

Islamiyat Paper 2: Hadith, the rightly guided caliphs and the pillars

These revision notes cover the Paper 2 content of Cambridge O Level Islamiyat (syllabus code **2058**). They explain the history and importance of the Hadith and go through a selection of hadiths in plain language, with their teachings and how to apply them. They also cover the period of the four rightly guided caliphs, the six articles of faith and the five pillars of Islam. Sections 1 to 5 each include at least one worked example. These show how to plan a part (a) answer, which tests knowledge, or a part (b) answer, which tests understanding and evaluation. At the end you will find a glossary and a set of practice questions with answer guidance. All Quranic and hadith references are in **bold**. Every translation gives the meaning in our own words. None is quoted from a published translation.

How Paper 2 answers are marked

- **Part (a)** tests *knowledge*. It uses command words such as *describe*, *write an account of*, *outline* and *state*. Marks go to accurate, detailed and relevant facts: names, dates, places, events and references. Part (a) usually carries the bigger share of the marks for a question.
- **Part (b)** tests *understanding and evaluation*. It uses command words such as *explain*, *why*, *how far*, *in what ways* and *what lessons*. Marks go to a clear point of view backed by reasoning and a relevant example or reference. Retelling the story earns little here.
- The mark allocations in these notes follow a typical pattern. Always check the mark allocation printed on your own paper, and divide your time to match it.

1. The history and importance of the Hadith

What is a hadith?

Learn these definitions:

- **Hadith**: a report of what the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said or did, or of something others did that he silently approved.
- **Sunna**: the Prophet's practice, meaning his normal way of acting, which Muslims follow as a model. The hadiths are the record of the Sunna.
- **Isnad**: the chain of narrators through whom a hadith was passed down, from the compiler back to the Prophet.
- **Matn**: the text, or actual content, of the hadith.
- **Hadith qudsi**: a hadith in which the Prophet reports a meaning from Allah in his own words. It is not part of the Quran.

Compilation in stages

Stage 1: the Prophet's lifetime. Most hadiths were kept in memory and passed on by word of mouth. The Arabs had a strong tradition of memorisation. At first the Prophet discouraged his Companions from writing down anything other than the Quran, so that the two would not be confused (**Muslim**). He

later allowed certain Companions to write. The best-known example is 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As, whose written collection was known as *al-Sahifa al-Sadiqa* ("the truthful page"). The Prophet's letters to rulers and his treaties, such as the Treaty of Hdaybiyya, were also written down.

Stage 2: the Companions (sahaba). After the Prophet died, the Companions taught what they had seen and heard. Leading narrators included **Abu Hurayra** (who narrated more hadiths than any other Companion), **'A'isha** (especially on family and private life), **'Abdullah ibn 'Umar**, **Anas ibn Malik** and **'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas**. The caliphs Abu Bakr and 'Umar were careful. They sometimes asked for a second witness before they accepted a report.

Stage 3: the Successors (tabi'un) and official collection. The Companions were dying and the Muslim lands were spreading. Invented reports also began to circulate, some for political reasons. The Umayyad caliph **'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz** (ruled 717–720 CE) therefore ordered scholars to collect the hadiths in writing. Among those he asked were **Abu Bakr ibn Hazm**, the governor of Madina, and **Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri**, who is often called the first major official compiler.

Stage 4: arranged collections.

- **Musannaf works** were arranged by subject. The most famous is the *Muwatta'* of **Imam Malik ibn Anas** of Madina (died 795 CE). It mixes hadiths with the practice of the people of Madina and the opinions of the Companions.
- **Musnad works** were arranged under the name of the Companion who narrated each hadith. The greatest is the *Musnad* of **Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal** (died 855 CE), with roughly 27,000–30,000 reports including repetitions.

Stage 5: the golden age, mainly the 3rd century AH (9th and early 10th centuries CE). Scholars now applied strict rules to the isnad and the matn and produced the six major collections (*al-Kutub al-Sitta*, or *Sihah Sitta*). Sunni Muslims regard these as the most authoritative collections.

The six collections and their compilers

Collection	Compiler (approx. dates CE)	Key features
<i>Sahih al-Bukhari</i> (al-Jami' al-Sahih)	Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari, from Bukhara (810–870)	Chosen from several hundred thousand reports he had gathered. Took about 16 years. Over 7,000 hadiths with repetitions, far fewer without them. He is said to have prayed two rak'as before recording each hadith. Required evidence that each narrator had actually met the one before him. Seen as the most authentic book after the Quran.
<i>Sahih Muslim</i>	Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, from Nishapur (c. 817/821–875)	A student of al-Bukhari. Arranged very neatly, keeping the different versions of a hadith together. Required narrators to have lived at the same time and to have been able to meet. Ranked second.
<i>Sunan Abu Dawud</i>	Abu Dawud Sulayman al-Sijistani (817–889)	About 4,800 hadiths, focused on legal rulings (fiqh). He pointed out weak reports in his collection.
<i>Jami' al-Tirmidhi</i>	Muhammad ibn 'Isa al-Tirmidhi (824–892)	Gives a grade (sahih, hasan, da'if) for many hadiths and records how jurists used them. Made the grade <i>hasan</i> widely known.

<i>Sunan al-Nasa'i</i>	Ahmad ibn Shu'ayb al-Nasa'i (829–915)	Known as <i>al-Mujtaba</i> ("the selected"). Very strict about narrators. Rich in hadiths about worship.
<i>Sunan Ibn Majah</i>	Muhammad ibn Yazid ibn Majah al-Qazwini (824–887)	About 4,300 hadiths, including some not found in the other five. It contains more weak reports than the others, so it was the last to be accepted as one of the six.

The Sahih collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim are called *al-Sahihan* ("the two Sahihs"). A hadith recorded by both is described as *muttafaq 'alayh* ("agreed upon").

Isnad and matn: how hadiths were tested

Scholars built a science called *'ulum al-hadith* (the hadith sciences), which included a detailed study of narrators' lives called *'ilm al-rijal*.

Tests on the isnad (chain)	Tests on the matn (text)
The chain must be unbroken, with each narrator having heard from the one before.	It must not contradict the Quran.
Every narrator must be of good character and religiously upright (<i>'adl</i>).	It must not contradict a better-established hadith.
Every narrator must have a precise memory or reliable written notes (<i>dabt</i>).	It must not go against clear reason or known historical facts.
The dates and places of narrators must make meeting possible.	The language should suit the Prophet's style. Exaggerated promises of huge reward for tiny acts are suspicious.
There must be no hidden defect (<i>'illa</i>).	It must not simply promote one tribe, city or political party.

Classification of hadiths

Category	Meaning	Use in law
Sahih (sound)	Unbroken chain of upright narrators with excellent memory, with no irregularity and no hidden defect.	Fully accepted as evidence.
Hasan (good)	Meets the same conditions, but one or more narrators has a slightly weaker memory.	Accepted as evidence.
Da'if (weak)	Fails one or more conditions, e.g. a broken chain or an unreliable narrator.	Not used to prove a ruling. Some scholars allow it to encourage good deeds, but not to establish beliefs or laws.
Mawdu' (fabricated)	Invented and falsely credited to the Prophet.	Rejected completely.

