

GLOSSARY OF COMMON ISLAMIC TERMS:

Ahl al-Dimmah (or Dhimmis)

Are the non-Muslim subjects of an Islamic state who have been guaranteed protection of their rights- life, property and practice of their religion, etc.

Ahl al-Kitab

Literally 'People of the Book,' refers to the followers of Divine Revelation before the advent of the Prophet Muhammad

Al-Akhirah

After-Life, Hereafter, Next World.

Alim (pl. Ulama)

An Islamic religious scholar.

Allah

The Islamic God, rehashed from the pre Islamic Pagan Moon God

"He is God, the One God, Independent and Sought by all; He begets not, nor is He begotten, and there is none like unto Him." (The Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-Ikhlās)

Aqeeda

Literally means belief. In Islamic terms, it means the following six articles of faith:

1. Belief in Allah, the One God.
2. Belief in Allah's angels.
3. Belief in His revealed Books.
4. Belief in His messengers.
5. Belief in the Day of Judgment.
6. Belief in Fate and the Divine Decree.

Assalamu 'Alaikum

Means 'Peace be on you.' Greeting of the Muslims. The response to this greeting is 'Wa 'Alaikum Assalam,' and on you be the Peace.

Bab Al-Raiyan

The name of one of the gates of Heavens (Jannah) through which the people who often observe fasting will enter on the Day of Judgment.

Badr

The Battle of Badr ,fought March 13, 624 AD (17 Ramadan 2 AH in the Islamic calendar) Hejaz region of western Arabia (present-day Saudi Arabia), was a key battle in the early days of Islam and a turning point in Muhammad's battle with his opponents among the Quraish in Mecca.

Baitul Mal

An Islamic treasury intended for the benefit of the Muslims and the Islamic state and not for the leaders or the wealthy. Though the reverse is the reality in most Islamic countries

Bakka

Another name for Makkah, Mecca.

Al-Baqi'

A cemetery in Madinah. Many of the Sahabiyeen (companions) and family members of the MOhammed are buried here

Bismillah Hir Rehman Nir Rahim

"In the name of Allah, the Most Kind, the Most Mericful." This utterance is usually made by every Muslim who is about to embark on something lawful (Halal), regardless of the magnitude of the task. This is also the first verse of Surah Al-Fatehah (Chapter 1) of the Quran.

Buhtan

A false accusation, calumny, slander

Dar al-Harb

Dar al-Harb (Domain of War) refers to the territory under the hegemony of unbelievers, which is on terms of active or potential belligerency with the Domain of Islam.

Dar al-Kufr

Dar al-Kufr (Domain of Unbelief) refers to the territory under the hegemony of the unbelievers.

Dawah

Propagation of Islam through word and action, calling the people to follow the commandments of Allah and His Messenger Muhammad

Dhu'l-Hijjah

The 12th month of the Islamic calendar. The month in which the great pilgrimage to Makkah takes place.

Dhu'l Qa'da

The 11th month of the Islamic calendar.

Diyah

Blood money, paid by the guilty as a compensation for killing, wounding, etc. (pl. Diyaat).

Du'a

Supplication: invoking Allah for whatever one desires.

Duhr

Noon. The second obligatory prayer (Salah) of the day. It can be prayed at any time between noon and mid-afternoon.

Eid Al-Adha

Literally means "the feast of the sacrifice." This feast commemorates Prophet Ibrahim's obedience to Allah by being prepared to sacrifice his only son Ismel, peace be on both of them.

Eid Al-Fitr

Three day festival marking the end of Ramadan. It takes place on the 1st of Shawal, the 10th month of the Islamic calendar.

Fai

War booty or spoils of war

Fajr

"The Dawn". The time of the first obligatory prayer (Salah). It can be prayed at any time between the first light of dawn and just before sunrise. Also called Subh (morning).

Faqeeh

An Islamic scholar who can give a legal opinion or judgment.

Fard bi al-Kifayah

It signifies a collective duty of the Muslim community so that if some people carry it out no Muslim is considered blameworthy; but if no one carries it out all incur a collective guilt.

Fasad

Fasad, literally 'corruption', in Qur'anic terminology, means creating disorder and corruption on earth by following a path other than God's. Islam maintains that true peace and happiness emanate only through the observance of God's commands and through making a conscious effort to see that His laws alone are implemented in every sphere of life.

Fasad occurs when man violates God's laws and disobeys Him. Fasad may therefore be partial as well as total; partial when one disregards God's law in one aspect of life while acknowledging His sovereignty in other spheres. If a society is based on the denial of God, that society is bound to be a corrupt and exploitative society - hence full of fasad.

Fasiq

transgressor, evil doer, disobedient. The one who commits fisq.

Fatwa

A legal verdict given on a religious basis. The sources on which a fatwa is based are the Qur'an, and the Sunnah of the Prophet.

