of Unity and Brotherhood:** When individuals support one another, great achievements are possible. The Mu'akhah system in Madinah shows how community ties can solve economic and emotional challenges.
5. **Role Models Who Inspire:** Historical figures like Bilal and Sumayyah show learners that ordinary people can do extraordinary things with faith and courage. They become moral compasses in times of doubt.
6. **Challenges Help Reveal True Character:** Facing challenges builds resilience, truthfulness, and a sense of justice. These are qualities needed in today's schools, families, and society.

### Activity 2.17 Why Were They Persecuted?

1. With a friend, have a discussion on the questions below.
  - a. Why were early Muslims persecuted?
  - b. What values did they show in return?
2. Write in your journal: “What would I do in their place?”

### Activity 2.18 Different Challenges, One Faith

1. Form groups based on these challenge types: *Physical, Economic, Psychological, or Political.*
2. Research and prepare a short poster or skit.
  - a. What happened?
  - b. How did the Muslims respond?
  - c. What value did they show?
3. Present to class and compare challenges in Makkah and Madinah.

### Activity 2.19 Reenacting the Struggle

1. Choose a historical scene (e.g., Bilal's torture, the Hijrah).
2. Act it out in groups.
3. Sit in a circle and share:
  - a. What you felt during the roleplay
  - b. What lesson have you learnt?

### Activity 2.20 Values from the Struggles

1. Review types of persecution with your group.
2. Create a concept map:
  - a. Centre: “Persecution of Early Muslims”
  - b. Branches: Each challenge and its moral lesson.

Example:

- i. Persecution → Ṣabr
- ii. Migration → Tawakkul
- iii. Battle → Jihad (in its ethical sense)
- iv. Social Rejection → Brotherhood and Solidarity
- v. Boycott → Solidarity

3. Share maps and display them in the classroom.

## RELIGION IN PREISLAMIC AFRICAN (GHANAIAN) SOCIETIES

This lesson introduces you to how religion shaped the lives of Africans—particularly Ghanaians—before the arrival of Islam. In these societies, religion was not separate from daily life. It influenced family, farming, leadership, justice, and festivals. The lesson explores African Indigenous Religion (AIR), its beliefs, practices, and worldview. You will understand how deeply spiritual African societies were and how these religious traditions created room for the later acceptance and blending of Islamic teachings.

# Key Aspects of Religion in Pre-Islamic African Societies

## Nature and Characteristics of Indigenous Religion

1. **Worship of the Supreme Being through Intermediaries:** AIR teaches belief in one Supreme Being (known by various names: Nyame, Mawu, Onyankopon, etc.) who is approached through spirits and ancestors. These intermediaries act as messengers or supporters, helping people connect with the divine.
2. **Oral Tradition and Community Transmission:** AIR is passed down orally—through stories, songs, proverbs, and rituals—not through books. Elders, priests, and priestesses serve as custodians of religious knowledge.
3. **Use of Religious Symbols and Roles:** Religious life included the use of sacred objects (e.g., stools, staffs), taboos, totems, and shrines. Ritual specialists (priests, diviners, rainmakers) performed duties during ceremonies and healing practices.

## Religion and Everyday Life

1. **Governance and Leadership:** Traditional leaders (chiefs, kings) were seen as chosen by the gods or ancestors. Their installation involved sacred oaths, libations, and blessings. Disobedience to rulers was often viewed as a spiritual offence, not just a social one.
2. **Morality and Justice:** AIR taught values such as honesty, respect, humility, and fairness. Taboos warned people against evil while ancestral punishment helped maintained justice. Community elders were both moral and spiritual guides.
3. **Healing and Health:** Traditional healers (akomfo, herbalists) used herbs, rituals, and spiritual insight to diagnose and treat illness. Disease could be seen as a result of breaking taboos or offending a spirit.
4. **Agriculture and Nature:** Religion guided farming practices: prayers were said for rain, and sacrifices were made to the earth goddess for fertility. Harvest festivals celebrated abundance and gave thanks to the ancestors.
5. **Festivals and Celebrations:** Religious festivals marked births, puberty, marriages, harvests, and deaths. They featured drumming, dancing, sacrifices, storytelling and community gatherings.

## The African Spiritual Worldview

1. **Three Levels of Existence:** AIR teaches that reality includes: the physical world, the world of spirits and ancestors, and the realm of the Supreme Being. Each world affects the other. What happens in the spirit world can affect daily life.
2. **Sacred and Secular as One:** In AIR, there is no clear line between religious and nonreligious life. Farming, dancing, marriage, and even greeting elders carry religious meaning. Religion was a living experience—not limited to a place or time.

3. **Communal and Environmental Respect:** African religion promoted communal living, respect for elders, and protection of nature. People believed that disturbing nature (e.g., cutting sacred trees) could lead to spiritual consequences.

## Why This Matters

1. **Understanding African Religious Identity:** Many Africans today are Muslims or Christians, but their worldview still carries deep influence from AIR. Studying it helps you to appreciate the roots of their identity.
2. **Respect for Diverse Traditions:** Learning about AIR encourages respect for all belief systems. It also helps us avoid the false idea that African religion is backward or irrelevant.
3. **Connection Between Religion and Daily Life:** Unlike modern trends that separate religion and society, AIR reminds us that faith can guide every part of life—work, relationships, leadership, and nature.
4. **Learning from African Values:** AIR promoted values such as justice, respect, sharing, and spiritual discipline—values still relevant today.
5. **Preparing for Interfaith Engagement:** Understanding AIR provides a better foundation for comparing and appreciating Islam’s message when it arrived in Africa.

### Activity 2.21 AIR Through Our Eyes

1. Watch videos by searching the interview or view pictures of AIR practices (see pictures below), focusing on their beliefs (e.g., libation, Bugum Chugu, Homowo).





2. In your groups, discuss the questions listed below.
  - a. What practices did you observe?
  - b. What values or beliefs did they reflect?
  - c. How do they connect to daily life?
3. Write a reflection on: “What have I learnt about traditional beliefs in my community?”

### Activity 2.22 AIR in Daily Life

For this activity, your teacher will guide you to form groups with your classmates.

1. The groups formed will each be based on the following themes;
  - a. Governance
  - b. Farming/Agriculture
  - c. Health

- d. Festivals
- e. Social behaviour
- f. Morality

2. Research how AIR influences your topic: Use posters, short plays or storytelling.
3. Present your findings and answer questions your peers may ask you after your presentation.

### Activity 2.23 Is Religion Separate from Life?

1. Think about cultural and religious practices in traditional Ghanaian societies.
2. Discuss with a few classmates the topic: *“Was religion separate from life in the community?”*
  - a. Use examples: taboos, naming, chiefs’ political and spiritual roles
  - b. Link to the Islamic view that religion guides all life.
3. Reflect in your journal on how religion influenced daily decisions.

### Activity 2.24 Mapping Ghana Before Islam

1. Brainstorm features of Ghanaian life before Islam.
2. Create a concept map centred on "Ghana before Islam."
  - a. Branches: Leadership, Family, Economy, Moral conduct, Spirituality/Cosmology
  - b. Add symbols or examples under each branch.
3. Share and explain your maps in class.

## INTRODUCTION: ISLAMISATION FROM NORTH AFRICA TO GHANA

This lesson will help you to understand how Islam, which began in the Arabian Peninsula, gradually spread across North Africa, into West Africa, and eventually into Ghana. The spread was not by force but mostly through peaceful trade, migration, scholarship, and cultural integration. You will explore the vital role of Mande and Wangara traders, trans Saharan trade routes, and centres of learning like Timbuktu in spreading Islamic teachings. The aim is to help you appreciate how Islam became part of Ghanaian societies and how it influenced education, culture, religion, and daily life.

## Key Aspects of Islamisation from North Africa to Ghana

### Origins of Islam and Expansion to Africa

**Start of Islam (610–632 CE):** Islam began in Makkah with the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) call to monotheism. By the time of his death in 632 CE, Islam had spread across much of the Arabian Peninsula.

**Spread After the Prophet's Death:** The Caliphs who succeeded him (Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali) expanded Islam across the Middle East and North Africa using a blend of military campaigns, diplomacy, religious dialogue, and strategic alliances. Umar ibn Al-Khattab's military strategies are studied in modern military academies in places such as the UK and the US, especially for their emphasis on strategic mobility, minimal civilian harm, and integrity in leadership.

**Arrival in North Africa:** Muslim armies crossed into Egypt by 640 CE and pushed westward into Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. Cities like Cairo (Egypt), Kairouan (Tunisia), and Fez (Morocco) became influential centres of Islamic authority, learning, and trade. The Berbers embraced Islam and, after conversion, helped spread the religion into the western Sahel and savannah.

### Spread to West Africa via Trade Routes

**Trans Saharan Trade Network:** This linked cities in North Africa to commercial hubs in the Sahel and beyond, such as Gao, Timbuktu, and Jenne. Caravans transported salt, cloth, horses, and books in exchange for gold, ivory, kola nuts, and enslaved persons. Trade routes became cultural highways where Islamic religious ideas, Arabic literacy, and commercial ethics were shared.

**Mande and Wangara Traders:** These Muslim traders were respected for their honesty, punctuality, and peaceful character. They settled in West African towns and villages, married into local communities, and taught Islamic practices. Their peaceful conduct, business integrity, and religious piety attracted many local converts.

**Gradual Acceptance of Islam:** Islam was not imposed. Instead, it was introduced through trusted relationships, consistent ethical behaviour, and demonstration of spiritual discipline. The Chiefs adopted Islam to enhance prestige, establish political ties, and gain access to international trade networks. Arabic literacy allowed better recordkeeping and law enforcement.

### Role of Scholars and Islamic Kingdoms

**Timbuktu as a Learning Centre:** This was known globally for its Islamic universities and manuscripts, especially the Sankore University. It hosted thousands of books on theology, science, medicine, law, and astronomy. Scholars from across Africa and the Islamic world came to study and teach there. Education in Timbuktu was accessible to both men and women in some cases, and it became a beacon of intellectual life.

**Influence of Empires like Mali and Songhai:** Mansa Musa's famous Hajj in 1324 CE drew international attention to West Africa. He built mosques and schools across Mali. Songhai under Askia Muhammad established a legal system based on Sharia, appointed Islamic judges (qadis), and created educational structures that formalised Islamic learning.

**Clerics and Missionaries:** Clerics (mallams, sheikhs, imams) were central in promoting Islamic education and spiritual leadership. They used storytelling, oral poetry, community preaching, and peaceful persuasion. They also helped mediate conflicts and were respected for their moral authority.

## Introduction of Islam to Ghana

**Entry Through Northern Trading Towns:** Islam entered Ghana through commercial towns like Salaga, Wa, Yendi, and Tamale, where Muslim merchants, clerics, and travellers settled. These towns served as regional centres for commerce and culture.

**Wangara Muslims as Teachers and Traders:** Played dual roles—economic and religious. They brought Arabic books and Islamic knowledge from Mali and Niger. Their peaceful conduct earned them respect, which helped Islam thrive.

**Mosques and Qur'anic Schools:** Built mosques and makaranta (Islamic schools) where children were taught reading, writing, Qur'anic memorisation, and Islamic ethics. Larabanga Mosque in northern Ghana is a famous surviving structure and symbol of early **Islamic settlement**. Local Example: The role of the Zongo communities in Ghana today reflects the legacy of early Islamic settlements.

## Cultural, Educational, and Economic Impact

1. **Cultural Influence:** Islam influenced clothing styles (e.g., jalabiya, hijab), naming practices (e.g., Amina, Ali), and greetings (e.g., salaam alaikum). Islamic festivals such as Eid ul-Fitr and Eid ul-Adha were widely celebrated. Islamic moral teachings supported existing values such as honesty, respect, and community service. Architecture: Sudanese styles of mosque building using mud and timber were introduced.
2. **Educational Impact:** Makaranta schools promoted Arabic literacy and Qur'anic education long before colonial schooling. Islamic education nurtured scholars, poets, legal experts, and historians. Emphasis on oral communication and memory skills enriched intellectual development. Enabled recordkeeping and integration into the wider Islamic knowledge economy.
3. **Economic Influence:** Improved commercial relations with Muslim traders from North and West Africa. Islamic principles encouraged honesty, trustworthiness, and fulfilment of contracts. Business transactions became more structured and efficient. Zakat (charity) promoted wealth redistribution and social responsibility.

## Why This Matters

1. **Builds Historical Understanding:** Learning how Islam spread into Ghana helps us to connect Ghana's history with global Islamic civilisation. Shows Ghana's active participation in international trade, education, and religion centuries ago.

2. **Promotes Religious Tolerance and Respect:** Understanding Islam's peaceful spread helps learners value tolerance and cooperation. Highlights the role of dialogue and mutual respect in building inclusive communities.
3. **Connects Past to Present:** Islam's contributions to education, trade, and community values still influence Ghanaian society today. Encourages us to recognise continuity between past legacies and present realities.

### Activity 2.25 How Islam Spread

1. Form a group with 4 of your classmates and do the following tasks.
  - a. Use a map of West Africa to trace Islam's spread from Makkah to North Africa across the Sahara into Mali and Songhai to present Ghana.
  - b. Identify key cities (e.g., Timbuktu, Gao, Salaga).
  - c. Create a wall map or digital slide showing routes and traders.
2. Present and explain your group's work to the class.

### Activity 2.26 Why Did They Come?

1. Reflect on the question: "Why would someone leave their land to settle in Ghana?"
2. In pairs, discuss these points:
  - a. Spiritual and economic reasons led Muslim traders to migrate.
  - b. Why they stayed in Ghana.
  - c. How their presence influenced local people.
3. Share key points with the class in a group circle.

### Activity 2.27 Voices from the Past

1. Your teacher will read an Islamic historian, a local elder, imam or scholar to reveal the time-honoured oral/scholarly traditions that explore the origins of Islam in Ghana. Listen carefully to stories about how Islam came to your area. Ask thoughtful questions.
2. In your journal, reflect on:
  - a. What did you find surprising or inspiring?
  - b. What the story teaches about religious history.

### Activity 2.28 Timeline of Islamic Growth

Before this activity, your teacher would have introduced Mansa Musa and other key figures.

1. Based on the knowledge acquired;
  - a. Create a historical timeline or annotated map.
  - b. Include key events like the Hijrah, Mansa Musa's Hajj, trade routes/the rise of Salaga.
2. Present your findings or maps to the class and answer class questions. Focus on Islam's spread as both a religious and cultural phenomenon.

### Activity 2.29 Discovering Islam

1. Your teacher will set up stations with brief texts on the following topics.
  - a. Islam in North Africa
  - b. Islam in the Ghana Empire
  - c. Islam in the Mali Empire
  - d. Islam in the Songhai Empire
  - e. Islam in present-day Ghana
2. Rotate in groups, reading the information and answering the questions provided at each station. Write a summary: *“How did Islam grow and influence Ghana?”*

## THE INFLUENCE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF ISLAM IN GHANA

### Understanding Islam's Role in Ghanaian Society

This lesson helps you to explore how Islam shaped the religious, cultural, and social development of Ghana from its introduction to the present day. It examines the interaction between Islam and African Indigenous Religion (AIR), showing how both systems influenced each other in areas such as belief, moral conduct, rituals, and community leadership. The lesson also highlights Islam's contributions to education, trade, values, and interfaith relations, helping you to appreciate Islam as a force for peace, knowledge, and moral discipline in Ghana.

### Key Aspects of Islam's Influence and Contributions

#### Influence on African Indigenous Religion (AIR)

Islam did not entirely replace AIR upon its arrival but gradually influenced several aspects of it.

- Belief in One God (Tawheed):** Islam's concept of monotheism introduced new ways of understanding the divine, moving many from a belief in multiple spiritual forces to a singular, supreme God (Allah). Over time, communities began incorporating references to Allah in traditional prayers or recognised Him as superior among spiritual beings.
- Forms of Worship:** While AIR involved libation and ancestral reverence, Islam emphasised structured daily prayers (salah), ritual purification (wudu), and the use of mosques. These practices introduced discipline and regularity into spiritual life.
- Dietary Laws and Cleanliness:** Islamic influence led to the avoidance of forbidden foods like pork and alcohol and encouraged personal and communal hygiene, which affected food preparation and public health habits.
- Moral Standards:** Islamic values such as honesty, respect for others, chastity, and responsibility reshaped ethical behaviour. Taboos and ancestral fear began to be replaced by concepts of divine accountability in the afterlife.

**Note:** These influences did not erase AIR overnight but introduced reformative patterns that were adopted gradually by communities open to Islam. Islam helped reframe traditional understandings in ways that still respected indigenous heritage.

## Adaptation and Syncretism

As Islam spread, many communities adopted it in ways that blended Islamic and traditional customs.

- Dress Codes:** Islamic teachings on modesty influenced local dress, particularly for women. Veils and headscarves became common, even in communities where full Islamic practice was limited.
- Festivals and Ceremonies:** Many AIR festivals, such as Homowo and Bugum Chugu began incorporating Islamic elements like Qur'an recitation, opening prayers, or the presence of Muslim elders.
- Naming and Leadership:** It became common for children to be given Islamic names such as Amina, Issah, or Abubakar alongside their indigenous names. Some community leaders doubled as spiritual guides, blending AIR authority with Islamic learning.
- Rites of Passage:** Ceremonies for naming, initiation, or marriage began to reflect a fusion of AIR rituals and Islamic supplications or blessings.

This syncretism helped Islam take root without severe cultural disruption. It showed flexibility in practice while still promoting Islamic core values. The ability to adapt made Islam more acceptable and relatable in various cultural settings.

## Peaceful Coexistence of Islam and AIR

In many parts of Ghana, especially in the north, Islam and AIR have coexisted for centuries with little conflict.

- Mutual Respect:** Extended families often included Muslims and AIR practitioners living peacefully under one roof. The emphasis was on communal values, not religious division.
- Cultural Sharing:** Weddings, funerals, and festivals were shared events where both Muslim and AIR rites could be observed side by side.
- Shared Morality:** Both traditions valued honesty, hospitality, care for the elderly, respect for nature, and the importance of community welfare. These shared values made cooperation and harmony possible.

4. *Local Mediation*: In villages and towns, disputes were sometimes resolved through both Islamic and traditional means, showing tolerance and mutual trust in diverse worldviews.

## Contributions of Islam to Ghana's Development

Islam has made lasting contributions to many areas of Ghanaian life:

1. **Education**
  - a. *Makaranta Schools*: From early times, Muslim communities established Qur'anic schools where children learned Arabic, Islamic ethics, and basic literacy long before formal Western education reached their areas.
  - b. *Literacy in Arabic*: These schools promoted the learning of Arabic, which helped learners read and memorise the Qur'an. Literacy became a tool for social mobility, spiritual growth, and community leadership.
  - c. *Higher Learning*: Students from Ghana travelled to historic learning centres such as Timbuktu (Mali), Al-Azhar (Egypt), and Sokoto (Nigeria), returning as learned scholars who contributed to national religious leadership and reform movements.
2. **Commerce and Economic Activity**
  - a. *Trade Expansion*: Muslim merchants contributed to regional trade routes linking Ghana to markets in Mali, Nigeria, and beyond. They traded in kola nuts, textiles, gold, salt, and livestock.
  - b. *Business Ethics*: Islam encourages honesty, fairness, and trust. Muslim traders earned reputations as honest dealers and were often called upon to resolve business disputes.
  - c. *Market Culture*: Muslims played roles in organising market days, maintaining trade discipline, and introducing the use of weighing scales and standardised units of trade.
3. **Moral and Ethical Values**
  - a. *Personal Conduct*: Core Islamic principles such as truthfulness, humility, and responsibility positively influenced daily behaviours and decision-making.
  - b. *Family Life*: Islam promotes family cohesion through structured responsibilities, mutual care, and respect for elders and parents. This strengthened family and community bonds.
  - c. *Community Welfare*: Zakat (charitable giving) and sadaqah (voluntary charity) encouraged care for the poor and sick, creating safety nets that supported the vulnerable in society.
4. **Peacebuilding and Interfaith Relations**
  - a. *Conflict Mediation*: Imams, mallams, and Muslim elders were often trusted mediators during disputes involving land, marriage, or tribal matters.
  - b. *National Dialogue*: Prominent Muslim figures have participated in Ghana's National Peace Council and other interfaith platforms to promote religious harmony.
  - c. *Moral Voice*: Islamic organisations regularly speak against corruption, domestic violence, and moral decay in public life, urging government and society to uphold justice.