Hadiths are also classified by the number of chains. A **mutawatir** hadith is narrated by so many people at every stage that they could not have agreed on a lie. An **ahad** hadith is narrated by fewer people.

Importance of the Hadith

- **Second source of Islamic law after the Quran.** The Quran commands Muslims to obey the Messenger. **Surah al-Nisa' 4:59** links obeying Allah with obeying the Messenger and those in

authority. **Surah al-Nisa' 4:80** says that whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah.

- **It explains the Quran.** The Quran orders prayer and zakat but gives few details. The Prophet told believers to pray in the way they had seen him praying (**Bukhari**). The number of rak'as, the timings and the zakat rates all come from the Sunna.
- **The Prophet's words are guided.** **Surah al-Najm 53:3–4** says the Prophet does not speak from his own wishes and that what he conveys is revelation.
- **A model for daily life.** **Surah al-Ahzab 33:21** describes the Messenger as an excellent example for those who hope in Allah and the Last Day. Hadiths guide manners, family life, trade and character.
- **Authority to command and forbid.** **Surah al-Hashr 59:7** tells believers to accept what the Messenger gives them and keep away from what he forbids.
- **Basis of the other sources.** Ijma' (consensus) and qiyas (analogy) must rest on the Quran and Sunna.

Worked example: part (a) plan

Question: Trace the stages by which the Hadith came to be written down, from the Prophet's lifetime to the six major collections. [10]

Step 1: Prophet's time. Oral memorisation. Early caution about writing, then permission. 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr's *Sahifa*. Letters and treaties.

Step 2: Companions. Name three or four leading narrators and what they were known for. Caution of Abu Bakr and 'Umar.

Step 3: Why official collection began. Death of Companions, spread of the empire, invented reports. 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz's order, Ibn Hazm and al-Zuhri.

Step 4: Early books. Malik's *Muwatta'* (by subject) and Ahmad's *Musnad* (by narrator).

Step 5: The six collections. Name the compilers and give one feature of each. Mention the isnad and matn tests.

Why this scores well: it is in time order and packed with names and facts, and each stage follows on from the one before. There is no evaluation, because part (a) does not reward it.

Worked example: part (b) evaluation

Question: Why is the isnad as important as the matn when judging a hadith? [4]

Step 1: Position. A hadith can only be trusted if both the chain and the text pass the tests, so neither is enough on its own.

Step 2: Reason one. A well-worded text can still be invented. Once fabrication began, some forged reports sounded pious. Only by checking who passed a report on, and whether each narrator was upright ('adl) and precise (dabt), could scholars tell a real saying of the Prophet from a forgery.

Step 3: Reason two. The matn is still tested, because even reliable people can make mistakes. A report that contradicts the Quran or reason is rejected even if its chain looks sound.

Step 4: Conclusion. The isnad shows *where* a report came from, and the matn shows *whether its*

content fits Islam. This double check is why Muslims can rely on collections such as al-Bukhari's.

2. Selected hadiths: teachings and application

For each hadith you must be able to: (1) state its meaning, (2) explain its teaching and (3) show how a Muslim can apply it today. The meanings below are paraphrased, so learn the *idea*, not these exact words.

Important: this is a **selection** of well-known hadiths chosen to illustrate the skills. It is **not** the syllabus list of prescribed hadiths. The 2058 syllabus prints its own list of hadiths for Paper 2. Ask your teacher for that list, or find it in the syllabus document for your exam year. Learn every hadith on it, using the same three steps. Any hadith below that is not on your list is an extra example only.

Meaning (own words)	Source	Teaching	Application today
Deeds are valued by the intention behind them, and each person receives what he truly aimed for.	Bukhari, Muslim	Sincerity (<i>ikhlas</i>) makes an act worship. The same act can be rewarded or worthless depending on the motive.	A student studies to serve others, not to show off. Giving charity privately rather than for praise on social media.
A person's faith is not complete until he wants for his brother the same good he wants for himself.	Bukhari, Muslim	Brotherhood and removing selfishness. Faith is shown in how we treat others.	Sharing notes with classmates. Honest dealing in business. Not hoarding goods in a shortage.
Anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day should either speak about good things or hold his tongue, and should treat his neighbour and his guest with honour.	Bukhari, Muslim	Control of the tongue. The rights of neighbours and guests are part of faith.	Avoiding gossip and backbiting online. Checking on elderly neighbours. Welcoming guests warmly.
Real strength is not overpowering others in wrestling, but keeping control of oneself when angry.	Bukhari, Muslim	Self-control and forbearance (<i>hilm</i>), a form of patience (<i>sabr</i>), is a sign of moral strength. Holding back anger (<i>kazm al-ghayz</i>) is praised in the Quran.	Staying calm in family arguments, on the road or in sports. Walking away instead of retaliating.
A true Muslim is someone whose words and actions leave other Muslims unharmed.	Bukhari, Muslim	Islam is shown by not harming others in speech or action.	No bullying, abusive language, cheating or violence. Protecting others' property.

Allah's judgement of a person rests on what is in the heart and what is done, not on the body or appearance.	Muslim	Equality. Worth depends on piety and sincerity, not wealth, colour or appearance.	Rejecting racism, colourism and snobbery. Treating a cleaner and a manager with equal respect.
When someone sees a wrong, he should put it right by action. If he is unable, then by speaking out. If he cannot even do that, then by rejecting it inwardly, which is the lowest degree of faith.	Muslim	Every Muslim has a duty to oppose wrongdoing according to his ability.	Those with authority (parents, teachers, officials) stop wrongs. Others speak up politely or report them. At the very least, never approve of the wrong.
Being rich does not come from owning a lot. Real richness is a heart that is satisfied.	Bukhari, Muslim	Contentment (<i>qana'a</i>) and freedom from greed.	Avoiding debt taken on to impress others. Gratitude for what one has.
The believers whose faith is most complete are those with the finest character.	Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi	Good character is the measure of faith, not outward show.	Keeping promises, being truthful and courteous at school, at home and online.
Someone who eats until he is full while the neighbour beside him goes hungry is not a true believer.	Bayhaqi	Responsibility for the needy people around us, especially neighbours.	Sharing food with struggling neighbours. Supporting local food banks and ration drives.
The people of highest standing are those who study the Quran and pass it on to others.	Bukhari	The high status of Quranic knowledge and of passing it on.	Regular recitation and study of meanings. Teaching younger siblings.
Treat this world as a place you are only passing through, like a visitor far from home or someone on a journey.	Bukhari	The world is temporary. Prepare for the Hereafter.	Not becoming attached to possessions. Using time well. Keeping one's affairs in order.
Allah Himself is gentle, and He is pleased when people deal gently in everything they do.	Bukhari, Muslim	Kindness and softness in dealing with others.	Gentle parenting and teaching. Polite customer service. Kindness to animals.
Allah withholds His mercy from a person who withholds mercy from people.	Bukhari, Muslim	Mercy to others brings Allah's mercy.	Helping flood victims. Treating employees and domestic workers fairly.
Ease people's burdens rather than adding to them, and bring them hope rather than pushing them away.	Bukhari, Muslim	Islam is a religion of ease. Harshness in inviting people to religion pushes them away.	Teaching new Muslims step by step. Not overloading beginners.