Fawahish

Applies to all those acts whose abominable character is self-evident. In the Qur'an all extra-marital sexual relationships, sodomy, nudity, false accusation of unchastity, and taking as one's wife a woman who had been married to one's father, are specifically reckoned as shameful deeds.

In Hadith, theft, taking intoxicating drinks and begging have been characterized as fawahish as have many other brazenly evil and indecent acts.

Fidya

Compensation for missing or wrongly practicing necessary acts of worship. Fidya usually takes the form of donating money, foodstuffs, or sacrificing an animal. Contrast with

Kaffara (making amends).

Fiqh

Islamic jurisprudence.

Fi sabil Allah

Fi sabil Allah (in the way of Allah) is a frequently used expression in the Qur'an which emphasizes those good acts should be done exclusively to please God. Generally the expression has been used in the Qur'an in connection with striving or spending for charitable purposes.

Fisq

Is transgression. It consists of disobedience to the command of God.

Fitnah

Fitnah has been used in the Quran in two meanings. It refers, firstly, to persecution, to a situation in which the believers are harassed and intimidated because of their religious convictions. Secondly, it refers to the state of affairs wherein the object of obedience is other than the One True God.

Furqan

Signifies that which enables one to distinguish between true and false; between real and fake.

Gharar

Selling something which has not yet been obtained. For example, selling eggs which have not yet been hatched.

Ghayy

Deception. Name of a pit in Hellfire.

Ghazwa

A battle for the cause of Allah in which Muhammad himself took part.

Gheebah

Talking evil about someone in his or her absence

Ghulool

Stealing from the war booty before its distribution.

Ghusl

The full ritual washing of the body with water alone to be pure for the prayer. to do Ghusl:

1. Wash your private parts,

2. do Wudu (ablution),
3. wash your entire body without touching your private parts again.

Gog and Magog

Two evil empires. They are mentioned in the Qur'an and Ahadeeth (Bukhari and Muslim) when mentioning some of the scenes just before the final hour.

Hadi

A cow, sheep or a goat that is offered as a sacrifice by a pilgrim during the Hajj.

Hadith

The word hadith literally means communication or narration. In the Islamic context it has come to denote the record of what the Prophet said, did, or tacitly approved. According to some scholars, the word hadith also covers reports about the sayings and deeds, etc. of the

Companions of the Prophet in addition to the Prophet himself. The whole body of Traditions is termed Hadith and its science 'Ilm al-Hadith.

Hajar Al-Aswad

The 'Black Stone', a stone which some say fell from heaven, set into one corner of the Ka'bah in Makkah by Prophet Ibrahim, which the pilgrims, in imitation of Prophet Muhammad kiss, so unifying all the Muslims throughout the ages in one place.

Hajj (Major Pilgrimage)

Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam, a duty one must perform during one's life-time if one has the financial resources for it. It must be performed during certain specified dates of Dhu al-Hijjah. In addition to tawaf and sa'y, there are a few other requirements but especially one's standing (i.e. stay) in 'Arafat during the day-time on 9th of Dhu al-Hijjah.

Halal

Lawful as defined by Allah.

Hanif

Hanif, literally 'one who is inclined', is used in the Qur'an in ten places, six with reference to the Prophet Abraham and the rest for one who is sincere and sound in his faith. The term as such connotes sincerity, uprightness and single-mindedness in one's inclination, dedication and commitment to God or to His faith.

Haram

1. Any act or deed which is prohibited by Allah and will incur His wrath and punishment.
2. Sanctuary or boundary of any Masjid (mosque), but usually used with regard to the sanctuaries of the Masjid al-Haram in Makkah and Masjid al-Rasool in Madinah. This is why they are referred to as 'Al-Haramain al-Sharifain,' the two Holy Sanctuaries.

Hashr

1. Another name for the Day of Judgement, Yaum al-Hashr, "Day of the Gathering."
2. "The Exile". Surah 59 of the Qur'an.

Hawd

The watering-place of Muhammad, whose pure drink will refresh those who have crossed the Siraat before entering the Garden on the Last Day.

Hawiyah

The sixth level of Nar (Hellfire). This will be the home of the Christians.

Hijab

Any kind of veil-it could be a curtain, a facial veil, etc. The facial Hijab is divided into two types:

1. Niqab: full facial covering.
2. Khimar: partial facial covering, i.e., it covers the face, but leaves the eyes exposed.

It is said that the universe is what veils the Creator from the creation. If you find the veil awe-inspiring, how much more awe-inspiring is the One behind the veil!

Hijrah

Hijrah signifies migration from a land where a Muslim is unable to live according to the precepts of his faith to a land where it is possible to do so. The hijrah par excellence for Muslims is the hijrah of the Prophet which not only provided him and his followers an opportunity to build a society and state according to the ideals of Islam.