## Why This Matters

1. Promotes National Unity and Understanding: Learning about how Islam coexisted with AIR promotes respect for Ghana's diverse religious background. It teaches us that differences in belief do not have to cause division but can foster mutual respect.
2. Highlights Religion's Role in Development: Islam helped build educational systems, moral standards, and peaceful communities. Understanding this helps us appreciate the role of religion in shaping society, both historically and today.
3. Encourages Respect for Religious Contributions: Islam's integration into Ghanaian society reflects religious flexibility, adaptation, and contribution. Learning this history reduces prejudice and builds appreciation for religious and cultural diversity.

### Activity 2.30 Islam's Impact on Religion

1. Think about religious practices you've seen in your community.
2. In a small group, you will form with 3 classmates:
  - a. Discuss: *"What changes did Islam bring to traditional religion in Ghana?"*
  - b. Explore how beliefs, moral teachings, education, and conflict resolution were affected.
  - c. These points should guide you through your discussion

**Step 1: Define key concepts** by establishing a clear understanding of both AIR in Ghana and Islam

**Step 2: Research and categorise changes** - structure historical interactions across the four focus areas: beliefs, moral teachings, education, and conflict resolution.

**Step 3: Critically evaluate the research**, contrasting traditional practices with Islamic ones and identifying instances of syncretism, replacement, and parallel structures.

**Step 4: Conclude by summarising the overall nature of the change**, determining whether the impact resulted in fundamental transformation, harmonious coexistence, or parallel religious structures.

3. Share your views with the class.

### Activity 2.31 Understanding Islam's Impact on the Community

#### Group Research and Interview Preparation

1. Form a group with a few classmates (or get back into your groups from previous activities) and select one of the following areas. This will be your **Focus Area**.

Group No.	Focus Area	Key Topic to Investigate
<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Beliefs &amp; Worship</b>	Changes and blending (syncretism) between Islamic and African Indigenous Religion (AIR) practices.
<b>Group 2</b>	<b>Education</b>	The role of Islamic schools (Makaranta) and Arabic literacy in the community.
<b>Group 3</b>	<b>Commerce</b>	Muslim contributions to local trade and the economy.
<b>Group 4</b>	<b>Moral Values</b>	How Islam influences community discipline, honesty, and charity (Zakat).
<b>Group 5</b>	<b>Interfaith Relations</b>	Examples of peaceful coexistence and cooperation with other religious groups.

2. Spend some time researching how Islam generally influenced your assigned **focal area** in West Africa/Ghana.
3. With your teacher's help, prepare **3-5 specific questions** to ask a local Muslim leader (Imam, religious elder, or Makaranta teacher) that relate to your group's **focal area**.

*Tip: Remember to ask about how Islam shaped their community and specific examples of cultural blending.*

### The Interview and Analysis

4. As a group, arrange and conduct an interview with a chosen local Muslim leader. Use the questions you prepared to gather firsthand information about Islam's impact on your **Focal Area**.

**Note:** Ensure you record the responses accurately.

5. Compare what you learned from your **initial research** (point 2) with what you learned from the **interview** (point 4).

### Presentation and Key Lessons

1. Prepare a visual and engaging way to present your group's overall findings. You can choose to use a:
  - Poster**
  - Role Play** (e.g., acting out a situation related to your focus area)
  - Mini Presentation** (e.g., using slides or large notes)
2. Present your findings to the rest of the class.
3. After all groups have presented, discuss as a class or in your groups and identify **three (3) key lessons** you learned about Islam's overall influence on the community and how these lessons link to wider understanding (e.g., social unity, economic development, or tolerance).

## Activity 2.32 Drawing Religious Influence

1. Individually or with a partner, draw two maps and connect them. Each map to be connected has a focus.
  - a. Map 1: "Islam's Influence on AIR" – show retained, replaced, blended practices.
  - b. Map 2: "Islam's contributions to Ghana" – branch into education, commerce, values and peace.
2. Share and explain your maps to the class.

## EXTENDED READING

- **Nawawi's 40 Hadith (with commentary by Jamaal Zarabozo)**  
Offers key insights into Islamic principles and ethics relevant to the Prophet's mission, leadership, and early Muslim values. <https://sunnah.com/nawawi40>
- **Islam in Africa South of the Sahara – Encyclopaedia of Islam**  
Scholarly overview of Islam's expansion into sub-Saharan Africa, with case studies on Ghana and West Africa. Supports Weeks 9–11.  
<https://referenceworks.brillonline.com> (Search for "Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa" within Encyclopaedia of Islam)
- **Al-Azhar Digital Library**  
Access classical Islamic texts, Arabic manuscripts, and historical documents from Africa's oldest university. Useful for Weeks 8–11.  
<https://azhar.eg/library>

# REVIEW QUESTIONS 2

## Multiple Choice Questions

1. The period before Islam in Arabia is known as:
  - A. Hijrah
  - B. Jahiliyyah
  - C. Khilafah
  - D. Ummah
2. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was born in the year:
  - A. 570 CE
  - B. 610 CE
  - C. 622 CE
  - D. 632 CE
3. The first revelation was received in:
  - A. Cave Thawr
  - B. Cave Hira
  - C. The Kaaba
  - D. Madinah
4. The first female martyr in Islam was:
  - A. Khadijah
  - B. Aisha
  - C. Sumayyah bint Khayyat
  - D. Fatimah
5. Prophet Muhammad's death, the first Caliph was:
  - A. Umar ibn alKhattab
  - B. Uthman ibn Affan
  - C. Abu Bakr asSiddiq
  - D. Ali ibn Abi Talib
6. The title given to Muhammad (SAW) before his prophethood was:
  - A. AlMustafa
  - B. AlAmin
  - C. ArRasul
  - D. AnNabi
7. The harsh desert climate of Arabia influenced the people to become:
  - A. Farmers only

- B. Nomadic herders and traders
- C. City dwellers only
- D. Fishermen

**8.** Muhammad's early experiences as an orphan helped him develop:

- A. Business skills only
- B. Compassion and understanding of social justice
- C. Military leadership
- D. Political ambitions

**9.** The Hijrah was significant because it:

- A. Ended all persecution
- B. Marked the beginning of the Islamic calendar and Muslim state
- C. Converted all Arabs to Islam
- D. Established trade routes

**10.** The migration to Abyssinia demonstrated:

- A. Military weakness
- B. Islamic values of seeking justice and protection
- C. Desire to spread Islam by force
- D. Fear of all opposition

**11.** Abu Bakr's speech after the Prophet's death helped to:

- A. Elect the next Prophet
- B. Calm the community and maintain unity
- C. Declare war on enemies
- D. Establish new laws

**12.** In traditional Ghanaian societies, religion was:

- A. Separated from daily life
- B. Integrated into all aspects of life
- C. Only for special occasions
- D. Limited to certain people

**13.** Islam spread to Ghana primarily through:

- A. Military conquest
- B. Peaceful trade and missionary work
- C. Political pressure
- D. Cultural imposition

**14.** Makaranta schools contributed to Ghana's development by:

- A. Teaching only Arabic
- B. Promoting literacy and Islamic education
- C. Replacing all other schools

D. Teaching only religious subjects

**15.** The main reason the Quraysh opposed Islam was because it:

- A. Was a foreign religion
- B. Threatened their religious, political and economic interests
- C. Was too difficult to understand
- D. Required too much prayer

**16.** The persecution of early Muslims ultimately:

- A. Weakened their faith
- B. Strengthened their unity and commitment
- C. Made them abandon Islam
- D. Led to immediate military victory

**17.** The concept of Shura in early Islamic leadership refers to:

- A. Military command
- B. Consultation and collective decision making
- C. Individual rule
- D. religious ritual

**18.** The Trans Saharan trade was effective in spreading Islam because:

- A. It was the only trade route
- B. It allowed peaceful interaction and cultural exchange
- C. It was controlled by Arabs only
- D. It forced conversion

**19.** The coexistence of Islam and AIR in Ghana demonstrates:

- A. religious conflict
- B. The adaptability and peaceful nature of both traditions
- C. The superiority of one religion
- D. The need for separation

**20.** Which factor was MOST important in preparing Pre-Islamic Arabia for Islam?

- A. The geographical location only
- B. The combination of social problems and spiritual needs
- C. The economic prosperity
- D. The political stability

## Essay Questions

1. List and briefly describe the main geographical features of Pre-Islamic Arabia and their effects on the people's lifestyle.
2. Describe the early life events of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) from birth to marriage with Khadijah.
3. Outline the key events in the Prophet's mission from the first revelation to the Hijrah.
4. Name and describe the roles of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs in chronological order.
5. Identify the main characteristics of African Indigenous Religion in pre-Islamic Ghana.
6. Explain how the conditions in Pre-Islamic Arabia prepared the region for the message of Islam.
7. Describe the various forms of persecution faced by early Muslims in Makkah and their responses.
8. Explain the significance of the Constitution of Madinah in establishing the Muslim community.
9. Describe how Islam spread from North Africa to Ghana through trade and scholarship.
10. Explain the contributions of Islam to Ghana's development in education and commerce.
11. (SEN Adapted) Explain why Abu Bakr's speech was important after the Prophet died. Use simple examples.
12. Analyse the character traits demonstrated by early Muslims under persecution, using specific examples from figures like Bilal and Sumayyah.
13. Compare the Prophet's role and challenges in Makkah with his role and achievements in Madinah.
14. Analyse the interaction between Islam and African Indigenous Religion in Ghana, discussing areas of harmony and influence.
15. Evaluate the significance of the Hijrah in Islamic history and its impact on the development of Islamic civilisation.
16. Assess how the principles of Shura established after the Prophet's death can be applied to modern leadership and governance.

## Fill in the blanks

1. The period before Islam in Arabia is called \_\_\_\_\_, which means "ignorance."
2. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was born in the city of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The migration of Muslims from Makkah to Madinah is called the \_\_\_\_\_.

4. The \_\_\_\_\_ trade routes helped spread Islam to West Africa through peaceful \_\_\_\_\_ and cultural exchange.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ traders were the main groups who introduced Islam to Ghana.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ schools contributed to literacy and Islamic education in Ghana.
7. (SEN Adapted) Abu Bakr gave a famous \_\_\_\_\_ after the Prophet died to keep Muslims together. (Word bank: speech, prayer, battle)
8. The Quraysh opposed Islam because it threatened their \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ interests.
9. Early Muslims showed \_\_\_\_\_ (patience) and \_\_\_\_\_ (trust in Allah) when facing persecution.
10. The coexistence of Islam and AIR in Ghana shows both religions' \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ nature.

### **Short answer questions**

1. List three economic activities that Arabs engaged in before Islam.
2. Name three companions of the Prophet who showed courage during persecution.
3. Identify three ways Islam influenced traditional Ghanaian practices.
4. Explain why the Quraysh tribe opposed the message of Islam in Makkah.
5. Describe how Abu Bakr's speech helped maintain unity after the Prophet's death.
6. Explain the significance of the title "AlAmin" for Muhammad's later prophetic mission.
7. (SEN Adapted) How did Islamic education through Makaranta schools help Ghana? Give three simple ways.
8. Analyse how the persecution of early Muslims ultimately strengthened the Islamic community.
9. Compare the challenges faced by Muslims in Makkah versus those in Madinah.
10. Evaluate what factors made trade an effective means of spreading Islam to West Africa.

SECTION

3

## ISLAMIC SACRED TEXTS



# RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, PRACTICES, MORAL VALUES AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

## Islamic Sacred Texts

### INTRODUCTION

This section provides an in-depth exploration of Islamic sacred texts, focusing particularly on the Qur'an and Hadith. Learners will investigate the process by which the Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) over 23 years, and how it was meticulously preserved through memorisation and written records. The section will outline the differences between the Qur'an and Hadith, highlighting the Qur'an as the direct word of Allah and the Hadith as the sayings and actions of the Prophet (SAW) that clarify and expand upon Qur'anic teachings. Additionally, the importance of both texts in shaping Islamic beliefs, moral values, daily practices, and law will be examined. By the end of this section, learners will be able to explain the methods of preservation of the Qur'an, distinguish between the roles of the Qur'an and Hadith, and appreciate their ongoing significance in guiding Muslim life and ethical conduct.

#### KEY IDEAS

- **Compilation of the Qur'an:** The Qur'an was preserved and compiled through careful memorisation and writing during the Prophet's time and later standardised under Caliph Uthman for unity and accuracy.
- **Difference between Qur'an and Hadith:** The Qur'an is the direct word of Allah, while Hadith contains the sayings, actions, and approvals of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that explain Islamic teachings.
- **Functions of the Hadith:** Hadith supports, explains, and provides details for the application of Qur'anic teachings in everyday life.
- **Importance of the Qur'an:** The Qur'an serves as the final revelation from Allah, providing guidance for belief, worship, morality, and social conduct.
- **Relevance of Hadith today:** Hadith remains essential in Islamic law, daily rituals, ethics, and how Muslims follow the Prophet's example.
- **Selected texts and messages:** Qur'anic and Hadith passages teach key values such as faith in Allah, honesty, responsibility, and good behaviour towards others.

### REVELATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE QUR'AN

The Qur'an is the final divine book revealed to humankind through Prophet Muhammad (SAW). It guides Muslims in all aspects of life. But how did this great book come to us? How was it revealed, recorded, and protected from any form of change?

In this section, we will explore how the Qur'an was revealed gradually over 23 years, often in response to real-life situations and questions. You will learn how the companions of the Prophet (SAW) memorised, wrote, and preserved the Qur'an during and after his lifetime.

Understanding this process will help you appreciate the authenticity, purity, and importance of the Qur'an in the lives of Muslims. It also teaches us valuable lessons about record-keeping, trustworthiness, teamwork, and dedication to a noble cause.

## The Prophet's Time in the Cave

Before receiving any revelation, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) used to go to a place called Cave Hira near Makkah. He spent many nights there thinking deeply about life and worshipping Allah.

1. The First Revelation: At the age of 40, Angel Jibril (Gabriel) came to him in the cave. The first verses revealed were from Surah Al-Alaq (Chapter 96:1–5). The angel said: “Read!” (Iqra). The Prophet replied that he could not read. The angel repeated the message, teaching the Prophet that Allah created man and gave him knowledge.
2. Reaction to the Revelation: The Prophet felt afraid and confused at first. He returned home to his wife Khadijah (RA), who comforted and supported him. She took him to a wise man named Waraqah ibn Nawfal, who confirmed that he had received a message from Allah.
3. Meaning and Impact of the First Revelation: The word “Iqra” means Read! This shows the importance of learning and knowledge in Islam. These first verses marked the beginning of Prophethood for Muhammad (SAW). He now had the duty to share Allah's message with people.
4. Gradual Revelation Over 23 Years: The Qur'an was not sent all at once. It was revealed bit by bit over 23 years to guide people in different situations. This helped the Prophet and his followers deal with real-life events, such as:
  - a. Battles
  - b. Peace treaties
  - c. Migration (Hijrah)
  - d. Community issues

For example, from the Qur'an, Surah Al-Isra (17:106):

*“We have sent the Qur'an in stages so that you may recite it to the people at intervals.”*

## How the Qur'an Was Preserved

The Prophet **memorised** each new verse and recited it to his **companions**. Some companions also **memorised** the verses. Others **wrote** them down on materials like leaves, bones, and leather.

## After the Prophet's Death

Under the leadership of Caliph Abu Bakr (RA) and later Caliph Uthman (RA), the verses were gathered into a single book called the **Mushaf**. This was done carefully by people who had memorised or written down the verses during the Prophet's life.

Aspect	Details
First Revelation	Surah Al-Alaq (96:1–5) in Cave Hira through Angel Jibril
Prophet's Age	40 years old
Key Word in Revelation	“Iqra” – Read!
Duration of Revelation	23 years
Reasons for Gradual Revelation	To guide the people through changing events and build their faith
Preservation Method	Through memorisation and writing by companions
Final Compilation	Completed under Caliphs Abu Bakr and Uthman into the Mushaf

## THE REVELATION & COMPILATION OF THE HOLY QUR’AN



### Activity 3.1 Experiencing the Revelation

1. In your groups, take on the following roles:
  - Narrator** – tells the story of what happened in each scene.
  - Jibril (Angel Gabriel)** – symbolically speaks the message.
  - Khadijah** – responds with care and support.

No one should act as the Prophet (SAW). His actions and words will only be described by the narrator.
2. Rehearse and present these scenes:

**Scene 1:** The Prophet (SAW) is alone in Cave Hira – the narrator describes the moment.

**Scene 2:** Jibril appears and gives the first message – “Read!” (Iqra).

**Scene 3:** The Prophet (SAW) returns home in fear – Khadijah comforts him with kind words.

3. Use soft gestures, voice, and simple props to help your group bring each scene to life respectfully.

### Activity 3.2 Revelation Timeline

1. Prepare a list of events from 610 CE to 632 CE.
2. In small groups, create a timeline including:
  - a. First Revelation
  - b. Migration to Madinah
  - c. Battle of Badr
  - d. Battle of Uhud
  - e. Conquest of Makkah
  - f. Prophet’s farewell sermon
  - g. Completion of the Qur’ān
3. Present your group’s timeline and explain how each event influenced the revelation of the Qur’ān (i.e. how the Qur’ān responded to each event). How did the event guide the Muslim community?

### Activity 3.3 Why Revealed in Parts?

1. Think about books or messages you received in parts.
  - a. Discuss in pairs: “Why didn’t Allah reveal the Qur’ān all at once?”
  - b. Share in class and record reasons on the board (e.g., ease of understanding, responding to events).
  - c. Discuss: “How was the Qur’ān preserved before being written?”
2. In your journal, write one lesson you learnt from the way the Qur’ān was revealed.

## COMPIILATION AND STANDARDISATION OF THE QUR’ĀN

The Qur’ān is the central religious text of Islam and a source of guidance for Muslims worldwide. After the Prophet Muhammad’s (SAW) death, it became necessary to preserve the Qur’ān in a fixed form to prevent loss, misinterpretation, and disunity among Muslims. This lesson explores the historical process of how the Qur’ān was compiled and standardised by the early caliphs, focusing on the efforts of Abu Bakr and Uthman (RA).

You will investigate the circumstances that led to the formal collection of the Qur'an—particularly after the loss of many memorisers in battle—and examine the wisdom behind Uthman's decision to establish a standard version. This lesson highlights the key personalities involved in this process, such as Zayd ibn Thabit, and explains how these decisions protected the integrity and authenticity of the Qur'an. Through this study, you will better appreciate how the preservation of the Qur'an contributes to the unity, stability and continuity of the Muslim ummah.