Pay a worker promptly, as soon as the job is done, without keeping him waiting.	Ibn Majah	Workers' rights and prompt, fair payment.	Paying staff salaries on time. Not delaying payment to labourers or delivery riders.
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Worked example: answering on hadiths

Question: (a) Write about the teachings of these two hadiths: the hadith on controlling anger, and the hadith on wanting for one's brother what one wants for oneself. [10]

(b) How can a Muslim apply one of these teachings in daily life? [4]

The exact wording and mark split of the hadith question can vary. Check the specimen paper for your exam year.

Part (a), hadith 1: teaching. The Prophet taught that a truly strong person is not one who beats others physically, but one who controls himself when angry (**Bukhari, Muslim**). Anger is natural, but it must be kept under control. This is *hilm* (forbearance). Uncontrolled anger leads to hurtful words, broken families and violence. The Quran praises those who hold back their anger and forgive people (**Surah Al 'Imran 3:134**). The Prophet also taught practical steps: seeking refuge in Allah from Shaytan when angry (**Bukhari, Muslim**), and sitting down if one is standing (**Abu Dawud**).

Part (a), hadith 2: teaching. Faith is not complete until a person wants for his brother what he wants for himself (**Bukhari, Muslim**). The hadith links belief directly to how we treat others. It removes selfishness, jealousy and greed, and builds brotherhood across the whole community. It shows that faith is tested in daily dealings, not only in worship.

Part (b): application. If a younger brother breaks a student's phone, the student should not shout or hit him. He can stay quiet, seek refuge in Allah from Shaytan, sit down, and talk about it once he is calm. Doing this protects family ties, which is exactly what the hadith aims at.

Why this scores well: part (a) explains each teaching with supporting references. Part (b) gives a specific action in a realistic setting, not a vague "be calm".

3. The rightly guided caliphs (al-Khulafa' al-Rashidun)

The first four caliphs ruled from 632 to 661 CE (11–40 AH). They are called *rashidun* ("rightly guided") because they governed by the Quran and Sunna, consulted others (*shura*), lived simply and were close Companions of the Prophet.

Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (632–634 CE)

Election. When the Prophet died, the Ansar met at the **Saqifa of Banu Sa'ida** to choose a leader. Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Abu 'Ubayda went there. After discussion, 'Umar pledged allegiance (*bay'a*) to Abu Bakr and the others followed. The next day the general public pledged in the Prophet's Mosque. Abu Bakr was chosen because he was the Prophet's closest friend, his companion during the Hijra and his father-in-law. The Prophet had also asked him to lead the prayers during his final illness (**Bukhari, Muslim**).

First address. He said he was not the best of them. He asked for their help if he did right and for correction if he did wrong. He said they should obey him only while he obeyed Allah and His Messenger. He also said that the weak among them were strong in his eyes until he had secured their

rights.

Main achievements and challenges:

- **Usama's army.** He sent the army the Prophet had prepared to the Syrian border under the young Usama ibn Zayd. He did this despite the danger at home, because he would not change a decision of the Prophet. Its success discouraged enemies.
- **Refusal of zakat.** Some tribes said they would pray but not pay zakat. Abu Bakr declared he would fight anyone who separated prayer from zakat, because both are duties.
- **False prophets and the Ridda (apostasy) wars.** Claimants included **Tulayha**, **Sajah** and, most dangerous of all, **Musaylima**. Khalid ibn al-Walid defeated Musaylima at the **Battle of Yamama** (632/633 CE), where Musaylima was killed. The unity of Arabia was restored within about a year.
- **Compilation of the Quran.** Many *huffaz* (people who had memorised the Quran) were killed at Yamama. 'Umar urged Abu Bakr to collect the Quran in one place. Abu Bakr at first hesitated, as the Prophet had not done this, but then agreed. **Zayd ibn Thabit** gathered the verses from written materials and from memory, checking each with witnesses. The finished copy stayed with Abu Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Umar's daughter **Hafsa**.
- **Expansion.** Campaigns began in Iraq (against the Persians) and Syria (against the Byzantines). Khalid won at **Ajnadayn** (634 CE).
- **Succession.** Before he died, he consulted senior Companions and nominated 'Umar in writing. He died in 634 CE and was buried beside the Prophet.

Administration. Abu Bakr ruled through **shura**, consulting senior Companions such as 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Ali on major decisions. He appointed **governors** over the provinces of Arabia, such as Makka, Ta'if, Yemen and Bahrain, and commanders for each army. He kept a simple **bayt al-mal** (treasury) and shared out its income equally among the people. At first he continued trading to support his family. The Companions then agreed to give him a small allowance from the treasury. Reports say that before he died he arranged for this allowance to be repaid from his own property.

'Umar ibn al-Khattab (634–644 CE)

Election. Nominated by Abu Bakr after consultation and accepted by the community's bay'a. He took the title **Amir al-Mu'minin** ("Commander of the Believers").

Expansion:

- **Yarmuk** (636 CE): a decisive victory over the Byzantines that opened Syria.
- **Qadisiyya** (c. 636/637 CE): victory over the Persians under Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas. The Persian capital Ctesiphon (Mada'in) fell soon after.
- **Jerusalem** (c. 637/638 CE): the city surrendered on condition that the caliph came in person. 'Umar travelled there simply dressed and gave the Christians a guarantee of safety for their lives, churches and property.
- **Egypt** (c. 640–642 CE) was taken by 'Amr ibn al-'As.
- **Nahawand** (642 CE): called the "victory of victories". Organised Persian resistance ended.

Administration. 'Umar is known as the great organiser of the early state:

- He divided the lands into **provinces**, each under a governor (*wali*), and kept strict checks on

governors, including listening to public complaints at Hajj.

- He set up a **separate judiciary**, with qadis (judges) independent of governors.
- He set up the **diwan**, a register of soldiers and citizens who received stipends from the **bayt al-mal** (public treasury).
- He founded **garrison cities**: Kufa and Basra in Iraq and Fustat in Egypt.
- He introduced the **Hijri calendar**, counting from the Hijra (622 CE).
- He organised land surveys and taxation (*kharaj* on land), a police force, and allowances for the poor, the elderly and the disabled, including non-Muslims.
- He had **tarawih** prayed in congregation behind one imam in Ramadan.
- He governed through a **majlis al-shura** (consultative council).

Character. He lived simply, patrolled Madina at night to find people in need, and was strict in justice even with his own family.

Death. In 644 CE (23 AH) he was stabbed during the dawn prayer by **Abu Lu'lu'a (Firoz)**, a Persian slave. Before he died, he named a council of six to choose his successor: 'Uthman, 'Ali, 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, al-Zubayr and Talha.