Hijr

i Name of the Islamic lunar calendar. It took its name from the early Muslims who migrated from Makkah to Madinah, and commences from the date of Mohammad's Hijrah, which he made with Abu Bakr as-Siddiq in 622 C.E.

The months of the Islamic calendar are:

1. Muharram 2. Safar 3. Rabi al-Awal 4. Rabi al-Thani 5. Jumada al-Awal 6. Jumada al-Thani 7. Rajab 8. Sha'ban 9. Ramadan 10. Shawal 11. Dhul Qi'da 12. Dhul Hijjah

Hubal

Hubal, the chief of the minor deities, was an image of a man, and was said to have been originally brought to Arabia from Syria. It was one of the so many false gods of Arabs housed in the Kabah.

Hukm

Hukm, literally judgement, decision, sometimes gives the meaning of wisdom, discretion, knowledge and the power to see things in their true perspective.

Iblis

Iblis literally means 'thoroughly disappointed; one in utter despair.' In Islamic terminology it denotes the jinn, who refused the command of Allah to prostrate before Adam out of vanity. He also asked God to allow him a term when he might mislead and tempt mankind to error.

This term was granted to him by God where after he became the chief promoter of evil and prompted Adam and Eve to disobey God's order. He is also called al-Shaytan (Satan). He is possessed of a specific personality and is not just an abstract force.

'Iddah

'Iddah denotes the waiting period that a woman is required to observe as a consequence of the nullification of her marriage with her husband or because of the husband's death.

Iftar

Breaking of the fast immediately after sunset. Iftar takes place at Maghrib as soon as the Call to Prayer (Adhan) is called.

Ihram

Ihram denotes the state of consecration which is essentially required for performing Hajj and 'Umrah. The outward garb which consists in the case of men of just two sheets of cloth instead of tailored clothes is one of the conditions of ihram but not identical with it.

Apart from donning that garb, one is required to pronounce talbiyah (Labbayk Allahumma Labbayk...). In the state of ihram the pilgrim is required to observe many prohibitions; e.g. he may not hunt, shave or trim his hair, shed blood, use perfume, or indulge in sexual gratification.

Ijtihad

To exercise personal judgment based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Ila'

Ila' denotes a husband's vow to abstain from sexual relations with his wife. The maximum permissible limit for abstaining from sexual relations in wedlock under such a vow is four months, after which ila' would automatically mean repudiation of the marriage.

Imam

1. Imam signifies the leader, and in its highest form, refers to the head of the Islamic state.
2. It is also used with reference to the founders of the different systems of theology and law in Islam.
3. A person who leads the prayer.

Iman

Trust, faith and acceptance. Having faith and belief in Allah according to the Qur'an.

Imsak

Start of the fasting time. Imsak begins when the first light of dawn becomes visible, and ends at Fajr when the Adhan is called.

Insha Allah

"If Allah wills."

Iqamah

The call to prayer that announces to the congregation that the obligatory prayer is just to begin.

Isha'

Isha' (Night) Prayer signifies the prescribed Prayer which is performed after the night has well set in.

Islam

Literally means "submission to the will of Allah."

I'tikaf

I'tikaf refers to the religious practice of spending the last ten days of Ramadan (either wholly or partly) in a mosque so as to devote oneself exclusively to worship. In this state one may go out of the mosque only for the absolutely necessary requirements of life, but one must stay away from gratifying one's sexual desire.

The minimum period for i'tikaf is twenty-four hours. I'tikaf is not valid if one is not keeping the fast or if it is done outside the month of Ramadan.

Ithm

Ithm denotes negligence, dereliction of duty and sin.

Jahanam / Jaheem

Most commonly understood to mean Hell. In fact, it is one of the levels of Hell. There are seven levels of Hellfire:

1. Jaheem - the shallowest level of Hell. It is reserved for those who believed in Allah and His Messenger (S.A.W.), but who ignored His commands.
2. Jahanam - a deeper level where the idol-worshippers are to be sent on the Day of Judgement.
3. Sa'ir - is reserved for the worshippers of fire.
4. Saqar - this is where those who did not believe in Allah will be sent on the Day of Judgement.
5. Ladha - will be the home of the Jews.
6. Hawiyah - will be the abode of the Christians.
7. Hutama - the deepest level of Hellfire. This is where the religious hypocrites will spend eternity. The worst of Allah's creation are the Munafiqeen (Hypocrites), whether they be mankind or Jinn, for they outwardly appear to accept, but inwardly reject Allah and His Messenger.

Jamarat Al-Aqaba

One of the three stone pillars at Mina. One of the rites of Hajj is to throw pebbles at these stone pillars, which represent Satan.