## Key Stages of the Compilation

- Compilation During the Prophet's Lifetime:** During the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) lifetime, the verses of the Qur'an were revealed in stages and written down on various materials such as bones, leaves, leather, and stones. Many companions also memorised the Qur'an, and their role was vital to the preservation of the revelation. However, there was no complete and officially compiled written Qur'an as a single book before the Prophet's death.
- Compilation under Caliph Abu Bakr:** After the Battle of Yamama, where many *huffaz* (memorisers of the Qur'an) were killed, there was fear that parts of the Qur'an might be lost. Umar ibn al-Khattab suggested to Caliph Abu Bakr that the Qur'an should be compiled in written form. Abu Bakr entrusted Zayd ibn Thabit with the task of collecting verses from both memorisers and written fragments. This compiled collection was kept first with Abu Bakr, then passed on to Umar, and later to Hafsa bint Umar, the daughter of Umar and a wife of the Prophet (SAW).
- Need for Standardisation under Caliph Uthman:** As Islam spread to non-Arabic speaking regions, differences in recitation and dialect led to confusion and disagreements among Muslims. Caliph Uthman, noticing the danger of disunity, commissioned a committee, again led by Zayd ibn Thabit, to produce an official, standardised version of the Qur'an in the Qurayshi dialect—the dialect of the Prophet (SAW). Several standard copies (Mushaf) were made and distributed to major Islamic cities. Other versions or dialects were ordered to be destroyed to prevent confusion.
- Impact of Uthman's Standardisation:** The Qur'an was preserved in a single, unified form, which has remained unchanged to this day. It protected the Muslim community from sectarianism and disputes over the text or method of recitation. It made memorisation and recitation easier and consistent across the Muslim world, helping to preserve the Qur'an through generations. This action was a significant step towards maintaining Islamic identity and unity.

### Activity 3.4 Qur'an Compilation Timeline

- Review the key stages in Qur'anic preservation.
- In a group you form with 3 classmates, build a timeline, including the following:
  - Revelation during the Prophet's life
  - Abu Bakr's compilation (led by Zayd ibn Thabit)

- c. Copy preserved with Hafsah
- d. Uthman's standardisation and distribution of copies

3. Add key dates and names. Discuss how each stage preserved the Qur'an's authenticity.

### Activity 3.5 Qur'anic Preservation Debate

1. Read about the Prophet's method of preserving verses.
2. Discuss the following questions with a few classmates.
  - a. "Why didn't the Prophet compile the Qur'an into one book?"
  - b. "What problems could arise if Uthman hadn't acted?"
  - c. "How did the spread of Islam influence the standardisation of the Qur'an?"
3. Reflect on how this discussion builds trust in the Qur'an's current form.

### Activity 3.6 Two Paths, One Qur'an

1. Your teacher will assign you to Group A or B.
  - a. Group A researches Abu Bakr's compilation process
  - b. Group B researches Uthman's standardisation project
2. Prepare a poster with the following information included.
  - a. Who led the effort?
  - b. Why it was needed.
  - c. How it was done.
  - d. What the outcomes were.
3. Present and compare processes as a class.

### Activity 3.7 Tracing Through Hadith

Your teacher will share *hadith* excerpts by Zayd ibn Thabit or other companions. Read in groups and respond to the questions below.

1. What challenges did Zayd face?
2. How did Uthman build a consensus for standardisation?
3. What values do these companions teach us (e.g., trust, precision, unity)? Write 3–5 sentences on what you admire most from these preservation efforts.

## EMERGENCE OF HADITH AS ISLAMIC SACRED TEXT

The Hadith plays a vital role in understanding Islam. It refers to the sayings, actions, and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), which explain and show how to practise what is taught in the Qur'an. In the early days of Islam, these Hadiths were passed on orally. The Prophet's companions (Sahabah) closely observed his behaviour and teachings and passed them on to others. These reports helped Muslims to learn how to live a good Islamic life by following the Prophet's example (Sunnah).

At first, Muslims were careful not to write down the Hadith. They feared it might be confused with the Qur'an. Because of this, Hadiths were mostly memorised and passed on through trusted people. However, as Islam spread and the number of people who knew the Prophet personally became fewer, scholars saw the need to collect and write down the Hadiths. This led to the development of systems to check which Hadiths were trustworthy and which were not.

Over time, Hadith became one of the most important sources of Islamic knowledge, law, and everyday practice—alongside the Qur'an. Special scholars, known as Muhaddithun, worked hard to collect, study, and classify Hadiths. Today, Hadith is used by Muslims all over the world to understand their religion better, follow the Prophet's example.

### How Hadith Came to be Recognised as a Sacred Islamic Text

- 1. The Prophet as Teacher and Role Model:** The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) not only delivered the message of the Qur'an; he also lived it out clearly for his companions to see. His actions, speech, and decisions provided practical examples of how to follow Islam in daily life. The Sahabah learned by observing him during prayer, conflict resolution, kindness to others, family life, leadership, and how he treated all people with fairness.
- 2. Early Oral Transmission and Reluctance to Document:** During the Prophet's lifetime, Hadiths were not recorded in writing on a large scale. Muslims were afraid that writing down Hadiths might cause confusion with the Qur'an, which was being revealed and recorded at the same time. Instead, the Hadiths were memorised and shared through trusted individuals who had heard or witnessed the Prophet's actions. Strong memory and honesty were very important for anyone who passed on a Hadith.
- 3. Efforts by Companions to Preserve Hadith:** Many companions made great efforts to remember and share the Prophet's sayings and actions.
  - Abu Hurairah** is known for memorising and narrating the most Hadiths.
  - Aisha (RA)**, the Prophet's wife, also narrated many Hadiths, especially those related to his personal life.
  - Some companions, like **Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As**, even took notes with the Prophet's permission.
- 4. Emergence of Compilation in 2nd and 3rd Centuries AH:** After the Prophet's death, Islam spread to many lands, and generations changed. This created a need to protect the true Hadiths from false ones. Scholars began travelling to gather Hadiths and developed strict methods to check whether a Hadith was authentic. They checked the Isnad (chain of narrators) and the Matn (content). Well-known compilers like Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim, and others carefully selected Hadiths based on strict

rules. Hadiths were classified into types such as Sahih (authentic), **Hasan** (good), and **Da'if** (weak).

5. **Recognition of Hadith as a Sacred Text:** Over time, Hadith was recognised as a sacred source of Islamic guidance, second only to the Qur'an. It became essential in Islamic law (**Shariah**) and in understanding the Qur'an's meanings. Hadith explains verses in the Qur'an, adds more details on Islamic laws (e.g. prayer, fasting), and provides moral teachings. Today, the Hadith helps Muslims know what the Prophet approved or disapproved of, shaping their actions and beliefs.

### Activity 3.8 Journey of Hadith

1. Listen as your teacher narrates the history of Hadith preservation.
  - a. Hear about companions like Abu Hurairah who memorised Hadith.
  - b. Learn about Imam Bukhari and his travels to gather Hadith.
2. In small groups, retell key parts of the story. As you are discussing, reflect on the following: "Why was Hadith so important to these people?"

### Activity 3.9 Hadith Timeline

1. Prepare to build a visual timeline.

**Work in your group from Activity 3.4 to create a timeline from:**

- a. Prophet's time (oral preservation)
- b. Caliph Umar's era (wider use)
- c. 2nd and 3rd century (formal compilation)

Include names of key scholars and events.

2. Present your timeline to the class and explain each stage.

### Activity 3.10 Hadith Detective

1. Your teacher will help you form groups of not more than 4 members. Each group will be assigned a question.
  - a. Group 1: Why wasn't Hadith written down early?
  - b. Group 2: What made scholars start compiling Hadith later?
  - c. Group 3: What rules helped identify authentic Hadith?
2. Present findings using posters or charts.
3. Groups give short presentations and answer peer questions.

### Activity 3.11 Understanding Hadith Through Dialogue

1. Talk for Learning – Class Dialogue / Guided Discussion
2. Think about how Hadith affects Muslim life.
3. Discuss the following questions with a partner.
  - a. "What makes a Hadith reliable?"
  - b. "Why is Hadith different from the Qur'an?"
  - c. "How does Hadith influence daily practice?"
4. Share insights with the class.
5. Write 3 sentences explaining why the Hadith would be important in the life of a Muslim.

You may write from your own experience or ask someone to share their ideas and feelings with you.

## COMPOSITION OF HADITH AS ISLAMIC SACRED TEXT

The Hadith literature forms a central pillar in Islam, standing as the second most authoritative source of knowledge after the Qur'an. It consists of the sayings, actions, and approvals of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and plays a critical role in explaining Qur'anic verses, shaping Islamic practices, and guiding personal behaviour. However, because the Hadith was largely transmitted orally before being compiled into written collections, scholars developed rigorous methods to verify their authenticity.

At the heart of this scholarly effort is the analysis of two main components of a Hadith: the **Isnad** (chain of narrators) and the **Matn** (text or message). The **Isnad** traces the link between the Prophet and the people who passed on the narration, while the **Matn** is assessed for consistency with the Qur'an and rational meaning. Over time, classifications such as **Sahih** (authentic), **Hasan** (fair), and **Da'if** (weak) were used to evaluate the reliability of Hadith reports. This scientific approach led to the formation of reliable Hadith collections by scholars such as Imam Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, and others.

Understanding the structure and critical assessment of Hadith is not only an academic exercise; it shows how Islamic knowledge is preserved, refined, and protected through generations. It also helps you to appreciate the discipline and commitment of Muslim scholars in preserving the Prophet's legacy with accuracy and care.

### How the Hadith Was Put Together

1. **The Isnad (Chain of Narrators):** This is the list of people who transmitted the Hadith from one person to another until it reached the collector. Scholars examined each narrator's character, memory, and moral integrity. If even one narrator in the chain was found unreliable, the Hadith could be rejected.

2. **The Matn (Text of the Hadith):** This refers to the main message or wording of the Hadith. It is studied to check if the meaning is reasonable, consistent with the Qur'an, and free from contradiction or exaggeration.
3. **Classification of Hadiths:** Hadiths are grouped into different types based on the strength of their chain and text. A **Sahih** Hadith has a strong Isnad and a sound Matn. A **Hasan** Hadith is fair but may have a minor weakness, while a **Da'if** Hadith has serious flaws in its chain or content.
4. **Science of Jarh wa Ta'dil (Criticism and Praise):** This is a special science developed to assess the trustworthiness of narrators. Scholars would gather detailed biographical information about narrators to judge whether they were honest and precise.
5. **The Role of Muhaddithun (Hadith Scholars):** These scholars memorised thousands of Hadiths and used strict rules to compile authentic collections. Among the most respected are **Imam Bukhari**, who set the highest standards for Hadith acceptance, and **Imam Muslim**, who followed similar principles.

### Activity 3.12 Isnad & Matn Explorer

1. Review the meaning of 'chain of narrators'.
2. Create a concept map with two main branches: **Isnad** and **Matn**
  - a. For Isnad: continuity, narrator honesty, memory, reputation
  - b. For Matn: language consistency, message clarity, agreement with Qur'an

Include one example Hadith and trace its Isnad and analyse its Matn
3. Share your map with another pair and discuss differences.

### Activity 3.13 Hadith Lab

Your teacher will distribute two sample Hadiths.

1. Identify the Isnad and Matn
2. Assess whether each narrator is trustworthy (based on clues)
3. Judge whether the Matn makes sense and aligns with Islamic values
4. Write a few lines on whether you would classify the Hadith as **Şahîh**, **Hasan** or **Da'if** and why.

### Activity 3.14 Hadith Scholars in Action

1. Your teacher will help you put yourselves into 3 groups.
  - a. Group A: Research Imam Bukhari's selection criteria
  - b. Group B: Investigate Jarh wa Ta'dil (criticism and validation of narrators)
  - c. Group C: Find out how early scholars classified Hadith into **Şahîh**, **Da'if**, etc.

2. Create a brief report, infographics, posters or slides to present your findings.

### Activity 3.15 Hadith Matters

1. List the classifications of Ahadith.
2. Think about how a Hadith can be misused if not verified.
3. Discuss the questions below in your groups from Activity 3.14.
  - a. Why do we need both Isnad and Matn?
  - b. Why is the Isnad regarded as the lifeblood of Hadith?
  - c. How do we know a Hadith is authentic?
  - d. Can we accept a Hadith if the Matn is good but the Isnad is weak?
  - e. How does a weak Hadith affect beliefs or practices?
4. Share one group insight with the class
5. Write a journal entry on the importance of verifying religious knowledge.

## SELECTED QUR’AN AND HADITH TEXTS

In this lesson, you will study short Surahs (chapters) from the Qur'an and selected Hadiths that offer important teachings about morality and human behaviour. You will learn to read some of these texts in Arabic or transliteration and understand their meanings in English. These sacred texts contain messages that help us live with sincerity, compassion, honesty, and respect for others. By learning the meanings of these texts, you will also improve your ability to use them in prayer, reflection, and everyday decision-making.

The selected Suwar (chapters) from the Qur'an teach values such as gratitude, kindness, dignity, humility, and trust in Allah. For example, Surah Al-Fatihah guides us to ask for Allah's help and follow the right path, while Surah Al-Ikhlas reminds us of the oneness of Allah. Likewise, the Hadiths from the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), especially those from Imam An-Nawawi's collection, emphasise good intentions (niyyah), self-control, love for others, and acting responsibly. These teachings give clear guidance on how to relate with others peacefully and with respect.

As you reflect on the messages in these Suwar and Hadiths, you will begin to connect them to your own life and the lives of others in your community. This will help you to develop good character (akhlaq) and practise your religion in a way that benefits yourself and others. You will be encouraged to think critically about issues such as anger, materialism, slander, and selfishness, and to apply the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith to overcome such behaviours.

## Key Vocabulary

Arabic Term	Meaning in English	Relevance in Lesson
<b>Niyyah</b>	Intention	Reminds us that all actions in Islam depend on the sincerity of our purpose.
<b>Akhlaq</b>	Morals or character	Central to practising Islam with good behaviour towards Allah and people.
<b>Ihsan</b>	Excellence in conduct	Means to worship Allah as if you see Him, and act with the highest moral standard.
<b>Rahmah</b>	Compassion or mercy	A value shown in the Qur'an and Hadith in caring for others, especially the needy.
<b>Ghiba</b>	Backbiting	Forbidden act of speaking ill of someone behind their back; warned against in texts.
<b>Taqwa</b>	Piety or God-consciousness	Being aware of Allah in all you do; leads to righteous living and moral discipline.

## Some Selected Texts

### 1. Short Suwar from the Qur'an

These chapters are easy to memorise but full of meaning. You will study their Arabic wording or transliteration, then explore their themes:

- a. Surah Al-Fatiyah (1) – Teaches gratitude to Allah, guidance, and asking for help to stay on the right path.
- b. Surah Ad-Duhaa (93) – Shows how Allah comforts the Prophet; encourages hope and caring for orphans and the poor.
- c. Surah At-Tin (95) – Teaches that human beings are created in the best form and are accountable for their actions.
- d. Surah Al-Alaq (96) – The first revelation; stresses the importance of knowledge and reading.
- e. Surah Al-Qadr (97) – Speaks of the Night of Power (Laylat al-Qadr), the sacred time when the Qur'an was revealed.
- f. Surah At-Takathur (102) – Warns against being greedy and distracted by wealth.
- g. Surah Al-Humazah (104) – Condemns gossip, mockery, and backbiting (ghiba).
- h. Surah Al-Kafirun (109) – Shows respect for other people's beliefs; promotes peaceful coexistence.
- i. Surah An-Nasr (110) – Celebrates victory, but also reminds believers to remain humble and thankful.
- j. Surah Al-Masad (111) – Condemns cruelty and arrogance, especially towards the Prophet and Islam.
- k. Surah Al-Ikhlas (112) – Affirms the oneness and uniqueness of Allah.

- Surah Al-Falaq (113) and Surah An-Nas (114) – Prayers for protection from evil forces, both seen and unseen.

## 2. Selected Hadiths from Imam An-Nawawi's 40 Hadith

Each Hadith has a specific ethical or spiritual teaching. These include the following listed below.

- Hadith 1:** All actions are judged by intentions (niyyah). This reminds us to be sincere in our actions.
- Hadith 3:** Outlines the five pillars of Islam – the foundation of a Muslim's faith and practice.
- Hadith 5:** A true believer does not harm others through words or actions.
- Hadith 9:** Teaches that Muslims should avoid doubtful matters and stick to what is clearly lawful.
- Hadith 13:** Encourages us to love for others what we love for ourselves – promoting empathy and justice.
- Hadith 15:** Urges us to speak good words or keep silent – controlling our tongue is a sign of faith.
- Hadith 16:** Advises believers to control their anger, as anger can lead to harm.
- Hadith 18:** Teaches fear of Allah, modesty, and striving for moral excellence (ihsan).
- Hadith 34:** Emphasises personal responsibility and accountability for our choices and behaviour.
- Hadith 41:** Reminds us that this world is temporary; we should live as travellers focused on the hereafter.

## 3. Moral Themes Across the Texts

You will notice repeated values in both Qur'anic and Hadith texts.

- Truthfulness:** Always speaking and acting honestly.
- Compassion and mercy:** Caring for others, especially the weak or poor.
- Justice:** Being fair and standing up for what is right.
- Humility:** Avoiding arrogance and being modest in speech and action.
- Self-control:** Avoiding anger, backbiting, and harmful behaviour.
- Gratitude:** Thanking Allah and appreciating what you have.
- Concern for others:** Thinking of others before acting, especially those in need.

## What Matters

- Understanding the meanings of key short Suwar and Hadiths** allows you to reflect on the teachings of Islam and live by them.
- Moral values like honesty, compassion, and respect** are central to Islamic teaching and essential for peaceful communities.
- Linking sacred texts to your daily life** strengthens your personal faith and helps you become a responsible citizen.

4. **Reading Qur'an and Hadith in Arabic or transliteration** helps improve your religious literacy and understanding.

### Activity 3.16 Meaning Through Recitation

1. Practise reading selected verses of Surah Al-Asr, Surah At-Takathur, or Hadith 15 in Arabic or transliteration.
  - a. In a group with your friends, take turns reciting your chosen text aloud.
  - b. Identify difficult Arabic words and use translations to understand them.
2. Discuss the questions below
  - a. What is the main theme or message of the Surah or Hadith?
  - b. Explore historical background: When was it revealed? What issue was it addressing?
3. Share your group's lessons learnt from the Surah or Hadith with the class.

### Activity 3.17 Drama from Revelation

1. **Choose one of these to prepare in your groups from Activity 3.16.**
  - a. Surah Al-Humazah → a drama about avoiding gossip in school
  - b. Hadith 13 → a short play about helping a friend in need
2. Act out your chosen scene in front of the class.

Include voice-over narration to explain the meaning of each scene  
Hold a class reflection on: "What did we learn from acting this out?"

### Activity 3.18 My Text, My Life

1. Pick one Surah or Hadith that you connect with.
  - a. Write out the text in Arabic (or transliteration)
  - b. Translate it using classroom materials (you may use English or your local language/dialect with short Tafsir)
  - c. Reflect on: "What does this teach me about how I should live my life?"
2. Write a short personal story or goal that connects with its message (to guide your thoughts, words or actions). Read part of your journal entry to a partner.

## EXTENDED READING

- **The Qur'an (with English Translation)** – Sahih International  
A simplified and accurate English translation is widely used for study and understanding.  
<https://quran.com>
- **The History of the Qur'anic Text: From Revelation to Compilation** – M.M. Al-Azami  
A scholarly but accessible book that explains how the Qur'an was revealed, compiled, and preserved.
- **Sunnah.com** – Authentic Hadith Collections  
A searchable database of Hadith from Sahih Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood, and others, with classification.  
<https://sunnah.com>
- **Introduction to the Sciences of Hadith** – Suhaib Hasan  
A beginner-friendly book that explains the compilation, classification, and authentication of Hadith.