'Uthman ibn 'Affan (644–656 CE)

Election. 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf withdrew his own claim and consulted the council members and the people of Madina widely. He then gave his pledge to 'Uthman, and the community followed. 'Uthman was known as **Dhu al-Nurayn** ("possessor of two lights") because he married two of the Prophet's daughters, Ruqayya and then Umm Kulthum. He was famous for his generosity, for example buying the well of Ruma for the Muslims and equipping the army for Tabuk.

Main achievements:

- **Standardising the Quran.** During campaigns in Armenia and Azerbaijan, **Hudhayfa ibn al-Yaman** saw Muslims from different regions arguing over how to recite. He warned 'Uthman. 'Uthman borrowed Hafsa's copy and appointed a committee led by **Zayd ibn Thabit** with 'Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr, Sa'id ibn al-'As and 'Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Harith. Where there was doubt, they wrote in the dialect of Quraysh. Copies were sent to the main cities and other private copies were burnt. For this he is called **Jami' al-Quran** ("gatherer of the Quran").
- **First Muslim navy**, set up by Mu'awiya, the governor of Syria. It took Cyprus (c. 649 CE). A Muslim fleet with ships from Syria and Egypt, under **'Abdullah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Sarh**, the governor of Egypt, defeated the Byzantines at the **Battle of the Masts** (Dhat al-Sawari, c. 654/655 CE).
- **Expansion** across North Africa, Armenia and Khurasan.
- **Public works:** enlarging the Prophet's Mosque and the area around the Ka'ba, and building roads, wells and guest houses.

Administration. 'Uthman kept 'Umar's system: the diwan, stipends, the bayt al-mal and the provincial structure. He merged and reorganised some provinces as the empire grew. For example, he placed the whole of Syria under Mu'awiya. When complaints about governors increased, he sent trusted Companions to the provinces to look into them. He also consulted the people at the Hajj season and invited anyone with a grievance to bring it forward.

Challenges and martyrdom. In his later years, some complained that he appointed relatives from Banu Umayya as governors and gave them favours. Unrest grew in Kufa, Basra and Egypt. Groups of rebels came to Madina and besieged his house. 'Uthman refused to let the Companions fight for him, because he did not want Muslim blood shed in the Prophet's city. In 656 CE (35 AH) the rebels broke in and killed him while he was reading the Quran.

'Ali ibn Abi Talib (656–661 CE)

Election. After 'Uthman's death, people in Madina urged 'Ali to accept the caliphate. He was reluctant, but agreed, and the pledge was given publicly in the mosque. He was the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law (husband of Fatima), was among the first to accept Islam, and was famous for his courage, knowledge and fairness in judgement.

Challenges:

- **Demand for retribution for 'Uthman.** Many wanted the killers punished at once. 'Ali felt order had to be restored first. This disagreement led to civil strife.
- **Battle of the Camel** (656 CE, near Basra). Fought against a group including 'A'isha, Talha and al-Zubayr. It is named after the camel 'A'isha rode. 'Ali won and sent 'A'isha back to Madina with respect.
- **Battle of Siffin** (657 CE) against Mu'awiya, the governor of Syria. When the Syrians raised copies of the Quran on spears, the fighting stopped and the matter went to **arbitration**, with Abu Musa al-Ash'ari for 'Ali and 'Amr ibn al-'As for Mu'awiya. The arbitration did not settle the conflict.
- **The Kharijites** (Khawarij) rejected the arbitration, broke away from 'Ali and declared their opponents unbelievers. 'Ali defeated them at **Nahrawan** (658 CE).

Administration. 'Ali moved the capital from Madina to **Kufa**, which was closer to the centre of the empire and to his supporters. He dismissed governors he judged to be unjust and appointed new ones. He shared out the treasury equally, without giving extra to anyone for rank or early conversion. He kept close watch on his officials and wrote to them about how to rule. The letter of instructions to **Malik al-Ashtar**, his appointed governor of Egypt, is traditionally credited to him. It tells a ruler to treat all people with justice and mercy.

Achievements. He lived very simply, gave justice equally, and was a great scholar and speaker whose sermons and sayings are widely quoted. He is traditionally credited with encouraging the setting down of Arabic grammar through Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali.

Martyrdom. In Ramadan 40 AH (661 CE), the Kharijite **'Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam** struck him with a poisoned sword in the Kufa mosque. He died two days later.

Comparison of the four caliphs

	Abu Bakr	'Umar	'Uthman	'Ali
Rule (CE)	632–634	634–644	644–656	656–661
How chosen	Discussion at Saqifa, then public bay'a	Nominated by Abu Bakr after consultation, then bay'a	Council of six, with 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf consulting the people	Public bay'a in Madina after 'Uthman's death

Key achievement	Restored unity. First collection of the Quran	Great expansion. Organised the administration	Standard copy of the Quran. Navy	Upheld justice through civil strife. Scholarship
Administration	Shura, governors for Arabia, equal distribution from a simple treasury	Provinces, judiciary, diwan, garrison cities, Hijri calendar	Kept 'Umar's system, reorganised provinces, investigated complaints	Capital moved to Kufa, unjust governors replaced, equal distribution
Main challenge	False prophets, apostasy, refusal of zakat	Ruling a rapidly growing empire	Accusations of favouring relatives, rebellion	Civil war, Kharijites
Death	Natural (illness)	Assassinated at dawn prayer	Killed by rebels in his house	Assassinated by a Kharijite

Worked example: part (b) evaluation

Question: Which do you think was more important for the Muslim community: Abu Bakr's collection of the Quran or 'Uthman's standardisation of it? Give reasons for your answer. [4]

Step 1: Take a position. "I think 'Uthman's standardisation was more important in the long term, although it depended on Abu Bakr's work."

Step 2: Reason one. Abu Bakr's collection made sure the Quran was not lost when the huffaz were dying. But it was a single copy kept privately with the caliph and later with Hafsa.

Step 3: Reason two. 'Uthman's copies were sent to every major city. This ended disputes over recitation that could have divided the Muslims, as Hudhayfa had warned. Muslims everywhere still read from that one text today.

Step 4: Balance. Without Abu Bakr's carefully checked copy, 'Uthman would have had no reliable master text. So the two achievements depend on each other.

Why this scores well: it gives a clear opinion, two reasons and a balancing point. It evaluates the achievements rather than retelling them.

4. The articles of faith

The six articles of faith were listed by the Prophet when the angel Jibril, in human form, questioned him about faith. This is known as the **Hadith of Jibril (Muslim)**. He named belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and the divine decree of good and bad. Several of these appear together in **Surah al-Baqara 2:285**, which describes the Messenger and the believers as believing in Allah, His angels, His books and His messengers without distinguishing between the messengers.

Tawhid (the oneness of Allah)

Tawhid: belief that Allah is One and unique in His lordship, in His right to be worshipped, and in His names and attributes, with no partner, equal or rival.