Jannah

Paradise. A created abode in the Hereafter for those who believe in the Unity of Allah and in all His Prophets and Messengers, and who follow the way of life of the Prophets. Jannah has eight gates around it and each of these eight gates has eleven doors. The names of the eight gates are:

1. Bab al-Iman.
2. Bab al-Jihad.
3. Bab al-Kadhemean al-Gaidh.
4. Bab ar-Raiyan.
5. Bab ar-Radiyeen.
6. Bab as-Sadaqa.
7. Bab at-Taubah.
8. Bab as-Salat.

Janaba

The state of a person after sexual discharge, whether intentional or otherwise. A person may not perform Salah (Prayer) or recite or touch the Qur'an until he performs Ghusl or Tayammum.

Jibt

Jibt signifies a thing devoid of any true basis and bereft of usefulness. In Islamic terminology the various forms of sorcery, divination and soothsaying, in short all superstitions, are called jibt.

Jihad

Jihad literally means 'to strive' or 'to exert to the utmost.' In Islamic parlance it signifies all forms of striving, including armed struggle, aimed at making the Word of God prevail.

Jinn

Jinn are an independent species of creation about which little is known except that unlike man, who was created out of earth, the jinn were created out of fire. But like man, a Divine Message has also been addressed to them and they too have been endowed with the capacity, again like man, to choose between good and evil, between obedience or disobedience to God. See Surah 72 of the Qur'an.

Jizyah

Unbelievers are required to pay jizyah (poll tax) in lieu of security provided to them as the Dhimmis (Protected People) of an Islamic state, and their exemption from military service and payment of Zakah. Jizyah symbolizes the submission of the unbelievers to the suzerainty of Islam.

Jum'ah

"Friday." The Muslims' day of gathering together, when all Muslim males must go to the Masjid to hear the Friday Khutba (sermon) and to do the Jum'ah Salat (prayer), which is prayed instead of Dhur. Surah 62 of the Qur'an.

Jumada al-Akhira

The sixth month of the Islamic calendar.

Junub

Junub - a person having Janaba - means to be in a state of ceremonial impurity or defilement. A male becomes junub on having sexual intercourse or simply on the emission of semen in sleep or otherwise.

A female also becomes junub as a result of sexual intercourse as well as when she is menstruating or having postnatal bleeding. These are the general causes of janaba, which is also referred to in the books of jurisprudence as hadath akbar.

A full bath is required for a junub to receive purification or tahara, without which a man or woman is not allowed to touch or read the Qur'an, enter the mosque or offer the prayers. In the absence of water, however, one is allowed to resort to tayammum. Tayammum substitutes for both a full bath (ghusl) and ablution (wudu).

Ka'aba

The cube-shaped stone building whose foundations were built by the angels and completed by Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and his son, Prophet Ismael, peace be on them, in Makkah. It was rebuilt with the with the help of Muhammad. It is the focal point towards which all Muslims face when praying.

Kabair

Major sins; such as Shirk (see Shirk), Qatl (murder), Zinah (fornication and adultery), the taking of Riba (usury), Sirq (theft), etc.

Kafir

Kafir signifies one who denies or rejects the truth, i.e. who disbelieves in the message of the Prophets. Since the advent of Muhammad, anyone who rejects his Message is a kafir.

Kafura

Literally means camphor. It is a special heavenly perfume that will be mixed with non-intoxicating, pure wine and be given to the righteous in the Hereafter. See the Qur'an, Al-Insan (76:5).

Khamr

Khamr literally means 'wine', and has been prohibited by Islam. This prohibition covers everything that acts as an agent of intoxication. See Qur'an, Al-Baqarah (2:219), Al-Ma'idah (5:93).

Kharaj

Tax imposed on the revenue from land taken from non-Muslims to ensure their equal rights under Islamic law.

Khul'

Khul' signifies a woman's securing the annulment of her marriage through the payment of some compensation to her husband. For reference see verse 2:229.

Khums

Khums, literally one-fifth. One-fifth of the spoils of war is earmarked for the struggle to exalt the Word of God and to help the orphans, the needy, the wayfarer and the Prophet's kinsmen. Part of khums was allocated for the maintenance of the Prophet as well as for his family and the relative's dependent upon him for financial support. See Al-Qur'an, Al-Anfaal (8:41).

Kufee

An Arabic script. Angular writing style often used for early hand-written copies of the Qur'an.

Kufr

Its original meaning is 'to conceal'. This word has been variously used in the Quran to denote:

- (1) State of absolute lack of faith;
- (2) Rejection or denial of any of the essentials of Islam;
- (3) Attitude of ingratitude and thanklessness to God;
- (4) Non-fulfillment of certain basic requirements of faith.

In the accepted technical sense, kufr consists of rejection of the Divine Guidance communicated through the Prophets and Messengers of God. More specifically, ever since the advent of the last of the Prophets and Messengers, Muhammad, rejection of his teaching constitutes Kufr.