# REVIEW QUESTIONS 3

## Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. What was the name of the cave where the Prophet (SAW) received the first revelation?
  - A. Hira
  - B. Uhud
  - C. Mina
  - D. Arafat
2. Who compiled the Qur'an into a single manuscript during Abu Bakr's caliphate?
  - A. Umar ibn Al-Khattab
  - B. Ali ibn Abi Talib
  - C. Zayd ibn Thabit
  - D. Abu Hurairah
3. What was the main reason for Uthman's standardisation of the Qur'an?
  - A. To promote Arabic poetry
  - B. To unify the style of Islamic dress
  - C. To avoid disputes in recitation
  - D. To remove unnecessary verses
4. Which companion narrated the most Hadiths from the Prophet (SAW)?
  - A. Abu Bakr
  - B. Zayd ibn Thabit
  - C. Abu Hurairah
  - D. Ali ibn Abi Talib
5. What are the two parts of a Hadith?
  - A. Sunnah and Shariah
  - B. Surah and Ayah
  - C. Isnad and Matn
  - D. Fiqh and Tafsir
6. Which scholar compiled Sahih al-Bukhari?
  - A. Imam Malik
  - B. Imam Shafi'i
  - C. Imam Bukhari
  - D. Imam Ahmad

**7.** The gradual revelation of the Qur'an was important because:

- A. It was easier to memorise
- B. It matched the literacy level of society
- C. It responded to unfolding events
- D. It helped spread Arabic culture

**8.** What distinguishes Sahih Hadith from Da'if Hadith?

- A. Language complexity
- B. Reliability of narrators
- C. Age of the narrators
- D. Inclusion in the Qur'an

**9.** How did the Prophet (SAW) ensure the Qur'an was preserved during his lifetime?

- A. By compiling it himself
- B. By writing it on paper
- C. By encouraging memorisation
- D. By selling written copies

**10.** Why was Hadith documentation delayed during the Prophet's lifetime?

- A. There were no scholars
- B. It was forbidden by the Qur'an
- C. Fear of mixing Hadith with the Qur'an
- D. The Prophet (SAW) disliked writing

**11.** Which Suwar focuses on avoiding materialism?

- A. Al-Kafirun
- B. Al-Humazah
- C. At-Takathur
- D. Al-Qadr

**12.** Which Hadith teaches believers to speak good or remain silent?

- A. Hadith 13
- B. Hadith 15
- C. Hadith 9
- D. Hadith 5

**13.** How can Hadith complement the Qur'an in Islamic practice?

- A. By replacing Qur'anic rulings
- B. By explaining and elaborating laws
- C. By providing translations
- D. By criticising early scholars

**14.** In what way did Uthman's compilation prevent sectarian disputes?

- A. He changed verses
- B. He selected only short chapters

- C. He unified recitation across the Muslim world
- D. He allowed every region to choose their own text

**15.** Why is isnad called the backbone of Hadith?

- A. It includes many short surahs
- B. It ensures continuity and authenticity
- C. It preserves Arabic grammar
- D. It lists the Prophet's battles

## Essay Questions

**1.** Describe the events that led to the first revelation of the Qur'an.

SEN scaffold: "The Prophet (SAW) went to Cave \_\_\_\_\_. He was visited by \_\_\_\_\_. Learners complete and expand.

**2.** Explain how Abu Bakr ensured the Qur'an was preserved after the Prophet's (SAW) death.

**3.** Outline the major contributions of Imam Bukhari in preserving Hadith.

**4.** Discuss the structure of Hadith and the role of the isnad and matn.

**5.** Compare the challenges faced during the compilation of the Qur'an under Abu Bakr and Uthman.

**6.** Assess the historical and religious reasons for the delay in documenting Hadith.

**7.** Explain the difference between sahih and da'if Hadith, using relevant examples.

**8.** Evaluate how the Qur'an and Hadith together shape the daily lives of Muslims.

**9.** Analyse the relevance of Surah Al-Falaq and Hadith 15 to social behaviour among students.

**10.** How does the standardisation of the Qur'an promote Muslim unity today?

## Fill-in-the-Blank Questions

**1.** The first Surah revealed to the Prophet (SAW) was \_\_\_\_.

SEN: Provide word bank: (Ikhlas, Takathur, Al-Alaq, Falaq)

**2.** The Angel who brought the revelation to the Prophet (SAW) was \_\_\_\_.

**3.** The standardised Qur'an was compiled during the caliphate of \_\_\_\_.

**4.** The person appointed to lead the compilation of the Qur'an under Abu Bakr was \_\_\_\_.

**5.** Hadith 1 in An-Nawawi's collection focuses on \_\_\_\_.

**6.** The part of Hadith that contains the chain of narrators is called \_\_\_\_.

**7.** A Hadith graded as reliable and authentic is described as \_\_\_\_.

**8.** A Surah that teaches believers to help the poor and be hopeful is \_\_\_\_.

**9.** The Qur'an was revealed gradually over a period of \_\_\_\_ years.

**10.** One reason Hadith was preserved orally was because of the fear of \_\_\_\_.

## **D. Short Answer Questions**

- 1.** What is Surah Al-Alaq about?
- 2.** Mention one short Surah studied in this section.
- 3.** Name one compiler of Hadith besides Imam Bukhari.
- 4.** Why was the Qur'an not compiled into a book during the Prophet's lifetime?
- 5.** What role did Hafsa bint Umar play in preserving the Qur'an?
- 6.** What does the Hadith "Speak good or remain silent" teach us?
- 7.** Why is the isnad important in Hadith transmission?
- 8.** Fill and expand → "Surah At-Takathur teaches Muslims to avoid \_\_\_\_\_. Why is this important?"
- 9.** How did Abu Hurairah help preserve Hadith?
- 10.** In what way can Surah Al-Ikhlas influence Muslim belief?

SECTION

4

## ISLAMIC BELIEFS AND PRACTICES



# RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, PRACTICES, MORAL VALUES AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

## The Major Beliefs of Islam

### INTRODUCTION

This section introduces you to the fundamental beliefs and essential practices that define the Islamic way of life. It begins by examining the belief in Allah, focusing on His attributes, oneness, and role as the Creator and Sustainer. You will then explore the Six Articles of Faith, which guide the spiritual understanding of a Muslim. The section further presents the Five Pillars of Islam as the core framework for worship and moral action. Through these focal areas, you will gain insights into how belief and practice are interconnected in Islam, shaping personal conduct, social responsibility, and spiritual growth. The section encourages reflection, inquiry, and values-based learning, with opportunities for you to compare beliefs across traditions, relate practices to everyday life, and appreciate the diversity of Muslim observance in Ghana and beyond.

#### KEY IDEAS

- Articles of Faith (Iman) are six core beliefs that every Muslim is required to accept, including belief in Allah, angels, divine books, prophets, the Last Day, and divine destiny (Qadar).
- Shariah is the Islamic legal and moral code derived mainly from the Qur'an and Sunnah, guiding personal, social, spiritual, and legal aspects of Muslim life.
- Sources of Shariah include the Qur'an, Sunnah (Prophet's traditions), Ijma (scholarly consensus), and Qiyas (analogical reasoning), used to interpret Islamic law.
- Tawhid is the belief in the oneness of Allah — the central and most important concept in Islam, rejecting all forms of polytheism (shirk).
- Types of Tawhid include Tawhid al-Rububiyyah (Oneness of Lordship), Tawhid al-Uluhiyyah (Oneness of Worship), and Tawhid al-Asma wa Sifat (Oneness of Names and Attributes of Allah).
- Understanding Shariah helps Muslims live morally upright lives, maintain justice, and follow divine guidance in daily affairs.

### ISLAMIC MONOTHEISM (TAWHID)

Tawhid is the firm belief that Allah is One, and He alone deserves to be worshipped. This belief is the foundation of Islam. Muslims believe that Allah has no partner, no child, and no equal. He is not part of a family or group. This is what makes Islam a monotheistic religion.

Without Tawhid, a person cannot be a true Muslim. Believing in the Oneness of Allah shapes how Muslims pray, behave, and live their lives every day. It also means that all power belongs to Allah and no one else can share in that power.

The Qur'an often reminds believers to worship Allah alone and avoid joining others with Him in worship. One example is Surah Al-Ikhlas (112), which clearly says: "Say: He is Allah, the One."

### Activity 4.1 Exploring Tawhid Together

1. In pairs, read and recite Surah Al-Ikhlas.
2. With your partner, discuss:
  - a. What does it mean to believe that Allah is One?
  - b. Why is Tawhid important in Islam?
3. Share examples of how this belief influences how Muslims live (e.g., trust in Allah, sincerity in worship).
4. Write **two short sentences** to summarise what you believe about Tawhid.

## THE THREE MAIN FORMS OF TAWHID

Muslim scholars have explained that Tawhid has three key dimensions. Understanding these helps Muslims avoid mistakes in belief and worship:

1. Tawhid ar-Rububiyyah (Oneness of Lordship): This is belief in Allah as the Sole Creator, Owner, and Controller of the universe. It means Allah alone causes the rain to fall, the crops to grow, and people to be born or die. No human, idol, or spirit shares in these powers.

Believing in this form of Tawhid teaches Muslims to depend on Allah in every part of life — from their health, success, and even the weather. This form of Tawhid helps us realise that we are not in control of the world, but Allah is.

Example: When someone is sick, Muslims pray to Allah for healing because He alone controls life and health.

2. Tawhid al-Uluhiyyah (Oneness of Worship): This means that only Allah deserves to be worshipped.

Every act of worship — such as prayer, fasting, sacrifice, or du'a (supplication) — must be done only for Him.

It also means Muslims must avoid any act of worship that is directed to anything or anyone else, like saints, idols, or spirits. Doing this is a form of Shirk (associating partners with Allah).

Example: If someone prays to a river or tree for protection, this goes against Tawhid al-Uluhiyyah. Instead, one should ask Allah directly.

3. Tawhid al-Asma wa Sifat (Oneness of Names and Attributes)

Allah has beautiful names and perfect attributes. Muslims believe that these names describe Allah in a way that is true and unique. Some names include:

- Ar-Rahman – The Most Merciful
- Al-Khaliq – The Creator
- Al-Aleem – The All-Knowing

Muslims accept these names as described in the Qur'an and Hadith without changing their meanings, denying them, or comparing Allah to His creation

Example: When the Qur'an says Allah sees all things, Muslims believe this without imagining that His seeing is like human eyes. Allah sees in a way that suits His greatness.

### Activity 4.2 The Tawhid Tree

- Form a group with a few friends and draw a **Tawhid Tree** with 3 main branches:
  - Tawhid ar-Rububiyyah
  - Tawhid al-Uluhiyyah
  - Tawhid al-Asma wa Sifat
- Under each, add the following features.
  - A definition in your own words
  - One verse or hadith
  - A real-life example
- Select a member from the group to present your tree to the class.

## WHAT IS SHIRK?

Shirk is the opposite of Tawhid. It means associating someone or something with Allah in His Lordship, Worship, or Attributes. Shirk is considered the greatest sin in Islam, and it breaks the belief in Tawhid. Allah strongly warns against it in Surah Luqman (31:13): "Do not associate anything with Allah. Truly, Shirk is a great injustice."

There are different types of Shirk:

- Praying to idols, ancestors, spirits, or stars
- Thinking that someone other than Allah controls life or death
- Wearing charms and believing they protect more than Allah

Muslims are taught from a young age to avoid all forms of Shirk and to correct anyone who believes or behaves in ways that contradict Tawhid.

### Activity 4.3 Spot the Shirk

Still in your groups from Activity 4.2, your teacher will assign each group a short case study (e.g., someone wears a charm, prays to a grave, or fears jinn).

1. In your group, respond to the following during a discussion.
  - a. Identify what type of Shirk (if any) is shown.
  - b. Explain which form of Tawhid is violated.
  - c. Suggest what the person should do instead.
2. Share your answers with the class.

## Qur'anic Verses on Tawhid

The Qur'an contains many verses that teach and emphasise the Oneness of Allah (Tawhid). These verses help Muslims understand who Allah is, how He should be worshipped, and how He is different from His creation.

Below are some of the key verses that explain Tawhid:

1. Surah Al-Ikhlas (Chapter 112) "Say: He is Allah, the One. Allah, the Eternal. He does not beget, nor was He begotten. And there is none like unto Him."

This Surah gives a full explanation of Tawhid in just four verses. It teaches that:

- a. Allah is completely One.
- b. He does not have a child or parent.
- c. Nothing in the world is like Allah. This verse is often recited in prayers and helps Muslims remember the uniqueness of Allah.

2. Surah Al-An'am (6:102) "That is Allah, your Lord. There is no deity except Him, the Creator of all things, so worship Him. And He is the Disposer of all things."

This verse shows Allah as the only God, the Creator and the one in control. It clearly calls believers to worship only Him. It is connected to Tawhid ar-Rububiyyah (Oneness in Lordship) and Tawhid al-Uluhiyyah (Oneness in Worship).

3. Ayat al-Kursi (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:255) "Allah! There is no god but He, the Living, the Self-subsisting. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him..." This is one of the most famous verses in the Qur'an. It teaches that:

- a. Allah is alive and always in control.
- b. He never gets tired or sleeps.
- c. Everything belongs to Him.
- d. He knows everything, and nothing happens without His permission.

## AHADITH ON TAWHID

1. Hadith on the Importance of Sincerity in Worship (Tawhid al-Uluhiyyah)

"Allah says: I am the most self-sufficient of partners. Whoever does a deed and associates someone else with Me in it, I will leave him and his shirk." — Sahih Muslim, Hadith 2985

**Explanation:** This Hadith teaches that Allah accepts only sincere worship. If someone prays, fasts, or gives charity to show off or please others, not Allah, then the act is not accepted. It highlights the importance of directing all acts of worship to Allah alone, which is the essence of Tawhid al-Uluhiyyah.

## 2. Hadith on the Gravest Sin – Associating Partners with Allah (Shirk)

The Prophet (SAW) said: “Shall I not tell you of the worst of the major sins?” They said, “Yes, O Messenger of Allah.” He said, “Associating others with Allah (Shirk)...” — Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith 2654; Sahih Muslim

**Explanation:** Here, the Prophet (SAW) teaches that shirk is the biggest sin a person can commit. This Hadith clearly warns believers to avoid all forms of associating partners with Allah in any aspect of belief, worship, or trust. It emphasises the centrality of Tawhid in Islam.

## 3. Hadith on Allah’s Mercy for Those Who Die on Tawhid

The Prophet (SAW) said, “Whoever dies while knowing that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah will enter Paradise.” — Sahih Muslim, Hadith 26

**Explanation:** This Hadith gives hope to all Muslims. It teaches that true belief in Tawhid—in Allah as the only one worthy of worship — is the path to salvation. The key is not just saying “La ilaha illallah” (There is no god but Allah), but knowing it, believing it, and living by it.

### Activity 4.4 Faith in Action

For this activity, form a group of 4 classmates.

1. Your teacher will read 2 short hadiths on Tawhid and sincerity in worship.
2. In your small group, do the following tasks.
  - a. Create a short role-play that shows:
    - i. One person doing an act of worship (e.g., prayer, giving charity) sincerely for Allah.
    - ii. Another is doing it for show or to impress others.
  - b. End the role-play with a short explanation from your group about what Tawhid teaches us here.
3. Act out your role-play to the class.

## WHY TAWHID MATTERS

Believing in Tawhid has a strong effect on how Muslims think, feel, and behave in everyday life:

1. It builds trust in Allah. Muslims learn to depend on Allah in both good and difficult times. This helps develop hope, patience, and emotional strength.
2. It encourages honesty and fairness. Believing that Allah sees everything helps Muslims be truthful, kind, and respectful to others, regardless of their background or gender.

3. It protects against fear and harmful beliefs. Tawhid teaches Muslims not to rely on charms, fortune-telling, or spirits—only Allah controls life and death.
4. It promotes unity and peace. All Muslims, whether male or female, rich or poor, are equal in their worship of Allah. This supports fairness and social inclusion in communities.
5. It guides worship with sincerity. Muslims learn to do good deeds only for Allah, not for praise or show. This helps build self-awareness and responsibility.
6. Tawhid teaches values that support Ghana’s peaceful, diverse, and morally responsible society. It encourages learners of all kinds to live with purpose, respect others, and grow emotionally and spiritually.

### Activity 4.5 My Tawhid Reflection

*Points 1 and 2 of this activity are to be done independently. For step 3, you pair up with a classmate.*

1. Write down your answers to these questions.
  - a. How does Tawhid help me in times of difficulty?
  - b. How can Tawhid help me treat others fairly?
2. Now write a short paragraph titled: “**Tawhid and My Life**” (4–6 sentences).
3. Share one sentence from your writing with your partner.

## THE SIX ARTICLES OF FAITH (IMAN)

### What Are the Six Articles of Faith?

In Islam, **faith (Iman)** is the starting point of a Muslim’s religious life. It refers to the sincere belief in certain core truths that form the foundation of the Islamic worldview. These truths are known as the **Six Articles of Faith**, and they define what a Muslim must believe in order to be considered a true believer. These articles focus on matters of the **unseen (al-ghayb)** — realities that cannot always be seen or tested physically but are firmly established through divine revelation.

The **sources** of the Six Articles of Faith are found in both the **Qur'an** and the **Hadith**. The Qur'an refers to these beliefs in several verses, particularly when describing the qualities of the true believers. One of the most direct sources, however, is a well-known Hadith called the **Hadith of Jibril (Gabriel)**, in which the angel Jibril (AS) came in human form and asked the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to explain the meaning of faith (Iman). In response, the Prophet (SAW) listed these six fundamental beliefs, which were later recorded and preserved by his companions.

The **Six Articles of Faith** help Muslims develop a clear understanding of Allah’s nature, His relationship with creation, and how life should be lived. They teach Muslims to trust in divine wisdom, remain hopeful about the Hereafter, and stay conscious of moral accountability. By believing in the unseen realities — such as angels, divine books, and the Last Day — Muslims are spiritually grounded in their worship, their ethics, and their

purpose in life. These articles serve as a **spiritual compass**, guiding believers to live with awareness of both the visible world and the divine truths beyond it.

### Activity 4.6 What Must a Muslim Believe?

1. With your teacher, discuss: “What must a Muslim believe to be truly faithful?”
2. Listen to a short explanation of the **six articles of faith**.
3. Say each article aloud with the class.
4. Match each article to a simple definition on a board/chart.

## Belief in Allah (Iman bi-llah)

This is the foundation of all other beliefs. It means believing that **Allah is the one true God**, who is **eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing**, and has **no partner or equal**. Muslims believe that Allah created everything, controls everything, and is the only one worthy of worship. This belief includes accepting **all of Allah's names and attributes** as described in the Qur'an and Hadith, without changing or imagining them in human form.

### Activity 4.7 Knowing Who Allah Is

1. With a partner, draw a mini concept map titled **Belief in Allah (Iman Billah)**.
  - a. Include the following features in your concept map
    - i. A simple definition
    - ii. A verse like Surah Al-Ikhlas or 6:102
    - iii. One or two of Allah's names (e.g., Ar-Rahman)
    - iv. A way belief in Allah shapes daily life
  - b. Colour and label your map.
2. Share with a classmate and explain what you drew.

## Belief in Angels (Iman bil-Mala'ika)

Muslims believe that Allah created angels from **light**, and they do not eat, sleep, or sin. They are invisible beings who always obey Allah and carry out His commands. Some well-known angels include **Jibril (Gabriel)**, who brought Allah's message to the prophets, **Israfil**, who will blow the trumpet on the Day of Judgment, and **Munkar and Nakir**, who question the dead in the grave.

## Activity 4.8 Meet the Angels of Islam

In a small group, read a short description of the angels.

1. Together, fill in a chart with:
  - a. What angels are made from
  - b. Names of key angels (e.g., Jibril, Israfil)
  - c. What angels do
2. Create a mini-poster with drawings, names, and one example of how belief in angels can guide you.

## Belief in the Revealed Books (Iman bil-Kutub)

Muslims believe that Allah sent down divine books to guide humanity. These include:

1. The Suhuf (Scrolls) of Ibrahim (AS)
2. The Tawrah (Torah) of Musa (AS)
3. The Zabur (Psalms) of Dawud (AS)
4. The Injil (Gospel) of Isa (AS)
5. The Qur'an, which was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and is the final and complete book, is preserved in its original form.

Muslims must believe in all these books, but they follow the Qur'an as the final and most complete guidance.