- One common way scholars explain tawhid is to divide it into three aspects:
 - **Oneness of lordship (rububiyya):** Allah alone creates, sustains and controls the universe.
 - **Oneness of worship (uluhiyya):** only Allah is worshipped, prayed to and relied upon.
 - **Oneness of names and attributes (al-asma' wa al-sifat):** Allah's qualities are perfect and like no creature's. **Surah al-Shura 42:11** states that nothing is like Him.

Other scholars group the same ideas differently, for example as oneness in Allah's essence, attributes and actions. All agree on the core belief.

- **Surah al-Ikhlâs 112:1–4** sums up tawhid: Allah is One and self-sufficient, He has no offspring and no parent, and nothing is equal to Him. **Surah al-Baqara 2:255** (Ayat al-Kursi) describes His ever-living, all-knowing, all-sustaining nature.
- The opposite of tawhid is **shirk** (associating partners with Allah). **Surah al-Nisa' 4:48** states that Allah does not forgive shirk, although He forgives lesser sins for whom He wills.
- **Importance:** tawhid is the foundation of all other beliefs. It frees people from fear of anything other than Allah. It also creates equality, because all humans are servants of the same Lord.

Angels (mala'ika)

- Angels were created from light (**Muslim**). They have no free will to disobey. **Surah al-Tahrim 66:6** describes angels who never disobey Allah's commands and do what they are told. They do not eat, sleep or have gender as humans do. **Surah Fatir 35:1** describes them as messengers with wings.
- **Jibril:** brings revelation to the prophets.
- **Mika'il:** in charge of rain and provision.
- **Israfil:** will blow the trumpet on the Last Day.
- **The Angel of Death** (often called 'Izra'il): takes souls. **Surah al-Sajda 32:11** refers to the angel of death put in charge of people.
- **Kiraman Katibin** (the noble recorders): record every deed. The name comes from **Surah al-Infitar 82:10–12**, which describes noble guardians who write down and know what people do. **Surah Qaf 50:17–18** describes two recorders, one on the right and one on the left, noting every word spoken.
- **Munkar and Nakir:** question the dead in the grave (**Tirmidhi**).
- **Ridwan** guards Paradise. This name comes from later tradition, not from the Quran. **Malik** guards Hell and is named in **Surah al-Zukhruf 43:77**.
- Angels also ask Allah to forgive the believers (**Surah Ghafir 40:7**).
- **Effect on behaviour:** knowing that deeds are recorded encourages good conduct even when alone.

Revealed books (kutub)

Book	Prophet
Suhuf (scrolls)	Ibrahim and Musa (Surah al-A'la 87:18–19)

Tawrat (Torah)	Musa
Zabur (Psalms)	Dawud (Surah al-Nisa' 4:163)
Injil (Gospel)	'Isa
Quran	Muhammad

Muslims believe all the books came from Allah in their original form. **Surah Al 'Imran 3:3–4** mentions the sending of the Torah and the Gospel before the Quran as guidance. The Quran is the final revelation. Allah has promised to protect it (**Surah al-Hijr 15:9**), so it remains unchanged, and it confirms the true message of the earlier books.

Prophets (rusul and anbiya')

- Allah sent messengers to every community, calling people to worship Him alone (**Surah al-Nahl 16:36**).
- Twenty-five prophets are named in the Quran, including Adam, Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, 'Isa and Muhammad.
- A **nabi** (prophet) receives revelation. A **rasul** (messenger) is given a message, often a scripture or law, to deliver to a people. Every rasul is a nabi, but not every nabi is a rasul.
- Prophets were human, of the best character and protected from major sin (*ma'sum*). Muslims do not worship them.
- Muhammad is the **Seal of the Prophets** (**Surah al-Ahzab 33:40**). No prophet will come after him.
- **Importance:** prophets bring guidance that reason alone cannot provide, and they give a living example of it.

The Last Day (al-Yawm al-Akhir)

- Every soul will taste death (**Surah Al 'Imran 3:185**).
- **Barzakh:** the stage between death and resurrection, including the questioning in the grave.
- **Signs:** minor signs, such as widespread dishonesty, and major signs, such as the appearance of the Dajjal and the descent of 'Isa.
- **The trumpet** is blown by Israfil. All creation ends, then all are resurrected.
- **Judgement:** each person receives his record. Deeds are weighed on the **mizan** (scales). Even an atom's weight of good or evil will be seen (**Surah al-Zalzala 99:7–8**).
- **The Sirat:** the bridge over Hell that everyone must cross.
- **Paradise (Janna)** and **Hell (Jahannam)**.
- **Importance:** it gives life purpose and makes people accountable. It reassures the oppressed that justice will be done.

Predestination (al-qadar)

Al-qadar: belief that Allah knows everything before it happens, has recorded it, wills it and creates it, while humans remain responsible for their own choices.

- Allah created everything in due measure (**Surah al-Qamar 54:49**).
- No misfortune happens without having been recorded before it came about (**Surah al-Hadid 57:22**). The record is the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lawh al-Mahfuz*, **Surah al-Buruj 85:22**).
- Many scholars explain qadar in four levels: Allah's **knowledge** ('ilm), His **writing** (kitaba), His **will** (mashi'a) and His **creation** (khalq). Others explain it in different terms, but all agree that nothing happens outside Allah's knowledge and will.
- **Free will:** humans choose their actions and are judged on those choices. Qadar is not an excuse for sin.
- **Importance:** it gives patience in hardship, humility in success and freedom from anxiety. A believer makes every effort, then trusts Allah (*tawakkul*).

Worked example: part (a) plan

Question: Write about the Muslim belief in angels. [10]

Step 1: Basis of the belief. Belief in angels is one of the six articles of faith named in the **Hadith of Jibril (Muslim)** and in **Surah al-Baqara 2:285**.

Step 2: Their nature. Created from light (**Muslim**). They obey Allah without fail (**Surah al-Tahrim 66:6**). They have wings (**Surah Fatir 35:1**). They do not eat, sleep or have gender as humans do.

Step 3: Named angels and their tasks. Jibril (revelation), Mika'il (rain and provision), Israfil (the trumpet), the Angel of Death (**Surah al-Sajda 32:11**), Malik (guardian of Hell, **Surah al-Zukhruf 43:77**).

Step 4: Angels and human beings. The recording angels (**Surah al-Infitar 82:10–12; Surah Qaf 50:17–18**). Munkar and Nakir in the grave (**Tirmidhi**). Angels asking forgiveness for believers (**Surah Ghafir 40:7**).

Why this scores well: it moves from the basis of the belief to the angels' nature and tasks. Each point carries a name or a reference. It stays descriptive, as part (a) requires.

Worked example: part (b) evaluation

Question: How does belief in the Last Day affect a Muslim's behaviour? [4]

Step 1: Position. It makes a Muslim feel accountable for everything he does, so it shapes both private and public conduct.

Step 2: Reason with a reference. Even an atom's weight of good or evil will be seen (**Surah al-Zalzala 99:7–8**). So small acts count. A Muslim is honest in a test even when the teacher has left the room, and gives small charity without waiting to be rich.

Step 3: Second reason. Knowing that final justice will be done gives patience to people who are wronged. It also stops people taking revenge, because they know that Allah will judge fairly.