Lailatul-Qadr

'The Night of Power,' concealed in one of the odd nights in the last ten days of Ramadan; the night on which the Qur'an was first revealed by Jibraeel to the Muhammad, and which the Qur'an itself describes as "better than a thousand months." See the Qur'an, Al-Qadr (97:3).

(Al-) Lat

Al-Lat was the chief idol of the Thaqif tribe in al-Taif, and among the most famous idols in pre-Islamic Arabia. See the Qur'an, An-Najm (53:19).

Lauh al-Mahfudh

A guarded tablet in the Seventh Heaven. The Holy Qur'an was first written on the Lauh al-Mahfudh in its entirety before it was sent down to the Baitul 'Izza in the First Heaven.

Maghreb

Sunset. The fourth obligatory Prayer of the day. It consists of three Rakahs and can be offered between just after sunset and before the stars appear in the sky.

Mahr

Mahr (bridal gift) signifies the amount of payment that is settled between the two spouses at the time of marriage, and which the husband is required to make to his bride. Mahr seems to symbolize the financial responsibility that a husband assumes towards his wife by virtue of entering into the contract of marriage.

Mahram

A man whom a woman can never marry because of closeness of relationship (e.g. father, brother, uncle, son, etc.). Her husband is also her Mahram.

Majoos

Fire worshippers. These people lived mainly in Persia and the eastern Arabian peninsula in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance. See Holy Qur'an, Al-Hajj (22:17).

Makr

Signifies a secret strategy of which the victim has no inkling until the decisive blow is struck. Until then, the victim is under the illusion that everything is in good order. See Qur'an, Aali-Imran (3:54).

Malaikah

"Angels". Another name for Suratul Fatir, Surah 35 of the Holy Qur'an.

Malak

Angel.

(Al-) Manat

Al-Manat was the chief idol worshipped by the Khuza'ah and Hudhayl tribes.

Ma'ruf

Ma'ruf refers to the conduct which is reckoned fair and equitable by the generality of disinterested people.

Mash'ar al-Haram

The boundary of Al-Masjid al-Haram in Makkah. It is prohibited to kill any game, or to damage any plant or tree, or to act in any manner that will violate the sanctity of the Holy

Masjid.

Mosque. plural Masajid.

Masjid Al-Haram (al)

The Grand Masjid in Makkah. The Ka'bah (the Qiblah of the Muslims) is situated within it.

Masjid an-Nabawi (al)

Another name for the Masjid ar-Rasool in Madinah. It is the second greatest Masjid in Islam.

Mina

A place five miles from Makkah and approximately ten miles from 'Arafat. An essential place to visit during the Hajj.

Mi'raj

The Night Journey of the Prophet from Makkah to Jerusalem and then through the realms of the seven heavens, beyond the limit of forms, the Sidrat al-Muntaha, to within a bow-span's length or nearer to the presence of Allah. See the Qur'an, Al-Isra (17:1), Bukhari Hadith 345, Vol. 1, 227, Vol. 5.

Miskin

Miskin (plural masakin) denotes helplessness, destitution. Thus masakin are those who are in greater distress than the ordinary poor people.

Explaining this word the Prophet declared that masakin are those who cannot make both ends meet, who face acute hardship and yet whose sense of self-respect prevents them from asking for aid from others and whose outward demeanor fails to create the impression that they are deserving of help.

Muadhan

The man who calls the Adhan loudly before each obligatory Salat, calling the people to prayer.

Muhadith

An Islamic scholar of Ahadeeth. Plural: Muhaditheen.

Muhammad

Muhammad, the last Messenger of Allah.

Muharram

1. The first month of the Islamic calendar.
2. An act that is strictly forbidden in Islam.

Muhsanat

Muhsanat means 'protected women'. It has been used in the Qur'an in two different meanings. First, it has been used in the sense of 'married women', that is, those who enjoy the protection of their husbands. Second, it has been used in the sense of those who enjoy the protection of families as opposed to slave-girls.

Mujahid

One who takes active part in a Jihad. Plural: Mujahideen. See Jihad.

Mulhid

Atheist.

Mumin

1. Believer.

2. Al-Mumin: Another name for Al-Ghafir, Surah 40 of the Qur'an.

Munafiq

Hypocrite.

Munkar wa Nakir

The names of the two angels who will question the dead in the graves.

Muqarraboon

Literally means, "those who have been brought near." On the Day of Resurrection, Allah Ta'ala will sort out the good and the evil into three groups:

1. Muqarraboon - the exalted class, those who will be nearest to Allah. Also described as the Sabiqoon, meaning "those who outstrip the rest."
2. Ashab al-Maimana - literally means, "the Companions of the Right." The righteous people destined to enter Paradise.
3. Ashab al-Mashama - literally, "the Companions of the Left." These will be the inheritors of the Hellfire. See Al-Waqi'ah (56:11-56).