## Activity 4.9 The Books Allah Sent

*Your teacher will tell you the names of five holy books that Allah sent to guide people.*

1. Say the names of each book and the Prophet who received it together as a class.
2. Use flashcards to match each book to the Prophet who received it.
  - a. The flashcards will have the names of the books on some cards (**book card**), and the names of the Prophets on other cards (**Prophet card**).
  - b. Work in pairs or small groups. Lay out all the cards and try to match each **book card** to its correct **Prophet card**.

*For example, if you have a card that says "Tawrah," you should find the card that says "Musa (AS)" and put them together.*

3. Copy and fill in the table below into your book. The table helps you remember which Prophet received which book.

Name of the Book	Prophet Who Received It
Tawrah (Torah)	Musa (AS)

4. Discussion: Talk with your class about why Muslims follow only the Qur'an today.

## Belief in the Prophets (Iman bir-Rusul)

Allah chose prophets to deliver His message to people. Muslims believe in all the prophets sent by Allah — over 124,000 in total — but 25 are mentioned in the Qur'an. These include Adam, Nuh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), Isa (Jesus), and Muhammad (SAW), who is the last and final prophet. Muslims respect all prophets and never place one in opposition to another.

### Activity 4.10 Following the Prophets' Examples

*Pair up with a friend or form a small group with a few classmates.*

1. Each group will be assigned or can select the name of a Prophet (for example, Musa, Isa, or Muhammad SAW).
2. Discuss together and create a presentation in the form of a role-play, song, or poster that shows the following:
  - a. What this Prophet taught
  - b. A value he demonstrated (such as honesty or patience)
  - c. One lesson Muslims can take from his example
3. Prepare your presentation and share it with the class. Aim to keep your presentation to around 2 minutes.

## Belief in the Last Day (Iman bil-Yawm al-Aakhir)

Muslims believe that this world will end one day, and everyone will be brought back to life for judgment. On the Day of Judgment, every person will be judged by Allah based on their deeds. Those who lived righteously will enter Paradise (Jannah), while those who disbelieved and did wrong will be punished in Hell (Jahannam). This belief encourages Muslims to live morally, honestly, and with hope in Allah's mercy.

## Activity 4.11 Preparing for the Last Day

1. Create a concept map on Belief in the Last Day. Add the following features to the map.
  - a. What happens on that day
  - b. Why this belief is important
  - c. How it shapes actions like honesty or kindness
2. Include quotes or symbols (e.g., scales, gates of Jannah).
3. Share your map with another group.

## Belief in Divine Decree (Iman bil-Qadar)

This means believing that **everything happens by Allah's will**, whether good or bad. Allah has full knowledge and control over all things, past, present, and future. However, humans are still given **free will** to make choices, and they are held responsible for their actions. Belief in Qadar helps Muslims to stay patient in hard times and humble in good times, trusting that Allah knows best.

## Activity 4.12 Allah's Plan and My Life

Read a short story about a challenge (e.g., failing a test or losing something).

1. Discuss with a partner: How does belief in Qadar help someone stay calm?
2. Write a journal entry (4–6 sentences): “Because I believe in Allah's plan, I...”
3. Share your ideas with your group.

## Why the Six Beliefs Matter

The six beliefs are very important in Islam. They help Muslims know what is right and what is wrong. These beliefs help Muslims to:

1. Pray to Allah only and mean it from the heart.
2. Stay strong and do not give up when life is hard.
3. Respect all people, even those with different religions.
4. Trust Allah's plan, even when things are not going well.

These beliefs teach good values like peace, honesty, and respect. These are also values we share in Ghana. Everyone—boys, girls, and learners with special needs—can live by these beliefs in their own way.

### Activity 4.13 Living by My Faith

1. Consider the following questions
  - a. In what ways do these six beliefs support you in your academic life, at home, or within friendships?
  - b. Which of the six beliefs most influences your decisions, and for what reason?
2. Record two to three concise points in your faith journal. Afterwards, present your reflections during a small group discussion.

## SHARIAH AND ITS INTERPRETATIONS

Shariah is the divine law in Islam. It guides how Muslims live, behave, and relate to others. Shariah is not just about punishments or court rulings. It includes everything a Muslim should do — from praying and fasting to honesty, kindness, and justice in daily life.

The word Shariah means “(the) clear path.” It is a way that leads Muslims toward a good life in this world and the next. It helps Muslims know what is right and wrong, what is allowed (halal) and not allowed (haram), and how to treat others fairly and kindly.

Shariah aims to bring peace, justice, and dignity to individuals and society.

The Shariah is based on four main sources. These help scholars and Muslims understand how to apply Allah’s law in daily life.

Source	Meaning	Example use
<b>Qur'an</b>	The direct word of Allah, the first and most important source.	Tells Muslims to pray, be honest, be fair.
<b>Sunnah</b>	The sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).	How to pray, fast, and show kindness to others.
<b>Ijma</b>	Agreement among Islamic scholars on a matter.	Used when the Qur'an and Sunnah are silent.
<b>Qiyas</b>	Comparing a new issue with an old one with similar reasons.	Using analogy to ban harmful drugs, like wine.

These sources show that Shariah is based on both revelation and reasoning.

## What Is Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence)?

Fiqh means “understanding.” It is the human interpretation of Shariah. While Shariah is from Allah and perfect, Fiqh is developed by scholars to apply Shariah to real life.

Fiqh helps Muslims answer questions like:

1. How should we give Zakat in modern times?
2. How can a Muslim salaried worker pay his/her Zakat duly?
3. What is the Islamic ruling on using technology for banking?

Different scholars may come to different conclusions. That's why we have schools of thought, or madhahib.

## The Four Common Schools of Thought (Madhahib)

Muslims have four main schools of law. These schools all follow the Qur'an and Sunnah but may use different methods.

School Name	Founder	Key Feature
<b>Hanafi</b>	Imam Abu Hanifah	Most flexible in reasoning (Qiyas).
<b>Maliki</b>	Imam Malik	Uses actions of people in Madinah.
<b>Shafi'i</b>	Imam Shafi'i	Combines Qur'an, Sunnah, and reasoning.
<b>Hanbali</b>	Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal	Sticks closely to texts of Qur'an and Hadith.

All these schools are respected in Islam. Differences among them show diversity, not division.

## Objectives of Shariah (Maqasid al-Shariah)

Shariah aims to protect important things in life. These are called the five Maqasid:

Objective	Meaning
Religion (Deen)	Allows freedom to practise Islam and other religions.
Life (Nafs)	Protects human life (e.g., bans murder, promotes safety).
Mind (Aql)	Encourages thinking and education; forbids drugs and alcohol.
Family/Lineage (Nasl)	Protects marriage, family rights, and children.
Property (Maal)	Defends the right to own and protect wealth and property.

## Common Misconceptions about Shariah

Many people misunderstand Shariah. Here are some myths and the truths behind them:

Misconception	What the Truth Is
Shariah is only about punishments.	Shariah covers all areas of life – ethics, worship, business, family life, kindness, fairness and social justice. Punishment is <b>only</b> a small part with many rules to follow.
Shariah is harsh and outdated.	No, it is based on justice and mercy and allows change.
All Muslims follow one law.	No, there are different schools, showing diverse thinking.

“Shariah punishes people without trial.”	Shariah has a proper court system. It includes judges, defence, prosecution, evidence, witnesses, and the right to speak. No one is punished without a fair hearing.
“Shariah is too old for today’s world.”	Shariah is flexible. Scholars use tools like Ijma (consensus) and Qiyas (reasoning) to solve new problems. The aim is justice, mercy, and human dignity.
“Shariah is the same everywhere.”	There are different schools of thought (madhahib), like Maliki or Shafi’i. These schools show that Shariah can work in different cultures and times.

## Understanding Shariah and Its Role in Society

Shariah in Islam is a guide for living a good and just life. It promotes values like truth, fairness, respect, and caring for the community. These values are not only for Muslims—they are shared by many people in Ghana and around the world.

Shariah is mostly used by Muslims, especially in matters like marriage, family, and inheritance. However, in some countries, non-Muslims also choose to use Shariah courts, especially when they feel it offers fair and familiar solutions.

Country	How Non-Muslims Use Shariah Courts	Reference/Sources	Scannable QR Code
 Nigeria	Non-Muslims in northern states sometimes use Shariah courts for civil matters like family disputes.	<a href="#">Nigerian Ministry of Justice</a> <a href="#">DW: Shariah law in Africa has many faces</a>	 
 Kenya	Kadhi courts handle Muslim family issues, but non-Muslims married to Muslims may also appear before them.	<a href="#">Cambridge Journal of African Law</a>	
 Indonesia (Aceh)	Some non-Muslims choose Shariah courts for certain cases because they are fast and familiar.	<a href="#">Springer Study on Aceh</a> <a href="#">Springer: Non-Muslims in Aceh's Sharia Courts</a>	 
 United Kingdom	Shariah councils help solve family and business issues. Non-Muslims in mixed-faith families sometimes use them.	<a href="#">UK Government Review</a> <a href="#">BBC: Sharia law explained</a> <a href="#">(BBC NEWS   UK   Q&amp;A: Sharia law explained)</a>	  

 Nigeria	Non-Muslims in northern states sometimes use Shariah courts for civil matters like family disputes.	<a href="#">Nigerian Ministry of Justice</a> <a href="#">DW: Shariah law in Africa has many faces</a>	 
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## Shariah in Modern Life

Shariah is not frozen in the past. Scholars have always applied its principles to new issues, like:

- Medical treatment (organ donation)
- Technology (online banking)
- Environment (protecting water, trees)

This makes Shariah a living system, rooted in Allah's guidance but open to human reasoning for the good of society.

## Why Shariah Matters – Connecting to Our Shared Values

Shariah is more than just a religious law. It is a system that promotes justice, compassion, dignity, and social harmony — values that are also important in Ghanaian society.

Here's why Shariah matters in both Islamic life and our national context:

- Respect for Law and Order: Like Ghana's Constitution, Shariah promotes obedience to laws that protect everyone's rights and responsibilities.
- Fairness and Justice: Shariah encourages fairness in business, family, and community life — values that match Ghana's goals of integrity, honesty, and peace.
- Social Inclusion: Shariah respects the rights of the poor, women, children, and people with special needs. This reflects our national goal of leaving no one behind (GESI).
- Peaceful Coexistence: True Shariah respects people of other religions and encourages dialogue and peaceful living — just as Ghana values tolerance and unity in diversity.
- Self-discipline and Responsibility: Shariah teaches Muslims to act with honesty, patience, and mercy. These values support social and emotional learning (SEL) and build strong, responsible citizens.
- Moral Education: Shariah builds good character — just as our schools aim to shape disciplined, hardworking, and morally upright young people.

Shariah is not just for Muslims. Its ethical spirit speaks to the human values shared across Ghana: truth, justice, respect, and community well-being.

## The interaction between Islam and AIR

In this lesson, we explore how Islam and African Indigenous Religion (AIR) have influenced one another in various Ghanaian communities. While Islam is rooted in the belief in only one God (Tawhid), Muslims have often lived alongside people who practise traditional beliefs. As a result, there has sometimes been a blending of customs from both faiths.

In many towns and villages, Muslims observe Islamic practices but may also take part in local traditions, especially during important life events like childbirth, illness, or death. Some of these customs might have origins in AIR, while others are based on Islamic teachings. You need to discuss and consider which practices are cultural and which are religious, recognising that different perspectives may exist.

This topic also encourages us to appreciate the peaceful coexistence of different religious groups in Ghana. Although Islam and AIR have their differences, both traditions emphasise values such as helping others, showing kindness, and respecting elders. By understanding these interactions, you can reflect on how people of diverse beliefs can live together respectfully, supporting social and emotional learning (SEL) in our classrooms and communities.

## AIR Influence on Ghanaian Muslim Practices

In some Ghanaian Muslim communities, local traditional beliefs influence how people practise Islam. This happens because of long-term cultural interaction with AIR. For example:

1. Some Muslims may wear amulets (tama) or charms for protection.
2. Others may visit traditional healers or spiritualists for blessings.
3. Some families follow taboos (e.g., avoiding certain foods or places because of spirits).
4. People may use water, herbs, soil, or other items in rituals linked to healing or safety.

### Activity 4.14 What's Cultural? What's Islamic?

1. Begin with the question: “Can culture influence how people practise religion?”
2. In pairs or small groups, learners list three common Ghanaian Muslim practices they’ve seen or heard (e.g., charms, dream interpretations, naming rites).
3. The teacher guides the class to decide:
  - a. Which practices come from Islamic teachings (based on Qur'an or Sunnah)?
  - b. Which come from cultural or AIR influence?
4. Each pair shares one example and explains their reasoning.

## NAMING CEREMONIES: A MIX OF TRADITIONS

In Islam, the proper way to name a child is through **Aqiqah**, which involves:

1. Naming the child with a good Islamic name,
2. Tahneek (a (recommended) practice in Islam, where a small amount of softened date (or other sweet, wholesome food) is gently rubbed on the palate or gums of a newborn baby),
3. Shaving a newborn's hair on the 7th day and its weight in silver or gold (or either's equivalent) is given to charity (to the poor or needy),

4. Offering a sacrifice (like a sheep or two),
5. Praying for the child's future and faith.

However, in Ghana, some Muslim families may choose to blend Islamic prayers with local traditions and invite family elders to offer blessings for the child. While Islamic teachings focus on naming ceremonies as outlined by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), these additional customs reflect a combination of cultural and religious influences. Many families aim to honour both their faith and their cultural heritage in these special occasions.

## Spirit Beliefs and Dreams

Both AIR and Islam believe in the spiritual world, but they explain it differently.

AIR Beliefs	Islamic Beliefs
Spirits of dead ancestors influence the living	Allah alone controls everything
Ancestors can bless or curse people	Only Allah has power over blessings and punishment
Dreams carry messages from spirits or gods	Dreams may come from Allah, the human self, or Shaytan
Rituals honour spirits for protection	Muslims pray to Allah alone for protection

While AIR connects many events in life to ancestral spirits, Islam teaches that such powers belong to Allah alone. Muslims believe in angels, jinn, and the unseen, but they must never worship or fear spirits instead of Allah.

### Activity 4.15 Spirit World: AIR vs Islam

*For this activity, you will be in a group, but listen to the audio carefully and write down points ahead of the group task.*

1. You will watch or listen to an audio-visual clip or testimony from a Muslim elder or community member on beliefs about spiritual protection (e.g., dreams, jinn, ancestors).
2. In your group, briefly present one key difference and one similarity.

## Culture or Religion? Learning the Difference

Not everything done in Muslim communities is Islamic. Sometimes, what people do is part of local culture, not the religion of Islam. Learners must know how to tell the difference.

For example:

1. Wearing tama or charms is a cultural practice, not Islamic.

2. Inviting an elder to give blessings may be cultural, but not from Sunnah.
3. Treating guests kindly is both cultural and Islamic.
4. Dancing and drumming during ceremonies may be cultural but must not go against Islamic rules.

True Islamic practices are based on the Qur'an and Sunnah, not on what is common in society. Knowing this helps Muslims practise their faith correctly while still respecting their Ghanaian heritage.

## Coexistence and Shared Values

In Ghana, Islam and AIR have coexisted for centuries. Although they are different in belief and worship, they share some **community values** that help society live in peace.

For example, both religions encourage:

1. Respecting elders and listening to them,
2. Welcoming visitors and showing hospitality,
3. Helping the poor and those in need,
4. Living peacefully with neighbours.

These shared values support Ghana's national goals of peace, tolerance, and unity. However, Muslims should learn to practise these values through Islamic teachings, not through beliefs in spirits, charms, or ancestor worship.

### Activity 4.16: My Faith, My Culture – Understanding What Matters Most

Reflect individually on the following question: “In what ways does my cultural background influence how I practise my religion?”

1. Write a brief journal entry (about 5–7 sentences) that covers the following points:
2. Describe a cultural tradition you value.
3. Consider whether this tradition agrees with or goes against Islamic teachings.
4. Explain how you manage any differences between your faith and your culture.
5. Once you have written your entry, join a small group. Each person should read aloud one sentence from their journal that shows either harmony or conflict between their beliefs and cultural practices.
6. To end the activity, listen as the teacher summarises why it is important to follow Islamic principles while still honouring your cultural heritage.

## Common Misconceptions: Correcting Wrong Ideas

Misconception	Correct Islamic Teaching
Islam allows Muslims to wear charms or tama for protection	Islam says only <b>Allah</b> protects — charms are <b>not allowed</b>

Naming ceremonies in Ghana always follow Islam	Some parts, like <b>ancestral prayers</b> , are from AIR, not Islam
Spirits can harm or bless people	Only <b>Allah</b> controls harm or blessing — spirits <b>cannot</b>
Every practice done by Muslims is Islamic	Not always — some actions are based on <b>local culture</b> , not <b>Islam</b>
Shariah punishes people without trial	Islamic law includes <b>judges, courts, evidence, and rights of the accused</b> , just like modern courts. Islam ensures justice through fair process

## Why This Topic Matters

Learning about the interaction between Islam and AIR is important for many reasons.

First, it helps Muslims understand their faith clearly, without confusing culture with religion. This helps them avoid wrong beliefs and stick to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Second, it teaches respect for other people's beliefs, especially in a country like Ghana where different religions live together peacefully. Even if Muslims don't agree with AIR practices, they can live peacefully and respectfully with their neighbours.

Finally, this knowledge supports Ghana's shared values of tolerance, unity, respect for diversity, and peaceful coexistence.

## Extended Reading (Optional)

- Explore more about how Islam and African Indigenous Religions interact in Ghana and other parts of Africa.
- African Traditional Religion and Islam in West Africa  
[https://spice.fsi.stanford.edu/docs/the\\_spread\\_of\\_islam\\_in\\_west\\_africaContainment\\_mixing\\_and\\_reform\\_from\\_the\\_eighth\\_to\\_the\\_twentieth\\_century](https://spice.fsi.stanford.edu/docs/the_spread_of_islam_in_west_africaContainment_mixing_and_reform_from_the_eighth_to_the_twentieth_century)
- (A comparative academic paper exploring AIR and Islam in West African societies.)
- BBC Religions – Islam in Africa  
[https://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index\\_section7.shtml](https://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section7.shtml)
- Yoruba Muslims and African Traditions (Case Study)  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/387755272\\_Yoruba\\_Culture\\_and\\_Its\\_Intersection\\_With\\_Islamic\\_Ethics\\_and\\_Jurisprudence](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/387755272_Yoruba_Culture_and_Its_Intersection_With_Islamic_Ethics_and_Jurisprudence)
- (Academic article on Yoruba Muslims that parallels the experiences of Ghanaian Muslims.)

