



Unit L2.9 How do festivals and worship show what matters to a Muslim?

Enquiry Questions

- What do we already know about Muslims and Islam?
- What does the opening chapter of the Qur'an teach Muslims about God?
- Why does prayer matter to Muslims?
- Why is the mosque a special place for Muslims?
- Why do Muslims celebrate at the end of Ramadan?

What will I know by the end of the unit?

Muslims believe that the Qur'an is God's final message to humanity, revealed to the Prophet Muhammad through the Angel Jibril (Gabriel). The opening surah (chapter) of the Qur'an is called Al-Fatihah (The Opening).

'Tawhid' is to do with declaring the oneness of God – for Muslims, there is one God with no equals. The opposite of tawhid is shirk – to make something equal to God, or to put something else in God's place, worshipping other gods or following one's own desires and ignoring God's commands in the Qur'an. Shirk is forbidden to Muslims.

Some Muslims pray five times a day. Before salah (prayer) they must wash themselves. To pray, Muslims face in the direction of Mecca, the centre of Islam. Muslims recite set prayers silently during salah. During salah, there are different prayer positions known as rak'ahs.

Muslims go to mosque to pray and services are held every day. The most important weekly service is held on a Friday. Mosques often have a domed roof. There are no images of people or animals in mosques. They are decorated with patterns and words from the Qur'an. Muslims take off their shoes before going into the mosque and wash before they pray. Muslims pray kneeling on the floor on a prayer mat. The wall of the mosque which faces Mecca is called the qibla wall. It has an empty arch to show the direction of Mecca.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. During Ramadan, some Muslims do not eat or drink anything during the day. This is called fasting. The festival at the end of Ramadan is called Eid Al-Fitr. This is a time for Muslim people to thank Allah for the strength that he has given them to have self-control during Ramadan. It is a time to celebrate with family and friends.

Key Vocabulary

Islam, Muslim, belief, Allah, Qur'an, surah, tawhid, shirk, salah, rak'ah, mosque, qibla, Ramadan, fasting, Eid Al-Fitr