Murtad

Apostate.

Mushrik

A person who commits Shirk.

Muslim

A person who accepts Islam as his or her way of life.

Mustahab

An act in Islam that is recommended, but not obligatory.

Mut'a

A temporary marriage. A custom common in Arabia. It was abrogated by the Prophet at Khaibar, as is related by Ali ibn Abi Talib in Sahih Muslim and Sahih Bukhari.

Mutaween

Literally means "volunteer", Islams "religious police", its volunteer army which enforces Islams human rights violations on everyone.

Muzdallifa

A site between 'Arafat and Mina where the pilgrims spend the night of the 9th of Dhul-Hijjah during Hajj.

Nabi

Prophet of Allah. Plural: Anbiyaa.

Nasara

Is the name given to the followers of the Christian faith both in the Qur'an and Hadith.

Nifaq

Hypocrisy.

Nikah

Marriage.

Niqab

A type of veil that covers the entire face including the eyes.

Nusuk

Ritual sacrifice as well as other forms of devotion and worship.

P.B.U.H.

Peace be upon him, used whenever the name of Muhammad is read or heard.

Qasr

Literally means 'to shorten', is technically used to signify the Islamic rule that during one's journey it is permissible, and indeed preferable, to pray only two rak'ahs in those obligatory Prayers in which a person is required to pray four rak'ahs.

Qawwam

Qawwam or qayyim

is a person responsible for administering or supervising the affairs of either an individual or an organization, for protecting and safeguarding them and taking care of their needs.

Qiblah

Signifies the direction to which all Muslims are required to turn when offering their prescribed Prayers, namely towards the Ka'bah, in Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

Qisaas

Law of equal retaliation when punishing a person for injuries intentionally inflicted on someone else. See Al-Baqarah(2:178-179).

Quraish

The Arab tribe to which Muhammad belonged.

R.A.A.

Radhi Allah 'Anhu (May Allah be pleased with him). Said whenever the name of a Sahabi (companion) is read or heard.

Rabb

Rabb has three meanings:

(i) Lord and Master;

(ii) Sustainer, Provider, Supporter, Nourisher and Guardian, and

(iii) Sovereign and Ruler, He who controls and directs. God is Rabb in all the three meanings of the term.

The rationale of the basic Qur'anic message - 'serve none but God' - is that since God is man's Rabb - Lord, Sustainer, Provider, Nourisher, etc. He alone should be the object of man's worship and service.

See Qur'an 2:21.

Rabi al-Awal

The third month of the Islamic calendar.

Rajab

The seventh month of the Islamic calendar.

Rajm (ar)

Stoning. In Islamic law the Hadd punishment is Rajm.

Rak'ah

Rak'ah (pl. raka'at) represents a unit of the Prayer and consists of bending the torso from an upright position followed by two prostrations.

Ramadan

The ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Fasting is obligatory during this month for all Muslims.

Rasool

Messenger and prophet of Allah.

Rawi

A narrator. In Hadith literature, it means the narrator of Ahadeeth.

Rea'

A minor shirk. Carrying out a religious act for worldly gains and not for the pleasure of Allah.

Riba

Riba literally means 'to grow; to increase.' Technically, it denotes the amount that a lender receives from a borrower at a fixed rate in excess of the principal. It is of two kinds:

1. Riba Nasi'a - taking interest on loaned money.
2. Riba Fadal - taking something of superior quality in exchange for giving less of the same kind of thing of poorer quality.

Rooh al-Qudus

"The Holy Spirit." Another name for the Angel Gabriel (Jibreel), peace be on him.

Ruku'

Ruku' means to bend the body to bow. This bowing is one of the acts required in Islamic Prayer. Additionally, the same word denotes a certain unit in the Qur'an. The whole Book, for the sake of the convenience of the reader is divided into thirty parts (ajza', sing. juz'), and each juz' consists usually of sixteen ruku'.

Sabr

Sabr is a comprehensive term having various shades of meaning. It implies

- (a) Patience in the sense of being thorough, dedicated and devoted,
- (b) Constancy, perseverance, steadfastness and firmness of purpose,
- (c) Disciplined and planned effort with confidence and belief in the mission itself
- (d) A cheerful attitude of acceptance and understanding under suffering and hardship and in times of strife and violence, and thankfulness to God in happiness, success and achievement.

Sadaqa

Anything given away in charity for the pleasure of Allah.

Saffah

A verandah attached to the Prophet's Masjid in Madina where poor Muslims, including some of the most exalted companions, used to sleep.

Sahabi

A companion of the Prophet. Plural: Sahabiyeen.