Step 4: Conclusion. Belief in the Last Day turns faith into daily action. It gives life a purpose beyond this world.

5. The pillars of Islam

The Prophet taught that Islam is built on five things: bearing witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger, establishing prayer, paying zakat, performing Hajj and fasting in Ramadan (**Bukhari, Muslim**).

Shahada (declaration of faith)

Shahada: *La ilaha illa Allah, Muhammadun rasul Allah*. It means that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

- **First part:** it denies every false god and affirms Allah alone, which is tawhid. Allah Himself bears witness that there is no god but Him (**Surah Al 'Imran 3:18**).
- **Second part:** it accepts Muhammad as Messenger. This means obeying him, following his Sunna and believing he is the final prophet.
- **Practice:** a person enters Islam by sincerely declaring the shahada, ideally in front of witnesses. It is repeated in the adhan, the iqama and every prayer (tashahhud). It is whispered to newborns in the adhan. The Prophet taught that a person whose last words are the shahada will enter Paradise (**Abu Dawud**), and told Muslims to prompt the dying to say it (**Muslim**).
- **Exemptions:** there are none. The shahada is the entry to Islam, so every Muslim must hold it sincerely.
- **Significance:** it is the basis of every other pillar. Without sincere belief, the other acts are not accepted. It commits a Muslim to a whole way of life.

Salat (prayer)

- **Meaning:** the five daily ritual prayers at fixed times (**Surah al-Nisa' 4:103**).
- **Obligatory rak'as:** Fajr 2, Zuhr 4, 'Asr 4, Maghrib 3, 'Isha' 4. That is $2 + 4 + 4 + 3 + 4 = 17$ fard rak'as a day.
- **Who must pray:** every Muslim who is sane and has reached puberty.
- **Conditions for a valid prayer:** purity through wudu' (or ghusl when required, see **Surah al-Ma'ida 5:6**). Clean body, clothes and place. Covering the 'awra. Facing the qibla. Praying within the correct time. Having the intention (niyya).
- **Practice:** takbir to begin, standing (qiyam) with Surah al-Fatiha, bowing (ruku'), standing again, two prostrations (sujud), sitting with tashahhud, and ending with taslim.
- **Jum'a:** on Friday a sermon and two rak'as in congregation replace Zuhr. Believers are told to hurry to it and leave trade (**Surah al-Jumu'a 62:9**).
- **Significance:** it is a way of remembering Allah (**Surah Ta Ha 20:14**), and it restrains a person from shameful and wrong acts (**Surah al-'Ankabut 29:45**). It builds discipline, cleanliness and punctuality. Congregational prayer builds brotherhood and equality, as rich and poor stand in the same line.
- **Exemptions and concessions:**
 - Women during menstruation and post-natal bleeding are excused and do not make up the missed prayers.
 - Children are not obliged, but are taught to pray from about the age of seven (**Abu Dawud**).

- ☐ People who have lost their reason are excused.
- ☐ The sick may pray sitting or lying down.
- ☐ Travellers may shorten four-rak'a prayers to two (*qasr*, **Surah al-Nisa' 4:101**) and may combine prayers.
- ☐ *Tayammum* (dry purification with clean earth) replaces wudu' when water is unavailable or harmful (**Surah al-Nisa' 4:43**; **Surah al-Ma'ida 5:6**).
- ☐ Jum'a is not required of women, children or the sick (**Abu Dawud**). The schools of law also exempt travellers. They pray Zuhr instead, although they may attend Jum'a if they wish.

Zakat (obligatory alms)

- **Meaning:** "purification" and "growth". A fixed share of surplus wealth is paid each year to set groups of people. **Surah al-Tawba 9:103** tells the Prophet to take charity from believers' wealth to purify them. Prayer and zakat are often commanded together, as in **Surah al-Baqara 2:43**.
- **Who pays:** a Muslim whose zakatable wealth has stayed at or above the **nisab** (minimum threshold) for a full lunar year (*hawl*). The nisab is commonly given as the value of about 85 g of gold or 595 g of silver.
- **Rates:** 2.5% on cash, savings, gold, silver and trade goods. On crops, 10% if watered by rain and 5% if irrigated artificially (**Bukhari**). Livestock has its own separate scales.
- **Not zakatable:** one's home, personal car, clothing, household furniture and working tools.
- **Exemptions:**
 - ☐ No zakat is due from someone whose wealth is below the nisab.
 - ☐ No zakat is due on wealth that has not been held for a full hawl.
 - ☐ No zakat is due on personal-use items (see above).
 - ☐ Nothing is due from someone whose debts, when taken away, leave them below the nisab.
 - ☐ Schools differ on the wealth of children and people who have lost their reason. Most schools (Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanbali) say the guardian must pay zakat from it. The Hanafis say zakat on such wealth is not due.
- **Recipients:** eight groups listed in **Surah al-Tawba 9:60**: the poor, the needy, those who collect zakat, those whose hearts are to be won over, freeing captives, those in debt, the cause of Allah, and stranded travellers.
- **Significance:** it purifies wealth and the soul from greed, narrows the gap between rich and poor, circulates money in society, and builds compassion and gratitude.

Enrichment (not examined): calculating zakat

The 2058 exam does not ask you to calculate zakat. This example is here to help you understand how nisab, hawl and debts work in practice.

Ayesha has held the following for a full lunar year: Rs 950,000 in a savings account, Rs 120,000 in cash, and trade stock in her small clothing business worth Rs 330,000. She owes a supplier Rs 150,000, payable now. Assume the nisab that year is worth Rs 180,000. Her house and car are for personal use.

Step 1: Add up the zakatable assets. $950,000 + 120,000 + 330,000 = \text{Rs } 1,400,000$. (The house and car are left out.)

Step 2: Subtract the debt that is due now. $1,400,000 - 150,000 = \text{Rs } 1,250,000$.

Step 3: Compare with the nisab. $\text{Rs } 1,250,000 \geq \text{Rs } 180,000$, so zakat is due.

Step 4: Apply 2.5%. $1,250,000 \times 2.5 \div 100 = 1,250,000 \times 0.025 = \text{Rs } 31,250$.

The nisab figure here is invented for practice. In real life, check the current gold or silver price. Ask a scholar how particular debts are treated, because the schools of law differ on some details.