# REVIEW QUESTIONS 4

## Multiple Choice Questions

1. What does the term syncretism mean?
  - A. Belief in spirits
  - B. Mixing religious and cultural practices
  - C. Rejecting traditional beliefs
  - D. Memorising Islamic prayers
2. Which of these is NOT a source of Islamic law?
  - A. Qur'an
  - B. Sunnah
  - C. Dreams
  - D. Ijma
3. What is an amulet (tama) used for in some AIR-influenced practices?
  - A. Beautification
  - B. Business growth
  - C. Spiritual protection
  - D. Education
4. What do both AIR and Islam recognise in terms of spiritual beings?
  - A. Angels only
  - B. Ancestral spirits only
  - C. Spirits or unseen beings
  - D. No spiritual realm
5. Why do some Muslims in Ghana pour libation during naming ceremonies?
  - A. It is required in Islamic law
  - B. It is part of Aqiqah
  - C. It reflects AIR cultural practices
  - D. It replaces reciting the Adhan
6. What does Islamic orthodoxy rely on to judge cultural practices?
  - A. Local customs
  - B. AIR beliefs
  - C. Qur'an and Sunnah
  - D. Dreams and visions
7. How does Islam differ from AIR in handling dreams?
  - A. Dreams are used for medicine in Islam

- B. Dreams are ignored in Islam
- C. Islam uses dreams for Shari'ah rulings
- D. Islam treats dreams carefully but not as law

**8.** Which of these practices may be seen as cultural, not Islamic?

- A. Performing ablution before prayer
- B. Sacrificing animals on sacred days of the week
- C. Fasting in Ramadan
- D. Reciting the Qur'an

**9.** How can distinguishing between faith and culture help Muslims?

- A. It reduces worship
- B. It creates confusion
- C. It preserves Islamic purity and identity
- D. It promotes superstition

**10.** What is one risk of combining AIR practices with Islamic worship?

- A. Stronger faith
- B. Social acceptance
- C. Confusion and possible Shirk
- D. Becoming an Imam

## Essay Questions

1. List any four cultural practices from AIR that may appear in Ghanaian Islamic communities.
2. Explain how Ghanaian Muslim naming ceremonies may include both Islamic and traditional elements.
3. Describe two differences between AIR beliefs and Islamic beliefs about the spirit world.
4. Why do some Muslims use charms, and what is Islam's position on this?
5. Discuss how syncretism may affect young Muslims' understanding of their religion.
6. Analyse whether a ritual bath for spiritual protection is a religious or cultural act. Give reasons.
7. Compare how AIR and Islam deal with divine protection. How are they similar or different?
8. Reflect on whether Ghanaian cultural heritage helps or hinders Islamic faith in your community.

## Short Answer Questions

1. What does Islam say about using amulets?
2. What is a common traditional healing method used in some Ghanaian Muslim communities?

3. What is the Islamic naming ceremony called?
4. How does belief in jinn differ from AIR beliefs in ancestral spirits?
5. Give one reason Muslims should distinguish between faith and culture.
6. What does the term “Islamic orthodoxy” mean in this context?
7. Why do Muslims sometimes struggle with cultural and religious identity?
8. In your view, is it possible to respect culture without compromising religion?
9. Should cultural practices that contradict Islam be abandoned? Why or why not?
10. Can AIR-inspired values like hospitality enrich Islamic life in Ghana?

### Fill-in-the-Blank Questions

1. The use of charms and talismans in some Muslim communities shows the influence of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The Islamic ceremony for naming a child is called \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Syncretism is the \_\_\_\_\_ of religious and cultural practices.
4. In AIR, people often believe in \_\_\_\_\_ spirits. In Islam, belief focuses on jinn and angels.
5. Islamic orthodoxy is based only on \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Ghanaian Muslim naming ceremonies may involve pouring \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Some Muslims take ritual \_\_\_\_\_ for spiritual protection due to AIR influence.
8. Mixing AIR rituals with Islamic worship can lead to \_\_\_\_\_ in faith.
9. Understanding one’s cultural background helps Muslims avoid \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Islam promotes respect for culture only when it does not contradict \_\_\_\_\_ teachings.

SECTION

5

# ISLAMIC COMMUNITIES



# RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES AND NATION BUILDING

## The Origin and Nature of Religious Communities in Ghana

### INTRODUCTION

This section explores the formation, features, and evolving roles of Islamic communities, focusing on their presence in Ghana. You will examine the early Muslim community in Madinah and trace how Islam spread to West Africa, giving rise to Ghanaian Muslim communities, especially in Zongo areas.

The section highlights key characteristics of these communities — including worship, education, leadership, trade, and social values — and how these have adapted over time. You will also study how Islamic communities in Ghana contribute to national development through peacebuilding, social services, and civic engagement.

Lastly, the section promotes appreciation of how Muslims live harmoniously with Christians and followers of African Indigenous Religion (AIR), emphasising shared values and interfaith cooperation. You are encouraged to reflect on peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and inclusive citizenship in Ghana's religiously diverse society.

#### KEY IDEAS

- **Characteristics of Islamic Communities:** Islamic communities are defined by religious worship, education, leadership, social cohesion, and charitable values.
- **Changing Roles Over Time:** The functions of Islamic communities in Ghana have expanded from traditional religious roles to include education, health, peacebuilding, and environmental activism.
- **Co-existence with Other Religions:** Islam in Ghana promotes peaceful living with Christians and practitioners of African Indigenous Religion through shared moral values and interfaith cooperation.
- **Historical Origins:** Islamic communities trace their roots from the Prophet's Madinan community through the Caliphates to West African trade routes and Ghanaian settlements.
- **Nation Building and Development:** Muslim communities actively contribute to national unity and civic development through education, social services, and moral leadership.
- **Religious Diversity and Adaptation:** Islamic communities reflect a range of doctrinal orientations and adapt their practices to local Ghanaian cultural contexts while preserving core Islamic identity.

# ORIGINS OF ISLAMIC COMMUNITIES

This lesson begins with an activity that activates your prior knowledge and helps you set the historical timeline of Muslim communities.

## Activity 5.1 From Madinah to Ghana

1. Think about what you already know about the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) move to Madinah.
2. Listen as your teacher tells the story of how the Prophet built the first Islamic community.
3. Join in the class discussion to trace the growth of Islamic communities from Madinah → Caliphates → Africa → Ghana.
4. In pairs, list three values (e.g., leadership) that made the Madinah community strong.
5. Share how you see these values in your own community today.

*Why this helps: This will help you connect the past with your present community life.*

## Islamic Communities

Islamic communities began to form during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), especially after the Hijrah (migration) to Madinah in 622 CE. In Madinah, the Prophet (SAW) established the first organised Islamic society known for its unity, leadership and mutual support. This early community or Ummah became a model for later Muslim and Islamic societies, combining spiritual guidance with social order and shared responsibility among Muslims.

After the Prophet's (SAW) death, leadership passed to the Khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn (Rightly Guided Caliphs), who expanded Muslim lands and laid the foundations for Islamic governance. Through these early caliphates and subsequent empires like the Umayyads and Abbasids, Islam spread across the Middle East, North Africa and into West Africa through peaceful means such as trade, migration, missionary work (da'wah) and scholarship.

Eventually, Islam reached present-day Ghana through Mande traders and Hausa clerics. These early Muslim settlers established vibrant Islamic communities in areas now known as Zongos. These communities adapted Islamic principles to local cultures while maintaining their identity through worship, education and leadership. Over time, Islamic communities diversified into different sects and traditions, influenced by geography, culture and politics.

## The First Islamic Community in Madinah

After the Hijrah to Madinah, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) formed a united Muslim community guided by values such as mutual respect, justice, and shared worship. This community included people of different backgrounds but was unified through belief in one

God (Allah), regular prayer, and obedience to the Prophet (SAW). It served as the earliest example of Islamic community life, balancing religious values with everyday affairs.

The Prophet (SAW) established a constitution in Madinah that guaranteed the rights of Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Social justice, charity, and leadership were key components. The mosque in Madinah was not only a place of worship but also a centre for education, conflict resolution, and community decision-making.

This model of community became the foundation for later Islamic societies, where leadership, unity and social responsibility were central features.

## The Caliphate and the Spread of Islam

When Prophet Muhammad (SAW) passed away, Abu Bakr (RA) became the first Caliph, followed by Umar (RA), Uthman (RA), and Ali (RA). These were the Rightly Guided Caliphs. Under their leadership, Islam spread rapidly to new regions, including Egypt, Persia and Syria. They introduced systems of governance that ensured justice, community leadership, and religious integrity.

The spread of Islam was not only through conquest but also through peaceful trade, intermarriage, learning, and da‘wah (religious preaching). In West Africa, Islam was introduced through long-distance trade routes and travelling scholars who lived in or near local African kingdoms.

These movements created lasting Muslim communities that maintained Islamic education, worship, and laws, while also adapting to African cultures.

## Ghanaian Muslim Communities and Their Origins

Islam entered Ghana between the 10th and 15th centuries, primarily through Mande and Hausa traders and Islamic clerics. They settled in market towns and trading centres, forming early Muslim communities. Over time, these communities developed into what we now call Zongos—multi-ethnic, Islamic urban settlements known for their religious life and strong sense of social support.

These Zongo communities played key roles in preserving Islamic traditions, Arabic literacy, and Qur’anic education. Islamic leaders such as imams and mallams were respected figures in the community. Islamic festivals, charity, and religious discipline shaped everyday life in these areas.

Despite changes in modern society, Zongos remain important religious and cultural centres in Ghana today.

### Activity 5.2 Islamic History Timeline

1. Your teacher will organise the class into three groups.

**Group A:** Madinah community and the Caliphate period

**Group B:** Spread of Islam to Africa

**Group C:** Early Ghanaian Muslim communities (e.g., Hausa settlements, Wangara)

2. In your groups, using class notes, books, or community knowledge, create a visual timeline, storyboard, or poster showing how Muslim communities developed.
3. Include important dates, places, and people.
4. Do a gallery walk—visit other groups' posters and ask one question about their work.

## Religious Diversity in Islamic Communities

As Islam spread across the world, different communities developed based on their environment and historical experiences. This led to the emergence of different Islamic traditions such as Sunni, Shi'a, and Sufi. Though these groups share the same core beliefs, they may differ in practices, leadership structures, or interpretations of Islamic texts.

In Ghana, most Muslims are Sunni, but there are also Ahmadiyya and Sufi groups. These differences reflect the broader diversity of the Muslim Ummah. Even with these differences, Islamic communities are united in belief in Allah, the Qur'an, and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Learning about this diversity helps us to appreciate the global nature of Islam and respect different ways of living the Islamic faith.

### Activity 5.3 Map the Development of Muslim Communities

1. Think about the stages in Islamic history.
2. Draw a concept map titled “**Development of Islamic Communities**”.
3. Include these main branches:
  - a. Madinah Period
  - b. Rightly Guided Caliphs
  - c. Umayyad and Abbasid Dynasties
  - d. Spread to Africa
  - e. Ghanaian Muslim Communities
4. Add examples under each branch and use arrows to show the flow of history.
5. Explain your map to a partner.

## Why This Matters

By exploring the origins of Islamic communities, you will gain a deeper appreciation for the importance of unity, leadership, and peaceful coexistence. This knowledge will help you understand how Islam developed locally and globally, allowing you to see your own religious identity within a wider context. Through this lesson, you will be

encouraged to value tolerance, justice, and shared responsibilities such as respect, equity, and patriotism. You will also recognise the significant contributions of diverse Islamic communities, including multi-ethnic Zongos.

You will have the chance to take part in activities such as creating visual maps, storytelling, and conducting interviews, all of which will help you build empathy and reflect on your own community. By learning how Muslim communities formed and adapted over time, you will develop important skills like historical thinking, critical inquiry, collaboration, and civic responsibility.

### Activity 5.4 The Roots of My Community

*Visit, observe, or interview someone in a Zongo or Islamic community in your area.*

1. Find out the following;
  - a. How and when the community was founded
  - b. If founders came from another place (migration, trade)
  - c. How they first built their mosque or school
2. Write a short paragraph (5–8 sentences) about the community’s history.
3. Share your story with the class.

#### Summary: What You Have Learned

1. The first Islamic community was formed in Madinah by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) after the Hijrah in 622 CE.
2. The Rightly Guided Caliphs expanded Islamic leadership and governance after the Prophet’s death.
3. Islam spread through peaceful means—especially trade, migration, da’wah and scholarship—to Africa and Ghana.
4. Muslim communities in Ghana developed around traders and clerics, eventually forming Zongos.
5. Islamic communities may vary (Sunni, Shi’a, Sufi), but they share core beliefs in Allah, the Qur’an and the Prophet (SAW).

## CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAMIC COMMUNITIES

### Characteristics of Islamic Communities (in Ghana)

Islamic communities are groups of Muslims who live together, share common beliefs, and organise their daily lives according to the teachings of Islam. In Ghana, these communities can be found in both cities and rural areas, especially in Zongo communities, which are well known for their cultural richness and religious activities. Their way of life is shaped by values from the Qur’an, the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and traditions passed down through generations.

These communities are not only about prayer and religious education; they are living networks where religion, culture, education, trade, and social life are closely connected. A mosque (masjid) is usually at the centre, with an imam or religious leader guiding worship and community decisions. Festivals, communal work, and charity are important parts of everyday life, making the community closely knit and supportive.

Over time, Ghanaian Islamic communities have developed unique features that blend Islamic principles with Ghana's diverse cultures. This includes special foods, dressing styles, market life, and peaceful cooperation with people of other faiths. By studying these characteristics, you will see how religion shapes identity and helps communities contribute to national development.

### Activity 5.5 What Makes a Muslim Community Unique?

1. Look at the pictures provided in your book or by your teacher (e.g., mosque, market scene, people in Islamic dress).
2. Think: What makes a Muslim community different from others? Work with people next to you to discuss your ideas.
3. Share one example from your own community.
4. Write or record a short reflection: Which Islamic value do I see most often in my community and why?



### Characteristics of Islamic communities in Ghana

#### 1. Religious Characteristics

- a. Communal Worship: Muslims gather for daily prayers, with Friday Jumu'ah as a major weekly event.
- b. Five Pillars of Islam: Faith, prayer, fasting, charity, and pilgrimage are practised openly.
- c. Modest Dressing: Men and women dress according to Islamic teachings, promoting dignity and respect.
- d. Leadership: Imams and scholars guide the community in worship, teaching, and moral decision-making.

## 2. Social and Cultural Life

- a. Values: Mutual respect, hospitality to visitors, caring for neighbours, and obeying elders are important.
- b. Festivals: Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are celebrated with prayer, feasting, and sharing with the needy.
- c. Healing and Support: Communities may offer herbal or faith-based healing and support for members in need.

## 3. Educational Features

- a. Makaranta: Children and youth learn Arabic, Qur'an memorisation, and Islamic morals.
- b. Moral Education: Islamic teachings guide good behaviour, honesty, and responsibility.

## 4. Economic Life

- a. Trade and Commerce: Many Muslims in Ghana work as traders, artisans, and market sellers.
- b. Market Centres: Zongo markets are important for selling food, clothing, and household goods, and also for social interaction.

## 5. Food Culture

- a. Zongo Cuisine: Popular dishes include waakye, hausa kooko, koose, maasa, tumbani, tuo zafi, sobolo, and burkina.
- b. These foods have spread across Ghana, enriching national cuisine.

## 6. Physical Features

- a. Mosques: From small local masjids to large centres like the Ghana National Mosque, these are places for worship, learning, and community meetings.
- b. Islamic Art: Arabic calligraphy and geometric designs often decorate mosques and community spaces.

## 7. Peace and Interfaith Contributions

- a. Peacebuilding: Muslim communities promote harmony with other religions through dialogue and cooperation.
- b. Community Service: Muslim youth groups and NGOs organise health drives, clean-ups, and charity events to support national development.

### Activity 5.6 Exploring Community Life in Groups

1. Your teacher will organise the class into four groups. Each group studies one of the areas listed below.
  - a. Group 1: Worship and religious rituals
  - b. Group 2: Education and leadership (Makaranta, Imams)
  - c. Group 3: Social values and family roles
  - d. Group 4: Peace-building, charity, and community service

2. In your groups, use books, community knowledge, or interviews to gather examples of the focus areas, including images representing the focus of your group.
3. Make a short presentation, which may be in any of the forms listed;
  - a. Use a poster
  - b. Act a short drama/skit
  - c. Tell a story
4. After all groups present, hold a question-and-answer session.

## Why This Matters

Learning about the characteristics of Islamic communities helps you understand how faith shapes daily life while promoting unity and respect among people of different backgrounds. It encourages you to appreciate traditions that uphold honesty, fairness, and care for others, while also recognising the importance of including everyone in community life.

By studying these features, you develop the ability to work with others peacefully, communicate effectively, and solve problems in ways that benefit the whole society. You also learn to value the strengths that men, women, the young, the elderly, and people with different abilities bring to a community.

This knowledge prepares you to be a responsible citizen who can protect cultural heritage while also adapting to new ideas and changes in the world. It equips you to contribute to your community with understanding, respect, and a spirit of cooperation.

### Activity 5.8 Life Inside My Community (Home Work)

*This activity will help you learn more about what happens in an Islamic community and understand how faith shapes everyday life. Follow the steps below and use clear, simple language as you complete each task.*

#### Step 1: Prepare Questions

1. Think of 2–3 easy questions you can ask or observe. Here are some examples to guide you:
  - a. How do people gather and pray together in the mosque?
  - b. What services or help does the community offer to others?
  - c. How are disagreements or problems solved among people?

You can use these questions or create your own based on what you want to find out.

#### Step 2: Find Out More

2. Visit a nearby Islamic community, or invite someone from the community, such as an imam, elder, or youth leader, to speak with you.
3. Watch what happens or ask your questions to learn about daily life.

### Step 3: Record Your Findings

4. Write down or draw what you discover.
5. Organise your notes or drawings under these three headings:
  - a. Daily Worship: How do people pray and gather for worship each day?
  - b. Education: How do people learn about their faith and other important knowledge?
  - c. Community Service/Charity: What do people do to help others and make the community better?

### Step 4: Share and Reflect

6. Share what you found with your class or a partner.
7. Think about this question and write a short answer: What is one thing my community does really well that others could learn from?

**Remember:** By doing this activity, you will discover how Islamic communities work together, help others, and solve problems. This will help you appreciate the strengths and traditions in your own community and learn how you can contribute too.

## THE CHANGING ROLES OF ISLAMIC COMMUNITIES

### Islamic Communities go Beyond Local Matters

Islamic communities in Ghana have long been central to religious life, social unity, and moral guidance. Traditionally, they provided spaces for worship, moral teaching, conflict resolution, and religious education through makaranta. Trade, marriage rites, and leadership in Zongo communities also reflected their influence.

In recent decades, these roles have expanded in response to changes in Ghanaian society and the world. Muslim organisations, women's groups, and youth leaders are now more visible in peacebuilding, formal education, environmental advocacy, and community development. This shows that Islamic communities are adapting to meet the needs of a changing world while remaining true to their faith.

Today, Islamic communities in Ghana continue to support moral values and social cohesion, while contributing to national development through partnerships with government agencies, NGOs, and other faith groups. Their work now goes beyond local religious matters to include global concerns like climate change, public health, and education for all.

### Traditional Roles of Muslim Communities

1. Religious education through makaranta schools, where Arabic, Qur'an recitation, and Islamic morals are taught.
2. Moral guidance and counselling provided by imams and community elders to help shape behaviour.
3. Dispute resolution in families and neighbourhoods, often led by religious leaders.
4. Participation in trade and commerce, with markets in Zongo communities serving as business hubs.

5. Organisation of religious rites such as marriage, naming ceremonies, and funerals following Islamic guidelines.
6. Leadership roles in Zongo communities, often involving decision-making for communal welfare.
7. Charitable acts, such as sharing food during Ramadan and providing for the poor.

## Emerging and Contemporary Roles

1. Peacebuilding efforts, especially in multi-religious areas, through dialogue and mediation.
2. Health awareness campaigns on issues like sanitation, disease prevention, and maternal health.
3. Formal education initiatives, including the Islamic Education Unit's integration into the national school system.
4. Support for girl-child education by organisations such as the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Ghana (FOMWAG).
5. Conflict mediation involving community leaders and youth groups.
6. Civic development through Muslim NGOs and community-based projects.
7. Environmental stewardship, including tree planting and awareness on waste management.

### Activity 5.9 Then and Now: Islamic Communities Evolving

Look at two sets of pictures or short descriptions from your teacher showing a Muslim community in Ghana 50 years ago and today.

1. As a class, answer: "What has changed? What has stayed the same?"
2. Compare areas like education, women's roles, youth involvement, and community services.
3. In pairs, write one way your Islamic community contributes to Ghana today.

### Drivers of Change

1. National education reforms that incorporate Islamic schools into the mainstream system.
2. Urbanisation, which changes community needs and opportunities for interaction.
3. Media engagement, including radio, television, and social media platforms for education and da'wah.
4. Greater involvement of women in leadership and community decision-making.
5. Global concerns such as climate change and public health crises like COVID-19.
6. Interreligious collaboration, which builds trust and shared community projects.
7. Economic changes leading to new business ventures and skills development opportunities.