Sahih Bukhari

A book of Ahadeeth compiled by Imam Bukhari.

Sahih Muslim

A book of Ahadeeth compiled by Imam Muslim.

Sa'i

Going seven times between the small hills of Safa and Marwa; an essential rite of Hajj and Umra.

Sajdah

1. Prostration. The act of prostration, particularly in the Salat.
2. As-Sajda: Surah 32 of the Qur'an.

Sajdah Sahu

Prostration to recompense forgetting a required act of Salah.

Salah

Prayers. There are five daily obligatory prayers. These prayers and their time zones are:

1. Fajr (morning prayer); After dawn but before sunrise;
2. Duhr (early afternoon or noon prayer); early afternoon till late afternoon;
3. 'Asr (late afternoon prayer) late afternoon prayer till sunset;
4. Maghrib (sunset prayer); just after sunset;
5. Isha (late evening prayer); late evening till late at night.

Salat al-Janaza

Funeral prayer. The prayer is done in standing position only and consist of four takbirs:

1. After the first Takbir, read Al-Fatihah.
2. After the second takbir, recite Tashahhud and Salat al-Ibrahimiya.
3. After the third Takbir, pray for the deceased person, his or her relatives, and all Muslims in general.
4. After the fourth Takbir, finish the prayer by uttering Assalamu Alaikum while turning to the right.

Salat al-Khawf

Salat al-Khawf means Prayer in the state of insecurity. For its procedure see Surah al-Nisa 4:102.

Sallallahu 'Alaihe wa Sallam (S.A.W.)

"May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him." This is said whenever the name of prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is mentioned or read. The equivalent English phrase is usually abbreviated as S.A.W. (peace be upon him).

Sariya

A small army sent by Muhammad in which he did not personally take part.

Sawm

Fasting. Plural: Siyam.

Sha`a'ir Allah

Sha`a'ir Allah refer to all those rites which, in opposition to polytheism and outright disbelief and atheism, are the characteristic symbols of exclusive devotion to God.

Sha'ban

The eighth month of the Islamic calendar.

Shahid

Shahid in Islamic parlance means martyr. Plural: Shuhadaa.

Shaitan

Satan. Plural: Shayateen. See Iblis.

Shari'ah

Shari'ah signifies the entire Islamic way of life, especially the Law of Islam.

Shawal

The tenth month of the Islamic calendar.

Shirk

Shirk consists of associating anyone or anything with the Creator either in His being, or attributes, or in the exclusive rights (such as worship) that He has against His creatures.

Sidrat al-Muntaha

"The lote-tree of the furthest limit." A tree over the seventh Heaven near Paradise, the place where form ends and beyond which no created being may pass. See An-Najm (53:14-18).

Sijjin

It is a "prison" where the records of the evil doers are kept. See Al-Mutafifeen (83:7-9).

Siratul-Mustaqeem

"The straight path," the path that the Muhammad demonstrated to mankind by way of the Holy Qur'an. The path that leads to the Paradise.

Siwak

A piece of branch or root of a tree called al-Arak used as a toothbrush.

Subhan Allah

"Glory be to Allah."

Sunnah

Ahadeeth and the way of Muhammad

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Sunnah Prayers

Sunnah Prayers are prayers which are considered recommended in view of the fact that the Prophet either performed them often and/or made statements about their meritorious character.

Surah

A chapter of the Qur'an. Literally means "a form". There are 114 Surahs in the Quran. Plural: Suwar.

Tabi`un

Tabi`un (sing. Tabi`i), Successors, are those who benefited and derived their knowledge from the Companions of the Prophet

Tafsir

A commentary, usually referring to the commentary of the Holy Quran.

Taghut

Taghut literally denotes the one who exceeds his legitimate limits. In Qur'anic terminology it refers to the creature who exceeds the limits of his creatureliness and abrogates to himself godhead and lordship. In the negative scale of values, the first stage of man's error is fisq (i.e. disobeying God without necessarily denying that one should obey Him.) The second stage is that of kufr, (i.e. rejection of the very idea that one ought to obey God.) The last stage is that man not only rebels against God but also imposes his rebellious will on others. All those who reach this stage are taghut.

Tahajjud

Voluntary Prayer that is done any time at night after Isha but before Fajr.

Tajweed

Recitation of the Qur'an with precise articulation and exact intonation.

Takbir

Saying "Allahu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest).

Talaq

Talaq means repudiation of marriage.

Talbiya

The pronouncement pilgrims make to Allah during Hajj:

"Labbaik, labbaik, Allahumma labbaik. La shareeka laka labbaik. Innal hama wa n'imata laka walmulk. La shareeka lak."

(I am totally at your service; I am totally at Your service, O Allah I am totally at Your service. You have no partner; I am totally at Your service. Truly, the praise and the blessing are yours, and the dominion. You have no partners.)