Sawm (fasting in Ramadan)

- **Meaning:** not eating, drinking or having marital relations from true dawn (Fajr) until sunset, with the intention of fasting, throughout Ramadan, the ninth month. Fasting was prescribed for believers as it had been for earlier nations, so that they may gain *taqwa* (God-consciousness) (**Surah al-Baqara 2:183**).
- **Ramadan** is the month in which the Quran began to be revealed, and Allah wants ease for believers, not hardship (**Surah al-Baqara 2:185**). Eating and drinking are allowed at night until the first light of dawn can be told apart from the darkness of night. The fast is then kept until nightfall (**Surah al-Baqara 2:187**).
- **Practice:** suhur (the pre-dawn meal), iftar at sunset (the Sunna is to break the fast with dates or water: **Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi**), tarawih prayers, extra Quran recitation and charity. People look for **Laylat al-Qadr** in the last ten nights (**Bukhari**). The Quran describes it as a single night of greater worth than a thousand months (**Surah al-Qadr 97:3**). Some make i'tikaf (spiritual retreat in the mosque). The month ends with **zakat al-fitr**, paid before the Eid prayer (**Bukhari, Muslim**), and **'Id al-Fitr**.
- **Exemptions:**
 - The sick and travellers may leave the fast and make up the days later (**Surah al-Baqara 2:184**).
 - The very old and the permanently ill, who cannot fast, pay **fidya**: feeding a poor person for each day missed (**Surah al-Baqara 2:184**).
 - Women who are menstruating or bleeding after childbirth must not fast, and make up the days later.
 - Pregnant and breastfeeding women who fear harm may leave the fast. Schools differ on whether they make up the days, pay fidya or do both.
 - Children and people who have lost their reason are not obliged to fast.
- **Breaking a fast deliberately without excuse** requires making up the day. For deliberate intercourse during a Ramadan fast, **kaffara** (expiation) is also due. In the hadith the order is: free a slave; if that is not possible, fast sixty consecutive days; if that is not possible, feed sixty poor people (**Bukhari, Muslim**). Freeing a slave no longer applies today, so the kaffara is sixty consecutive days of fasting or, if that is not possible, feeding sixty poor people. Schools differ on whether deliberately eating or drinking also requires kaffara: the Hanafis and Malikis say it does. Eating or drinking by genuine mistake does not break the fast (**Bukhari, Muslim**).
- **Significance:** self-control and taqwa, empathy with the hungry, gratitude, better health habits, and unity, as the whole Muslim world fasts together.

Hajj (pilgrimage)

- **Meaning:** the pilgrimage to Makka in the month of Dhu al-Hijja. It is required once in a lifetime of every adult, sane Muslim who is able to make the journey (**Surah Al 'Imran 3:97**). Ibrahim was told to call people to Hajj. They would come to him walking, or riding thin, tired mounts, arriving by every far-off route (**Surah al-Hajj 22:27**).
- **Conditions of obligation:** being Muslim, adult and sane, physically fit, able to pay for the journey after covering one's dependants' needs, and having a safe route. Many scholars also require a woman to travel with a *mahram* (a close male relative she cannot marry).
- **Exemptions:** those who lack the health, money or safe access are exempt, and so are children. A child's Hajj is valid but does not count as the obligatory one. Someone who is permanently unable to travel but has the money may arrange *Hajj badal* (Hajj performed on his behalf) (**Bukhari, Muslim**).
- **Behaviour:** during Hajj there must be no obscene talk, no sinful conduct and no quarrelling (**Surah al-Baqara 2:197**).

Day	Rites	Link / meaning
Before 8 Dhu al-Hijja	Enter ihram at the miqat (men wear two unstitched white sheets), make the intention and recite the talbiya. Arrival tawaf (7 circuits of the Ka'ba) and sa'i between Safa and Marwa.	Equality before Allah. Sa'i recalls Hajar searching for water for Isma'il. Safa and Marwa are among the symbols of Allah (Surah al-Baqara 2:158).
8th	Go to Mina and spend the day and night in prayer.	Preparation.
9th	Wuquf at 'Arafat from noon to sunset, in prayer and seeking forgiveness. After sunset, go to Muzdalifa , pray Maghrib and 'Isha', spend the night and collect pebbles.	The essential rite: the Prophet said that Hajj is 'Arafa (Tirmidhi). A reminder of standing on the Day of Judgement. Remember Allah at al-Mash'ar al-Haram (Surah al-Baqara 2:198).
10th	Throw 7 pebbles at Jamrat al-'Aqaba . Sacrifice an animal. Men shave or trim their hair (women trim a little). Tawaf al-ifada and sa'i. Most ihram restrictions end. This is 'Id al-Adha.	Stoning recalls Ibrahim rejecting Shaytan. The sacrifice recalls Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son and the ram given in his place. The Quran explains that it is the sacrificer's piety, not the meat or blood, that reaches Allah (Surah al-Hajj 22:36–37).
11th–13th	Stay in Mina and stone all three jamarat each day (7 pebbles each). One may leave after the 12th.	Continued struggle against evil.
Departure	Tawaf al-wada' (the farewell tawaf).	Leaving the House of Allah.

- **Significance:** it expresses unity and equality, as millions from every nation dress alike. It renews the story of Ibrahim, Hajar and Isma'il, and it rehearses the gathering on the Day of Judgement. The Prophet said that whoever performs Hajj without obscene talk or sin returns as free of sin as on the day he was born (**Bukhari, Muslim**).

Worked example: part (b) on the pillars

Question: "Fasting is only about going hungry." How far do you agree? Give reasons. [4]

Step 1: Position. I disagree. Hunger is the outward form, but the aim is inner change.

Step 2: Reason with a reference. The Quran says fasting was prescribed so that believers may gain taqwa (**Surah al-Baqara 2:183**). The goal is God-consciousness, not hunger for its own sake.

Step 3: Reason with a hadith. The Prophet taught that if someone does not give up false speech and acting on it, Allah has no need for him to give up his food and drink (**Bukhari**). A fast without good behaviour misses the point.

Step 4: Social dimension and conclusion. Feeling hunger builds empathy with the poor and leads to zakat al-fitr and charity. So hunger is a *means* to self-control, piety and compassion, not the purpose.

6. Answer guidance for part (a) and part (b)

	Part (a): knowledge	Part (b): understanding and evaluation
Typical command words	Describe, write an account of, outline, state, give an account of	Explain, why, how far, in what ways, what lessons, do you think
What earns marks	Accurate, detailed and relevant facts, in a logical order. Names, dates, places and references.	A clear opinion or explanation supported by reasons, examples and references.
Common mistakes	Vague generalisations. Irrelevant background. Giving opinions instead of facts.	Retelling the story. Answering without reasons. Giving no example from modern life.
Good habit	Plan 5–8 key facts before writing. Use short paragraphs, one idea each.	Start with your answer in one sentence, then give 2–3 developed reasons. End with a balancing point or a conclusion.

Using references well: give the surah name and verse number (for example **Surah al-Baqara 2:183**), or name the hadith collection (for example **Bukhari**). Then explain in your own words how the reference supports your point. A reference with no explanation adds little.

Key terms

Term	Definition
Hadith	A report of the Prophet's words, actions or silent approval.
Sunna	The Prophet's practice, followed by Muslims as a model.
Isnad	The chain of narrators of a hadith.
Matn	The text or content of a hadith.
Sahih	A sound hadith meeting all conditions of authenticity.