## Activity 5.10 Our Changing Role: Group Investigations

1. Your teacher will organise the class into four groups. Each group will focus on one topic for research and discussion:
  - a. Group A: Peacebuilding & Interfaith Relations
  - b. Group B: Education & Girls' Literacy
  - c. Group C: Economic Empowerment (for example, skills training or women's co-operatives)
  - d. Group D: Environmental Care & Public Health
2. Within your group, share real-life examples from your own community or stories from the news related to your topic.
3. Work together to create a short presentation. This could be a poster, a brief skit, or a role-play that demonstrates positive changes in your chosen area.
4. Present your group's work to the rest of the class. After your presentation, each member should mention one personal action they can take to support positive change in this area.

### Ongoing Relevance to Ghana's Development

1. Promotion of moral values like honesty, hard work, and respect for others.
2. Advocacy for social justice, fairness, and the protection of rights.
3. Literacy programmes for both adults and children to improve education levels.
4. National unity building through interfaith activities and civic engagement.
5. Partnerships with government agencies on education, health, and peace projects.
6. Youth empowerment through skills training, mentorship, and sports.
7. Humanitarian assistance, such as food aid, scholarships, and disaster relief.

### Why This Matters

By exploring how the roles of Islamic communities have evolved, you will gain a deeper appreciation for how faith responds to modern challenges while holding onto its core values. This insight encourages you to take an active part in your community, to respect diversity, and to collaborate with people from different backgrounds and beliefs.

Through this study, you can see how personal qualities such as honesty, service, and respect for others can help shape a better society. You will also develop valuable skills—like problem-solving, leadership, and teamwork—that will prepare you to contribute to peace, justice, and progress in Ghana. Most importantly, you will understand that everyone—including men, women, young people, and persons with different abilities—has something important to offer in building strong and caring communities.

## Activity 5.11 Tracing the Journey: Timeline Creation

1. In small groups, build a timeline of Muslim community roles in Ghana from the past to today.  
Include events like:
  - a. Start of makaranta education
  - b. Muslim traders in Ghana's early markets
  - c. Creation of the Islamic Education Unit
  - d. Modern NGOs in health, charity, and climate action
2. Add pictures, Qur'anic verses, or short captions for each event.
3. Walk around the “timeline gallery” in class and write: “The biggest change I see is...”

### Summary: What You Have Learned

- a. Islamic communities in Ghana have both traditional and new roles in society.
- b. Traditional roles included education, moral guidance, dispute resolution, and trade.
- c. Contemporary roles include peacebuilding, health campaigns, interfaith work, and environmental care.
- d. Women and youth are increasingly active in leadership and development work.
- e. Partnerships with other groups and organisations extend the influence of Islamic communities beyond religious matters.

## ISLAM AND OTHER RELIGIONS IN GHANA

Living together peacefully is an important part of life in Ghana. In many communities, Muslims share towns, villages, and cities with Christians and followers of African Indigenous Religions (AIR). These groups meet in markets, work together in offices, and sometimes live in the same households. This shared life has created opportunities for cooperation and mutual respect.

From the earliest days of Islam in Ghana, Muslim traders, scholars, and leaders worked alongside people of other faiths. They exchanged goods, ideas, and moral values. They attended each other's community events and helped solve problems affecting everyone, such as access to water or the need for schools.

Today, this peaceful co-existence continues through interfaith dialogue, joint development projects, and shared celebrations. In this lesson, you will learn about the ways Islam interacts with other religions in Ghana, the shared values that unite us, and how communities solve differences without conflict.

## Key Expressions

- **Interfaith Dialogue** – Communication between people of different religions to promote understanding.
- **Religious Co-existence** – Peaceful living among people of various faiths.
- **Cultural Harmony** – Blending different traditions respectfully.
- **Community Solidarity** – Unity and mutual support within a community.

## Areas of Religious Interaction

Religious interaction in Ghana is evident in many aspects of community life. People from different faiths participate together in communal events such as funerals, festivals, and naming ceremonies, fostering a sense of unity. Joint development projects, including the construction of schools, clinics, and wells, see collaboration across religious lines, while public spaces like markets, sports fields, and community halls are shared by all. There is mutual respect for each other's times of worship and observance of holy days, and intermarriages and family connections often extend across faiths, further strengthening the bonds between communities.

## Shared Moral Values

Honesty and truthfulness are highly valued in both trade and everyday interactions, forming the foundation of trust in the community. There is deep respect for elders and community leaders, whose guidance helps maintain harmony and order. Hospitality towards visitors, regardless of their religious affiliation, is widely practised, reflecting a welcoming spirit across faiths. Caring for the poor and needy is a shared responsibility, with all members of the community contributing to the wellbeing of the less fortunate. Above all, there is a strong commitment to peace and fairness in dealings with others, ensuring that justice and mutual respect prevail in every aspect of communal life.

### Activity 5.12 Living Together in Peace

Think of ways in which Muslims and non-Muslims live peacefully in your community.

1. Discuss in class: “How do Muslims live peacefully with people of other religions in our community?”
2. Share examples like attending neighbours' events or working together on clean-up days.
3. Talk about shared values—honesty, respect, kindness—found in Islam, Christianity, and AIR.
4. Write in your journal: “One thing I can do to promote peace in my multi-religious community.”

## Cultural Practices Promoting Harmony

Peaceful co-existence in Ghanaian communities is fostered through the active inclusion of representatives from diverse religious backgrounds in decision-making processes. People of various faiths attend one another's religious celebrations, such as Eid and Christmas, which strengthens mutual understanding and respect. Joint cultural activities—including storytelling, music, and sports—further promote unity, while the practice of traditional greetings and courtesies is maintained across different faiths. Additionally, there is a shared respect for local customs that encourage non-violence and harmony, ensuring that all members of the community feel valued and welcome.

### Activity 5.13 Our Shared Spaces

1. Work in three groups:
  - a. **Group 1:** Shared community events (e.g., funerals, community clean-ups)
  - b. **Group 2:** Common moral values (e.g., honesty, love, peace)
  - c. **Group 3:** Joint leadership roles (e.g., chiefs, councils, school boards)
2. Each group:
  - a. Collect examples from your own experience or stories from elders.
  - b. Present your findings using a poster, short skit, or oral presentation.
  - c. Add your best idea to a class mural titled “Faiths Working Together”.

## Strategies for Peaceful Co-existence

1. Mediation by chiefs, imams, pastors, and other opinion leaders during disputes.
2. Religious education in schools that encourages respect for all faiths.
3. Community meetings where different religious groups plan events together.
4. Creation of youth groups that include members from all faith backgrounds.
5. Using local radio or social media to spread peace messages.

## The Role of Interfaith Dialogue

1. National platforms like the Ghana Peace Council promoting unity.
2. Local interfaith meetings where religious leaders discuss community needs.
3. Collaborative responses to crises, such as health emergencies or disasters.
4. Public campaigns for tolerance and against discrimination.
5. Strengthening relationships without forcing anyone to change their faith.

## Activity 5.15 Mapping Our Unity

1. Create a concept map titled “**Islam–AIR–Christianity Collaboration in Ghana**” with these branches:
  - a. **Family Life** (e.g., naming, respect for elders)
  - b. **Peacebuilding** (e.g., peace marches, mediation)
  - c. **Cultural Celebrations** (e.g., festival greetings, dress)
  - d. **Education and Health** (e.g., faith-based schools, clinics)
2. Share your map with a partner and tell them one new thing you learned about another religion.

## Why This Matters

When people of different religions live together peacefully, the whole nation benefits. Communities are safer, development is faster, and children grow up learning respect and cooperation. By building trust, people can solve problems together, from fixing a broken borehole to stopping the spread of violence. Living this way also shows that faith can be a force for unity, not division. It builds strong relationships between neighbours, encourages fairness in leadership, and ensures everyone’s voice is heard. These skills—respect, problem-solving, and teamwork—are also valuable in school, at work, and in leadership. They help us become good citizens who care for the common good.

## Summary: What You Have Learned

In Ghana, Muslims live alongside Christians and followers of AIR in ways that encourage peace and progress. They share public spaces, help each other in times of need, and celebrate together. Common values such as honesty, hospitality, and respect for elders create a strong foundation for harmony. Interfaith dialogue and cooperation in development projects strengthen these bonds. Peaceful co-existence is not just possible, it is already happening, and we all have a role to keep it growing.

## EXTENDED READING

- Cambridge University Press: Islam in a Zongo: Muslim Lifeworlds in Ghana — an in-depth ethnographic and historical study of Zongo communities in southern Ghana, tracing how migrant Muslim wards formed, their diverse practices, and Islamic orders such as Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya. ([cambridgeblog.org](https://cambridgeblog.org))
- Explore Kumasi: “The Zongo Community in Kumasi: A Powerful Legacy...” — a richly descriptive account of how Kumasi’s Zongo grew from a temporary camp to vibrant neighbourhood, detailing trade, interethnic relations, and religious life. ([Explore Kumasi](#))
- Modern Ghana / Scholar Schildkrout: “Formation of Zongos in Asante” — explores the multicultural origins of Asante Zongos, early integration of Muslims into the Asante political sphere, and the roles of Hausa, Dyula, and Wangara migrants. ([Modern Ghana](#))

- Wikipedia: Al-Hajj Salim Suwari (Suwarian tradition) — introduces the Suwarian tradition of peaceful coexistence that influenced Islamic thought in Ghana and the broader Sahel, emphasising tolerance and thoughtful minority engagement. ([Wikipedia](#))
- Ghana News Agency: “Chief Imams form Association to inculcate Islamic teachings in Zongo youth” — a contemporary example showing how Zongo religious leadership organises to strengthen youth education, moral discipline, and peace within communities. ([Ghana National Association](#))

# REVIEW QUESTIONS 5

## Multiple Choice Questions

1. In which year did the Prophet's Hijrah to Madinah take place?
  - A. 610 CE
  - B. 622 CE
  - C. 632 CE
  - D. 600 CE
2. Which feature of the Madinah community most helped it include different social groups?
  - A. Strictly uniform dress code for all members
  - B. A written constitution that guaranteed rights and shared responsibilities
  - C. A single marketplace controlled by the Prophet (SAW)
  - D. Complete separation of religious and civic life
3. Islam reached present-day Ghana mainly through large-scale military conquest.
  - A. True
  - B. False
4. Which place usually serves as the centre for worship, education and community decision-making in an Islamic community?
  - A. School
  - B. Market
  - C. Mosque (masjid)
  - D. Chief's palace
5. Which statement best describes the economic life of many Zongo communities?
  - A. They rely only on subsistence farming.
  - B. They were mainly industrial manufacturing centres.
  - C. They developed active market and trading networks that supported local and regional commerce.
  - D. They never participated in national trade.
6. A “makaranta” is a Qur'anic school where children learn Qur'an recitation and Arabic basics.
  - A. True
  - B. False
7. Which of the following is an example of an emerging role for Islamic communities in Ghana?
  - A. Only organising traditional rites
  - B. Running health awareness campaigns and environmental activities
  - C. Rejecting all forms of formal education
  - D. Stopping all trade activities

**8.** Which driver of change has most directly increased women's participation in leadership and education in Islamic communities?

- Traditional dress codes
- National education reforms and girls' literacy programmes
- Seasonal festivals
- Increased rainfall

**9.** Islamic communities in Ghana now engage in environmental stewardship such as tree planting.

- True
- False

**10.** What does "interfaith dialogue" mean?

- Forcing others to change faith
- Avoiding people of other religions
- Communication between people of different religions to promote understanding
- Only attending your own religious events

**11.** Which of the following is a clear example of religious co-existence mentioned in the lesson?

- Refusing to share public spaces
- Joint development projects (building schools, wells, clinics) involving different faith groups
- Banning intermarriage entirely
- Segregated markets by faith

**12.** Interfaith cooperation in Ghana sometimes includes religious leaders working together to mediate disputes.

- True
- False

## Essay Questions

- Analyse how the social values practised in the Madinah community (for example: justice, mutual support, shared responsibility) influenced the formation and organisation of later Muslim settlements such as Zongos in Ghana. Use specific examples.
- Evaluate the roles of the Khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn (Rightly Guided Caliphs) in creating institutions and systems that helped Islam spread across North and West Africa.
- Describe three characteristics of Islamic communities in Ghana (religious, social and economic). Explain briefly how each characteristic supports daily community life.
- Assess the contribution of Zongo markets and makaranta (Qur'anic schools) to preserving Islamic identity and to Ghana's wider cultural life.
- Discuss two traditional roles and two emerging roles of Islamic communities in Ghana today. Give examples and explain why the newer roles developed.

6. Design a short community programme that an Islamic organisation could run to improve youth employment in a Zongo. Describe the main activities, partners and measurable outcomes.
7. Examine three practical ways Muslims in Ghana collaborate with Christians and followers of AIR to promote peaceful co-existence in local communities.
8. Analyse how interfaith dialogue can be used to resolve a specific community problem (for example: water access or land dispute). Outline the steps you would recommend.

## Short answer questions

1. List three values that made the Madinah community strong and explain briefly one of them.
2. Explain two ways Mande traders and Hausa clerics helped establish Muslim communities in what is now Ghana.
3. Give two functions of an imam in a Ghanaian Islamic community.
4. Explain briefly how makaranta contribute to both religious education and moral formation in Zongo communities.
5. Name two contemporary community projects that Islamic groups in Ghana now undertake (e.g., health, environment).
6. Explain how urbanisation changes the needs and roles of Islamic communities.
7. Define “religious co-existence” and give one community example.
8. List two shared moral values between Islam and Christianity that help promote peace in Ghana.

## Fill-in-the-blanks

1. The Hijrah to Madinah took place in the year \_\_\_\_\_ CE.
2. Early multi-ethnic Muslim settlements in Ghana are commonly called \_\_\_\_\_ (also spelled “Zango”).
3. The centre for worship and community meetings in Islamic communities is the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Children who attend Qur’anic schools to learn Qur'an recitation and Arabic attend a \_\_\_\_\_ (local term).
5. An example of an emerging role for Islamic communities is organising \_\_\_\_\_ campaigns (e.g., sanitation and disease prevention).
6. One driver of change that affects Islamic community life is \_\_\_\_\_ (for example, movement from rural to urban areas).
7. Working together to build a school or clinic is an example of a joint \_\_\_\_\_ project.
8. A national body mentioned as promoting unity and peace in Ghana is the \_\_\_\_\_ (two words).

SECTION

6

# ISLAM AND THE ENVIRONMENT



# RELIGION AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

## Religion and the Environment

### INTRODUCTION

In this section, you will examine the vital connection between Islam and the environment, focusing on the responsibility Muslims hold as stewards of creation. Key lessons include understanding the religious principles guiding human use of the environment, the consequences of harmful actions such as illegal mining (galamsey), and the collective duty to preserve the natural world. The section explores how Islamic teachings encourage care for the environment, emphasising values such as respect, discipline, and community service. Through discussions and practical activities, you are invited to consider how collective responsibility and positive action can address contemporary environmental challenges. The Mosque is highlighted not only as a centre for worship and learning but also as a hub for community initiatives and social support. By engaging with these ideas, you will learn how Islamic principles can inform everyday decisions, foster unity, and promote sustainable practices within your community. This foundation will support your personal development and prepare you for further study in Islamic Religious Education as you move forward in your academic journey.

#### KEY IDEAS

- **Human Use of the Environment:** People depend on the environment for farming, building, mining, and other daily activities. In Ghana, these activities support life and development but can also cause harm if not managed well.
- **Harm Caused by Human Actions:** Some human actions damage the environment instead of protecting it. Examples include cutting trees without replanting, polluting rivers, and burning waste in the open.
- **Effects of Illegal Mining (Galamsey):** Mining without proper control destroys farmlands, pollutes rivers such as the Pra and Ankobra, and removes trees that protect the soil.
- **Deforestation and Pollution:** Deforestation removes animal habitats and affects rainfall. Plastic waste blocks drains and causes flooding, while burning rubbish and car fumes pollute the air and harm human health.
- **Protecting the Environment:** Taking care of nature keeps our surroundings clean, supports healthy living, and ensures future generations also benefit from the land, water, and air we enjoy today.

### Activity 6.1 Spot the Harm

1. Look at pictures provided by your teacher (or draw from memory) of activities such as tree cutting, galamsey, burning rubbish, or dumping waste in rivers.
2. For each picture, say whether it is good or harmful for the environment.
3. Explain why you think so.
4. In pairs, list three harmful activities you have seen in your area and one way to stop each one.

## POSITIVE HUMAN PRACTICES

Even though people can harm the environment, we can also protect it through good actions such as:

1. Tree Planting: Growing new trees keeps the air clean, provides shade, and prevents soil erosion.
2. Recycling and Reusing: Using materials more than once reduces waste and saves resources.
3. Proper Waste Disposal: Putting rubbish in bins and ensuring waste is collected keeps the community clean and prevents disease.
4. Environmental Clean-Up Campaigns: Community clean-up days bring people together to remove rubbish and improve hygiene.

## Consequences of Environmental Harm

When the environment is damaged, everyone suffers. Some effects include:

1. Health Risks: Dirty water can cause diarrhoea and typhoid. Air pollution can cause coughs and other breathing problems.
2. Loss of Biodiversity: Some plants and animals may disappear forever if their habitats are destroyed.
3. Climate Change: When trees are cut down and air is polluted, weather patterns change. This can lead to floods, droughts, or very hot temperatures.

### Activity 6.2 Our Environment Before and After

1. In groups of four, draw two simple pictures on paper:
  - a. Picture 1: A clean, green environment.
  - b. Picture 2: The same place after harmful activities like waste dumping or tree cutting.
2. Under each picture, write two sentences describing what is happening.
3. Present your drawings to the class and explain the differences.

## Why This Matters

When we care for the environment, we protect the health, safety, and future of our community. Keeping our surroundings clean, planting trees, and using resources wisely help everyone live better lives. These actions encourage fairness, cooperation, and shared responsibility among people of different backgrounds.

By acting responsibly, we build respect for one another, support the wellbeing of vulnerable groups, and develop problem-solving skills for real-life challenges. In this way, protecting the environment is not just about nature – it is also about building a strong, peaceful, and healthy society for today and the future.

### Activity 6.3 Be an Eco-Champion

1. Think of **one harmful activity** that happens in your community (e.g., plastic littering).
2. Write down a **simple action plan** you and your friends can do to reduce it. For example:
  - a. Collect plastic bottles for recycling.
  - b. Plant two trees each rainy season.
  - c. Hold a clean-up day once a month.
3. Share your plan in a small group.
4. Each group chooses one action to start doing in the school or community.

#### Summary: What You Have Learned

1. The environment provides essential resources for life.
2. Human activities such as galamsey, deforestation, and pollution can damage the environment.
3. Good practices like tree planting, recycling, and proper waste management help protect nature.
4. Environmental damage can cause sickness, loss of animals and plants, and climate change.
5. Everyone has a role to play in protecting the environment for the benefit of the whole community.

## ISLAMIC ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

### Islamic teachings

In Islam, the earth and everything in it are gifts from Allah and humans have been given the responsibility to care for them. This means protecting nature, avoiding harm, and using resources wisely. These values guide Muslims in living in a way that benefits people,

animals and the environment. The Qur'an and Hadith remind believers that caring for the environment is part of faith. They warn against waste, destruction and greed. They also encourage cleanliness, moderation and kindness to all living things. In Ghana today, these teachings can help solve problems like pollution, deforestation and waste. By following Islamic environmental values, Muslim communities can protect natural resources for future generations while living in peace with others and with nature.