Taqiyya

is a practice in whereby adherents may conceal their faith when they feel that they are under threat, persecution or compulsion. Where adherents lie to deceive and unbeliever or lie by omission.

Taqwa

Fearing Allah as He should be feared. A major sign of being a faithful Muslim. See Qur'an, Aali Imran (3:102-103), Al-Hashr (59:18-19).

Taraweeh

Prayers done after Isha during Ramadan, the fasting month.

Tartee

Measured recitation of the Qur'an taking extreme care with regard to the rules of slow reading, pausing and stopping at every indicated point.

Tashahhud

Tashahhud literally 'testimony' is a declaration of the Muslim faith towards the end of the Prayers, immediately after the recitation of Tahiyah, while sitting with the first finger of the right hand extended as a witness to the unity of God.

[Ayyam] al-Tashriq

This term signifies four days of the month of Dhu al-Hijjah, viz. 10th through 13th.

Tawaf

The circling of the Holy Kabah. Tawaf is done in sets of seven circuits.

Tawbah (Repentance)

Tawbah basically denotes 'to come back; to turn towards someone.' Tawbah on the part of man signifies that he has given up his disobedience and has returned to submission and obedience to God.

The same word used in respect of God means that He has mercifully turned to His repentant servant so that the latter has once more become an object of His compassionate attention.

Tawhid

Oneness of God. The Divine Unity. Allah is One in His Essence and His Attributes and His Acts. The centermost concept of Islam.

Tayammum

Literally means 'to intend to do a thing'. As an Islamic legal term, it refers to wiping one's hands and face with clean earth as a substitution for ablution when water cannot be obtained.

Ulu al-amr

Includes all those entrusted with directing Muslims in matters of common concern.

Ummah

Community, or nation, is a special name given to Muslim brotherhood and unity. The Qur'an refers to Muslims as the best Ummah rose for the benefit of all mankind (3:110). At another place, (2:143), it calls them 'the middle nation' (Umma Wasat) a unique characteristic of the Islamic community which has been asked to maintain equitable balance between extremes,

pursue the path of moderation and establish the middle way. Such a community of Muslims will be a model for the whole world to emulate.

Ummi

Signifies the 'unlettered'. It is also used to refer to those who do not possess Divine revelation.

Ummul Mumineen

"Mother of the Faithful." A title given to each of the wives of the Prophet.

'Umrah

Minor Pilgrimage: is an Islamic rite and consists of pilgrimage to the Ka'bah. It consists essentially of ihram, tawaf (i.e. circumambulation) around the Ka'bah (seven times), and sa'y (i.e. running) between Safa and Marwah (seven times).

It is called minor Hajj since it need not be performed at a particular time of the year and its performance requires fewer ceremonies than the Hajj proper.

(Al) Uzza

Has been identified with Venus, but it was worshipped under the form of an acacia tree, and was the deity of the Ghatfan tribe.

Wa Alaikum Assalam

"And on you be peace." The reply to the Muslim greeting of "assalamu alaikum." (peace be on you).

Wahy

Refers to Revelation which consists of communicating God's Messages to a Prophet or Messenger of God. The highest form of revelation is the Qur'an of which even the words are from God.

Wali

Guardian.

Walima

A marriage banquet.

Waqf

Endowment, a charitable trust in the name of Allah.

Witr

Means 'odd number'. Witr rakahs are odd number of rakahs such as 1, 3, 5, etc. - usually 1 or 3 - which are said after the last Prayer at night.

Wudu

Refers to the ablution made before performing the prescribed Prayers. it requires washing

- (1) The face from the top of the forehead to the chin and as far as each ear;
- (2) The hands and arms up to the elbow;
- (3) Wiping with wet hands a part of the head; and
- (4) Washing the feet to the ankle.

Zaboor

The Holy Book revealed to Prophet Dawood (David)

Zakah

Purifying Alms literally means purification, whence it is used to express a portion of property bestowed in alms, as a means of purifying the person concerned and the remainder of his property.

It is among the five pillars of Islam and refers to the mandatory amount that a Muslim must pay out of his property. The detailed rules of zakah have been laid down in books of Fiqh.

Zalim

Zalim is the wrong-doer, he who exceeds the limits of right, the unjust.

Zamzam

The sacred well inside Al-Haram ash-Shareef in Makkah.

Zanjabil

A special mixture that will be in one of the drinks of the people of the Paradise. See the Qur'an, Al-Insan (76:17).

Zaqqum

An extremely bitter and thorny tree that grows at the bottom of the Heelfire. See the Qur'an, Al-Isra (17:60), for example.

Zina

Means illegal sexual intercourse and embraces both fornication and adultery.

Zulm

Literally means placing a thing where it does not belong. Technically, it refers to exceeding the right and hence committing wrong or injustice.