Hasan	A good, acceptable hadith, although one narrator in the chain has a slightly weaker memory.
Da'if	A weak hadith that fails one or more conditions.
Mawdu'	A fabricated report falsely credited to the Prophet.
Mutawatir	Narrated by so many at each stage that fabrication is impossible.
Sihah Sitta	The six major Sunni hadith collections.
Hilm	Forbearance: staying calm and holding back anger.
Bay'a	An oath of allegiance given to a leader.
Shura	Consultation in decision-making.
Ridda	Apostasy. Also the name of the wars against the rebel tribes after the Prophet's death.
Diwan	'Umar's register of people receiving state stipends.
Bayt al-mal	The public treasury.
Tawhid	The oneness of Allah, with no partner, equal or rival.
Shirk	Associating partners with Allah.
Qadar	Allah's decree: His knowledge, recording, will and creation of all things.
Barzakh	The stage between death and resurrection.
Nisab	The minimum amount of wealth at which zakat becomes due.
Hawl	The full lunar year for which wealth must be held before zakat is due.
Fidya	Feeding a poor person for each fast missed by someone permanently unable to fast.
Kaffara	Expiation for deliberately breaking certain obligations.
Ihram	The sacred state, and simple dress, of the pilgrim.
Wuquf	Standing at 'Arafat on 9 Dhu al-Hijja, the essential rite of Hajj.
Qasr	Shortening four-rak'a prayers to two while travelling.
Tayammum	Dry purification with clean earth when water cannot be used.

Quick check

Questions 1–5 are recall practice, not in exam format, so they carry no marks. Question 5 is enrichment and is not examined. Questions 6–12 are exam-style part (a) and part (b) questions.

1. State the meaning of the terms *isnad* and *matn*.
2. Name the compilers of the two Sahih collections.
3. List the eight categories of zakat recipients, and give the Quranic reference.
4. Outline the exemptions from fasting in Ramadan.
5. Enrichment: calculate the zakat due on Rs 820,000 in savings plus Rs 60,000 in cash held for a full lunar year, with Rs 80,000 of debt due now and a nisab worth Rs 170,000. Show your working.

6. Describe how a hadith was tested for authenticity by the scholars of hadith. [10]
7. Describe the ways in which 'Umar ibn al-Khattab organised the running of the Muslim state. [10]
8. Give an account of what pilgrims do during Hajj on 9 and 10 Dhu al-Hijja. [10]
9. Explain why belief in angels is important for a Muslim's daily conduct. [4]
10. Choose one hadith about how Muslims should treat others. Explain its teaching and how it can be applied in a modern workplace. [4]
11. "The problems of 'Ali's caliphate were caused by the situation he inherited." How far do you agree? Give reasons. [4]
12. If Allah has decreed everything, how can humans be held responsible for their actions? Explain your answer with references. [4]

Answers and guidance

1. **Isnad** is the chain of narrators passing a hadith back to the Prophet. **Matn** is the actual text or content of the hadith.
2. **Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari** (*Sahih al-Bukhari*) and **Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj** (*Sahih Muslim*).
3. The poor, the needy, those who collect zakat, those whose hearts are to be won over, freeing captives, debtors, the cause of Allah, and stranded travellers. Reference: **Surah al-Tawba 9:60**.
4. The sick and travellers (make up the days later, **Surah al-Baqara 2:184**). The very old and permanently ill (pay fidya, **Surah al-Baqara 2:184**). Women menstruating or after childbirth (make up later). Pregnant or breastfeeding women who fear harm (make up and/or fidya, depending on the school). Children and people who have lost their reason (not obliged).
5. Step 1: $820,000 + 60,000 = \text{Rs } 880,000$. Step 2: $880,000 - 80,000 = \text{Rs } 800,000$. Step 3: $800,000 \geq 170,000$, so zakat is due. Step 4: $800,000 \times 0.025 = \text{Rs } 20,000$.
6. Credit for: the isnad must be unbroken. Each narrator must be upright ('adl) and precise in memory (dabt). Narrators' dates and places were checked through 'ilm al-rijal to confirm they could have met. There must be no hidden defect ('illa) and no conflict with stronger reports. The matn must not contradict the Quran, established Sunna, reason or known history. It was also checked for suspicious exaggeration or partisan content. Hadiths were then graded sahih, hasan, da'if or mawdu', and also mutawatir or ahad. Examples of strict compilers (al-Bukhari's requirement that narrators had actually met) add detail.
7. Credit for: provinces under walis, with governors held to account. An independent judiciary of qadis. The diwan and stipends. The bayt al-mal. Garrison cities (Kufa, Basra, Fustat). The Hijri calendar. Land survey and kharaj. Police. Allowances for the poor and disabled, including non-Muslims. Majlis al-shura. Congregational tarawih. Personal night patrols. The best answers give specific details and names, not a list of headings.
8. Credit for the 9th: wuquf at 'Arafat from noon to sunset in prayer (the essential rite, "Hajj is 'Arafa", **Tirmidhi**). After sunset, travel to Muzdalifa, combine Maghrib and 'Isha', spend the night and collect pebbles. Credit for the 10th: stoning Jamrat al-'Aqaba with 7 pebbles, the animal sacrifice (Ibrahim's story, **Surah al-Hajj 22:36–37**), shaving or trimming, tawaf al-ifada and sa'i, partial release from ihram, and 'Id al-Adha. Links to Ibrahim and to **Surah al-Baqara 2:198** earn extra credit.

9. A good answer explains that Muslims believe the recording angels note every word and deed (**Surah al-Infitar 82:10–12; Surah Qaf 50:17–18**). So a believer behaves well even when no person is watching, for example being honest in an exam or at work. Belief in the angel of death reminds a person that life is short, which encourages repentance. Knowing that angels ask Allah to forgive the believers (**Surah Ghafir 40:7**) gives hope. Two developed points with a reference and an example gain full credit.
10. For example, the hadith that a person's faith is incomplete until he wants for his brother what he wants for himself (**Bukhari, Muslim**). Teaching: unselfishness and brotherhood. Application: sharing credit with colleagues, training a junior employee fairly instead of guarding knowledge, not spreading rumours to get ahead. Other suitable hadiths include the one on paying workers promptly (**Ibn Majah**) or on gentleness (**Bukhari, Muslim**).
11. A balanced answer might largely agree. For the statement: 'Ali took office straight after 'Uthman's murder, with the killers still in Madina, the community divided and strong demands for immediate retribution. The Camel and Siffin grew out of that dispute. Against the statement, or adding other causes: the arbitration did not settle the matter, and the Kharijites' split added a new problem during his rule. Points about 'Ali's own conduct can support either side: he kept justice and simplicity, removed governors he judged unjust, honoured 'A'isha after the Camel, and defeated the Kharijites at Nahrawan. Conclusion: most of the difficulties came from the crisis he inherited, although events during his rule added to them. Credit any well-reasoned view that is expressed respectfully.
12. Qadar means Allah knows, records, wills and creates all things (**Surah al-Qamar 54:49; Surah al-Hadid 57:22**). But Allah's knowledge does not force a person's choice. Humans have real free will within Allah's decree and are judged on what they choose. Even an atom's weight of good or evil will be seen (**Surah al-Zalzala 99:7–8**). So qadar is never an excuse for sin. Instead, a believer should make every effort and then rely on Allah, which gives patience in hardship and humility in success.