### Activity 6.4 Islamic Teachings for a Greener Ghana

1. Think about one place in your community that is polluted or damaged (e.g., a dirty river, a littered street).
2. Read or listen to Qur'an 6:165 (humans as trustees of the earth) and Qur'an 7:31 (do not be excessive).
3. With a partner, discuss the responses to the following questions.
  - a. What would a Muslim do to protect this place?
  - b. Which Islamic value guides that action (stewardship, moderation, cleanliness)?
4. Share your ideas with the class.

### Stewardship (Khilafah)

Allah has appointed humans as khalifah, or trustees, of the earth, as stated in Qur'an 6:165. As trustees, it is their duty to care for, protect, and enhance all that has been entrusted to them, which includes safeguarding forests, rivers, and animals rather than exploiting these resources for selfish purposes. In Ghana, this responsibility might be fulfilled by actions such as planting trees and actively protecting water sources, demonstrating a commitment to environmental stewardship in line with Islamic teachings.

### Cleanliness (Taharah)

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "Cleanliness is half of faith" (Sahih Muslim). By maintaining cleanliness in our bodies, clothing, homes, and surroundings, we show respect for Allah's creation. This responsibility extends to disposing of waste properly and ensuring that communal areas such as mosques, schools, and markets remain tidy and presentable.

### Avoiding Waste (Tabzeer)

The Qur'an cautions against wastefulness in verse 17:27, declaring, "Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils." This teaching underlines that squandering food, water, or money is considered wrong in Islam. In everyday life, Muslims are encouraged to take only what they need and to share with others, fostering a spirit of moderation and generosity in their communities.

## Moderation (Wasatiyyah)

Qur'an 7:31 teaches, "Eat and drink, but be not excessive." Islam promotes a balanced approach to consumption, advising against greed and the overuse of resources. This principle is relevant to all aspects of daily life, including eating, shopping, using water, and farming, reminding Muslims to practise moderation and avoid wastefulness.

## Prohibition of Harm (Fasad fil-ard)

As stated in Qur'an 7:56, "Do not cause corruption on the earth after it has been set in order." This teaching makes it clear that causing harm, such as polluting rivers, burning plastics, or destroying forests without necessity, is prohibited. Muslims are therefore encouraged to act in ways that benefit and improve the world around them, rather than causing damage or destruction.

### Activity 6.5 Our Values, Our Actions

1. Form 5 small groups. Each group takes one key Islamic environmental value.
  - Group A: Stewardship (Khilafah)
  - Group B: Cleanliness (Taharah)
  - Group C: Avoiding Waste (Tabzeer)
  - Group D: Moderation (Wasatiyyah)
  - Group E: Prohibition of Harm (Fasad fil-ard)
2. Prepare a short presentation which includes the features listed below.
  - The meaning of your value
  - A Qur'an verse or Hadith that supports it
  - A real-life example from Ghana
3. Present to the class using a simple poster or drawing.

**Outcome:** You learn the meaning of each value and how to apply it in real life.

## Why This Matters

When Muslims live by these environmental values, they protect life and resources for the next generation. These teachings promote fairness, care for others, and community responsibility. They help people work together for the common good, respect the rights of others, and solve problems peacefully. Living by these values also builds important life skills—like problem-solving, teamwork, and responsible decision-making. It strengthens community unity and encourages inclusion, ensuring that everyone, regardless of gender, ability, or background, can take part in caring for the environment.

## Activity 6.6 Environmental Values Map

1. Draw a big circle in the middle of your page and write: “Islamic Environmental Values”.
2. From the circle, draw 5 branches for the 5 values.
3. Under each branch, write at least 2 examples of how Muslims can show that value in Ghana (e.g., Stewardship → plant trees; protect water).
4. Swap maps with a partner and check if you can add more examples.

**Outcome:** You organise your understanding of Islamic environmental values in a clear visual way.

### Summary: What You Have Learned

1. Islam teaches that humans are stewards of the earth and must protect it.
2. Cleanliness is part of faith and includes caring for public spaces.
3. Waste is forbidden; moderation is encouraged in all things.
4. Muslims are told to avoid harming the environment and to use resources wisely.
5. These teachings can guide environmental care in Ghana today.

## ISLAMIC VALUES AND SCIENCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

### Islamic faith and science can really work together

Islam teaches that humans are caretakers of the earth (khalifah), entrusted to use its resources wisely and protect it for future generations. At the same time, science and technology provide powerful tools to solve environmental problems such as pollution, waste, and climate change. This lesson shows how faith and science can work together to create sustainable solutions.

In Ghana, we see examples where solar panels provide clean energy, water filtration systems make drinking water safe, and recycling reduces waste. However, science alone is not enough — without moral values like amanah (trust) and wasatiyyah (moderation), technology can also harm the environment, such as when mining equipment is misused for illegal activities or factories pollute rivers.

By learning how Islamic ethics guide the responsible use of scientific innovations, we can develop a balanced approach that protects the earth while improving the quality of life. This integration of faith and science helps us address modern challenges in a way that is both practical and pleasing to Allah.

## Activity 6.7 Faith and Science in Action

1. Think of a scientific tool or method you know (e.g., solar panel, water filter, recycling bin).
2. Your teacher or a classmate will explain how it works.
3. Discuss: “How can Islamic values like amanah (trust) and wasatiyyah (moderation) guide the use of this tool?”
4. Share one example in your notebook of how faith can improve the way we use science.

## Strengths and Limitations of Science and Technology

Science and technology offer valuable solutions to environmental challenges, including the use of solar energy, drip irrigation, waste recycling, and water treatment. When applied with care and guided by ethical values, these tools can help prevent harm to the environment and promote sustainability. However, if used without moral principles, such as those found in Islamic teachings, technology can also contribute to problems like oil spills or deforestation caused by machinery. Human responsibility and ethical guidance must shape the application of scientific innovations, ensuring that their benefits extend beyond material gains and lead to lasting stewardship of the earth.

## Complementarity between Islamic Values and Scientific Tools

Islamic ethics play a crucial role in ensuring that science is used in a responsible and beneficial manner. For instance, applying biotechnology in agriculture can help minimise food waste and protect the land from harm. By upholding values such as amanah (trust) and wasatiyyah (moderation), resources are used fairly and excessive exploitation is prevented. When Muslim communities integrate scientific progress with strong moral principles, they are better equipped to address environmental challenges effectively and sustainably. Both faith and science encourage long-term care for the planet and its people.

## Activity 6.8 Problem + Solution Match-Up

### Group Work – Collaborative Investigation

1. In small groups, choose one environmental problem in Ghana (e.g., plastic waste, dirty water, deforestation).
2. Research or brainstorm:
  - a. A scientific solution (e.g., recycling, tree planting, water purification).
  - b. An Islamic teaching that supports solving it.
3. Present your solution to the class using a simple chart with two columns: Science and Islam.

## Why This Matters

When we combine Islamic values with scientific knowledge, we make choices that protect life, preserve resources, and strengthen our communities. This approach promotes fairness, unity, and shared responsibility. It helps communities work together to solve real problems such as unsafe water, poor waste management, and deforestation. By developing problem-solving, teamwork, and creative thinking skills, we prepare ourselves to face future challenges while living in harmony with Allah's creation.

### Activity 6.9 Connecting the Dots: Concept Mapping – Visual Thinking

1. Draw a large circle in the middle of your page and write: **Protecting the Environment**.
2. Around it, make three branches: **Islamic Values, Science Tools, Results**.
3. Add examples under each branch (e.g., Khalifah ☰ Tree planting ☰ Clean air).
4. Share your map with a partner and add one new idea from their map to yours.

#### Summary: What You Have Learned

- Islam teaches moral values like stewardship, moderation, and responsibility that guide environmental care.
- Science and technology provide tools to address environmental challenges.
- Combining faith and science leads to more ethical, sustainable solutions.
- Without moral values, technology can harm the environment.
- Ghanaian communities can use both Islamic ethics and science to protect nature and improve lives.

## EXTENDED READING

- Islamic Philosophy's Approach to Environmental Ethics: An Analysis of the Teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith — Ahmad Zuhdi et al. (2024) Explores stewardship (khalifah), balance (mizan), and trust (amanah) as Islamic ethical principles supporting environmental sustainability. ([journal.ypidathu.or.id](http://journal.ypidathu.or.id))
- Islamic Environmental Ethics: A Cultural Framework for Sustainable Resource Management. A systematic literature review highlighting how Islamic values inform eco-friendly practices in education, agriculture, and policy. ([journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id](http://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id))
- Islamic Environmentalism (Wikipedia overview) Introduces Islamic environmentalism—a philosophy combining Qur'anic and prophetic teachings with ecological activism and conservation efforts. ([Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org))
- Eco Warriors Movement (Ghana) (Wikipedia entry). Showcases a youth-led environmental group in Ghana using storytelling, tree-planting, and inclusive education to promote sustainable practices. ([Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org))
- Amanah and Umma: Eco-Islam and Ecospiritual Epistemology (Frontiers in Communication, 2025) Discusses amanah (trust) as a spiritual concept rooted in caring for biodiversity, with real-life examples from Omani farming communities. ([Frontiers](https://www.frontiersin.org))

# REVIEW QUESTIONS 6

## Multiple Choice & True/False Questions

1. Which of the following is *not* a quality of a good Islamic leader?
  - A. Justice
  - B. Patience
  - C. Oppression
  - D. Honesty
2. Which practice is prohibited in Islamic business ethics?
  - A. Honesty
  - B. Riba (usury)
  - C. Fair pricing
  - D. Truthful advertising
3. A leader in Islam should always favour their family members over others.  
True/False
4. In Islam, leadership is considered a trust (Amanah). True/False
5. Islam encourages cheating if it benefits the seller. True/False
6. In Islam, both buyer and seller must be truthful in a transaction. True/False
7. Which of the following is encouraged in Islam?
  - A. Wasting water
  - B. Cutting trees unnecessarily
  - C. Planting trees
  - D. Polluting rivers
8. Islamic teachings allow wasting resources if they are abundant. True/False
9. The Qur'an encourages humans to act as stewards (Khalifah) of the earth. True/False
10. Which Qur'anic concept refers to humans being caretakers of the earth?
  - A. Shura
  - B. Khalifah
  - C. Zakat
  - D. Taqwa

## Essay Questions

1. Explain how the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) demonstrated fairness in his leadership.
2. Discuss the importance of consultation (Shura) in Islamic leadership and give two examples.
3. Explain why Islam forbids fraud in trade, giving at least two examples.

4. Analyse how fair-trade practices can promote community development in an Islamic society.
5. Describe how Muslims can practise environmental stewardship in daily life.
6. Evaluate the role of Islamic teachings in addressing modern environmental problems.

## Short Answer Questions

1. Who appoints leaders in an Islamic community?
2. Mention two responsibilities of an Islamic leader.
3. State one verse or Hadith that emphasises justice in leadership.
4. What is the Arabic term for interest or usury?
5. Mention two ethical practices in Islamic business.
6. State one Hadith about honesty in business.
7. What does the term “Khalifah” mean in relation to the environment?
8. Mention two environmental responsibilities of Muslims.
9. State one Qur’anic verse about protecting nature.

## Fill-in-the-Blanks

1. Leadership in Islam is described as a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. A good leader should practise \_\_\_\_\_ and justice.
3. The Arabic term for consultation in leadership is \_\_\_\_\_.
4. In Islam, \_\_\_\_\_ is forbidden because it exploits people.
5. Business dealings in Islam must be based on \_\_\_\_\_ and transparency.
6. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: “The truthful merchant will be with the \_\_\_\_\_ on the Day of Judgement.”
7. In Islam, humans are regarded as \_\_\_\_\_ of the earth.
8. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) encouraged the planting of \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Wasting natural resources is considered \_\_\_\_\_ in Islam.

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## GLOSSARY

<b>Accountability</b>	Being responsible for one's actions and decisions before God and society.
<b>African Indigenous Religion (AIR)</b>	Traditional African spiritual beliefs practised before the arrival of foreign religions.
<b>Afterlife</b>	Life that begins after death, as taught in Islamic belief.
<b>Ahlul Hadith</b>	Scholars who specialise in collecting and verifying the sayings of the Prophet.
<b>Akhlaq</b>	Islamic ethics guiding good behaviour, moral conduct, and social responsibility.
<b>Al-Qiyamah</b>	The Islamic term for the Day of Resurrection or Judgement.
<b>Almsgiving (Zakat)</b>	Giving part of wealth to help the poor, a pillar of Islam.
<b>Amulets (Tama)</b>	Objects worn for spiritual protection, often based on AIR or cultural beliefs.
<b>Ancestral Spirits</b>	AIR belief in the spirits of ancestors influencing the lives of the living.
<b>Angels</b>	Invisible beings created by Allah who obey His commands and perform divine tasks.

<b>Aqiqah</b>	An Islamic naming ceremony involving prayer and animal sacrifice for a newborn child.
<b>Ayah</b>	A verse in the Qur'an.
<b>Barzakh</b>	The stage between death and the Day of Judgement.
<b>Belief</b>	Accepting something as true, especially in religious or spiritual matters.
<b>Caliph</b>	A successor to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) who led the Muslim community after his death.
<b>Charity (Sadaqah)</b>	Voluntary act of giving to help others without expecting reward.
<b>Cleric</b>	A religious leader or scholar in Islam, such as a mallam, imam, or sheikh.
<b>Community</b>	A group of people united by shared religion, culture, or goals.
<b>Compassion</b>	Showing kindness and care towards others in need.
<b>Compilation</b>	The act of collecting and organising the Qur'an or Hadith into a written form.
<b>Concept Map</b>	A visual tool showing relationships between key ideas using branches and connections.
<b>Cooperation</b>	Working together with others to achieve a common good.
<b>Cultural Adaptation</b>	Adjusting religious practices to fit into local traditions and customs.
<b>Da'if Hadith</b>	A weak Hadith due to an unreliable chain or text.
<b>Da'wah</b>	Peaceful invitation or call to Islam through preaching, teaching, and good character.
<b>Day of Judgement</b>	A future day when Allah will judge all humans for their actions.
<b>Definition</b>	A clear explanation of the meaning of a word, idea, or concept.
<b>Dīn</b>	The Arabic word for religion; a complete way of life in Islam.
<b>Divine Decree (Qadar)</b>	The belief that everything happens by Allah's knowledge and will.
<b>Dream Interpretation</b>	Understanding messages from dreams, practiced in both AIR and some Muslim contexts.
<b>Equality</b>	Treating all people fairly without discrimination.
<b>Eternal Life</b>	Everlasting existence after death, either in Paradise or Hell.
<b>Faith (Iman)</b>	Complete belief and trust in Allah and His teachings.
<b>Fasting (Sawm)</b>	Abstaining from food, drink, and bad deeds for spiritual growth.
<b>Fiqh</b>	Human understanding and application of Islamic rules in daily life.
<b>Fitrah</b>	The natural human disposition to believe in and worship one God.
<b>Forgiveness</b>	Letting go of anger or resentment towards someone who has wronged you.
<b>Generosity</b>	Willingness to give and share with others.
<b>Hadith</b>	Recorded sayings, actions, and approvals of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).
<b>Hell (Jahannam)</b>	Place of punishment for wrongdoers in the afterlife.

<b>Hijrah</b>	The Prophet's migration from Makkah to Madinah in 622 CE for safety and religious freedom.
<b>Honesty</b>	Being truthful in words and actions.
<b>Ijma</b>	Consensus of Islamic scholars on religious matters.
<b>Imam</b>	A person who leads prayers in a mosque and often offers religious guidance.
<b>Iman</b>	Faith in the six key Islamic beliefs such as Allah, angels, and the prophets.
<b>Islamic Education</b>	Learning based on the Qur'an, Hadith, Arabic, and Islamic values and law.
<b>Islamic Orthodoxy</b>	Strict adherence to the original teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah.
<b>Isnad</b>	Chain of narrators who transmitted a Hadith.
<b>Jinn</b>	Unseen beings made from smokeless fire, mentioned in the Qur'an.
<b>Judgement</b>	God's final decision about each person's deeds on the Last Day.
<b>Justice</b>	Fair and equal treatment of all people according to moral and legal principles.
<b>Kindness</b>	Doing good and being gentle to others.
<b>Libation</b>	A traditional practice of pouring liquid to honour ancestors or spirits in AIR.
<b>Madhab</b>	A school of Islamic law or legal interpretation (e.g., Hanafi, Maliki).
<b>Makaranta</b>	Traditional Islamic school where children learn Qur'an, Arabic, and Islamic morals.
<b>Maqasid al-Shariah</b>	The main objectives of Islamic law: protect religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property.
<b>Matn</b>	The main text or content of a Hadith.
<b>Mercy</b>	Showing forgiveness and compassion even when one has power to punish.
<b>Misconception</b>	A mistaken or wrong idea or understanding about something.
<b>Mission (of the Prophet)</b>	The responsibility to preach Islam and guide people to monotheism and righteousness.
<b>Monotheism</b>	Belief in one God, a central teaching in Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.
<b>Morality</b>	Principles concerning right and wrong behaviour in personal and social life.
<b>Naming Ceremony</b>	Religious or cultural event to give a child their name.
<b>Paradise (Jannah)</b>	Place of eternal happiness and reward for believers.
<b>Patience</b>	Staying calm and hopeful during hardship.
<b>Profane</b>	That which is not sacred; ordinary or unholy.
<b>Prophets</b>	Human messengers chosen by Allah to deliver His guidance to people.
<b>Protection Rituals</b>	Spiritual acts performed for safety from harm, found in both AIR and cultural Islam.
<b>Qadar</b>	Belief that Allah has full control over all things, past and future.

<b>Qiyas</b>	Analogy reasoning in Islamic law to solve new issues using existing rulings.
<b>Qur'an</b>	The Holy Book of Islam revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW).
<b>Religion</b>	A system of belief, worship, and practice relating to the sacred or divine.
<b>Respect</b>	Valuing others' feelings, rights, and dignity.
<b>Resurrection</b>	Rising from the dead at the end of the world.
<b>Revealed Books</b>	Holy scriptures sent by Allah before the Qur'an, like the Torah and the Gospel.
<b>Revelation</b>	Divine message sent by Allah to His prophets.
<b>Sacred</b>	Something holy, special, and set apart for worship or religious use.
<b>Sahih al-Bukhari</b>	A famous authentic collection of Hadith compiled by Imam Bukhari.
<b>Sahih Hadith</b>	An authentic and reliable Hadith.
<b>Salvation</b>	Being saved from punishment and entering Paradise.
<b>Shari'ah</b>	Islamic law based on the Qur'an and Sunnah.
<b>Shariah</b>	The complete Islamic system of law and ethics based on the Qur'an and Sunnah.
<b>Shirk</b>	Associating others with Allah in worship; the gravest sin in Islam.
<b>Sin</b>	An act that goes against Allah's commands.
<b>Spirituality</b>	The inner connection with God and pursuit of religious meaning.
<b>Sunnah</b>	Practices and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), second to the Qur'an in authority.
<b>Surah</b>	A chapter in the Qur'an.
<b>Suwar</b>	Plural of Surah; chapters of the Qur'an.
<b>Syncretism</b>	Mixing different religions or traditions into a new combined form.
<b>Tafsir</b>	Interpretation or explanation of the Qur'an.
<b>Taqwa</b>	Consciousness and fear of Allah, leading to righteous living.
<b>Tawhid</b>	Belief in the absolute oneness and uniqueness of Allah.
<b>Theology</b>	The academic study of God and religious beliefs.
<b>Trans-Saharan Trade</b>	Trade routes across the Sahara Desert linking North and West African peoples and goods.
<b>Trustworthiness</b>	Being reliable and keeping one

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This book is intended to be used for the Year One Islamic Religious Studies Senior High School (SHS) Curriculum. It contains information and activities to support teachers to deliver the curriculum in the classroom as well as additional exercises to support learners' self-study and revision. Learners can use the review questions to assess their understanding and explore concepts and additional content in their own time using the extended reading list provided.

All materials can be accessed electronically from the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Microsite.



[Scan the QR Code to visit the website]



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