

Fall 2022 Midterm. 20 points each.

1. Who is Muhammad in the eyes of Muslims?

In the eyes of Muslims, Prophet Muhammed is the creator of the religion Islam. He was born around 570-573 years in Mecca and was a member of the well-known tribe Quraysh. In his time, the city of Mecca was one of the world's leading trade and religious places. When we are talking about religious places, the place was for people who worshipped idols and for Polytheism people. So, the prophet Muhammed was the last message of Allah whose mission was to guide people from darkness and polytheism to monotheism and show that there is only one God-Allah.

His journey to Islam started when he went to Mount Hira to pray to Allah, and there showed up the angel Jabriel and gave him the last of Allah's books -the Quran. He could not read, but after the words of Jabriel: "Read in the name of your Lord, who has created everything, who has created man from a clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous." (96:1-3)". As a result of meeting with the angel Gabriel, Prophet Muhammed learned how to read the book.

After this event, he started to enlarge religion by reverting people and uniting all Muslims. In Islam, we have not only the book of the Quran but also many books about hadiths, meaning that the goal of the hadith books is to follow the Sunna of the prophet Muhammed. The main thing is that Prophet Muhammed is a sample of how to live life and follow his Sunna, and every action repeated by people is sunnah. Furthermore, of course, the Qur'an is the rule of Allah, which is mandatory for all Muslims.

2. According to Muslim scholars how a person could find God through nature? Give examples.

Everything around us was created by Allah. from small atoms to the biggest universes. He/she should study nature to see this unbelievable miracle around us. Also, Islam rejects all theories like Darwin Charles'. Those human beings evolved from monkeys to humans. But in Islam, everything and every life were created by Allah, and Allah does not have companions. So, if the person wants to find Allah through nature, he/she should study nature deeply. For example, Keith L. Moore reverted to Islam after doing deep research on embryology; he was amazed at the accuracy of the Quran, which was written by Allah in the seven-century. Also, Scientist Alfred Kroner was amazed the prophet Muhammed said about the origin of the universe, which was 1400 years ago; it is kind of impossible to predict such a miracle. And Science Yushidi Kusan said that the Quran has true facts about astronomy.

So, to find Allah through nature, you should deeply research anything, and in the end, you will be amazed that everything around us was created by Allah. Even if you deeply research Christianity or any other religion, you will find inaccuracies. My friend reverted to Islam after researching Christianity deeply for over five years and found out that the Bible has its own inaccuracies. As Dr. Zakir Naik usually likes to say about Christian people that any person in the world who can prove that Prophet Jesus behalf of his name, said that he is a God or son of God, then Dr. Zakir Naik would accept and become a Christian.

3. What are the five pillars of Islam? Please describe each.


Islam, Muslims have 5 pillars of Islam. These 5 pillars were not mentioned in the Qur'an but in the hadiths of Prophet Muhammed. They are below

- 1.) Profession of Faith (shahada)
- 2.) Prayer (salat)
- 3.) Alms (zakat)
- 4.) Fasting (sawm)
- 5.) Pilgrimage (hajj)

So, every Muslim should do these 5 pillars before his/her death.

The first pillar of Islam is the entrance to the Islamic world. The person should take **complete ablution (Ghusl)** and then, with pure intent, say these words to Iman(usually) lā 'ilāha 'illā llāhu muḥammadun rasūlu llāhi) (Islam). There is no deity but God; Muhammad is the messenger of God. After, with pure intent saying this, the person becomes a Muslim.

The second pillar of Islam is Praying namaz. Every Muslim should pray namaz 5 times a day. They are the **Fajr** prayer, **Zuhr** prayer, **Asr** prayer, **Maghrib** prayer, and **Isha** prayer. Namaz should be prayed at a specific time of day, and a person should pronounce words during the namaz in Arabic. Here is the table of namaz for each day.

	Table of Prayer Rakats						Farz
							Muakkadah
							Waajib
	Sunnat	Farz	Sunnat	Nafil	Witr	Nafil	Total Rakats
Fajr	2	2	-	-	-	-	4
Zohr	4	4	2	2	-	-	12
Asr	4	4	-	-	-	-	8
Maghrib	-	3	2	2	-	-	7
Isha	4	4	2	2	3	2	17
Jumuah	4	2	4+2	2	-	-	14

Before praying the namaz, a person should take **complete ablution (Ghusl)** or minor ablution (Wudu). The red ones are mandatories (Farz), and the Blue is between mandatory (Farz) and unrestricted (Sunna), but people should pray in Sunni Islam.

Moreover, red, and blue boxes are all necessary but do not require namaz, saying that they are all sunnah of Prophet Muhammed. In Islam, there is a time when praying is not allowed: *at Sunrise, Sunset, and* the time just after the sun reaches its highest point or zenith during the day. Moreover, women should always be behind men during prayer or prayer alone. During the namaz, a person should give 100% attention to the namaz, saying it is not allowed to drink, sink, discuss, eat, etc., and the face of prayer should be Qibla's side.

The third pillar of Islam is Alms (zakat). Zakat means a tax for people who are in need. Moreover, my favorite hadith about charity is “Charity does not decrease wealth, no one forgives another, but that Allah increases his honor, and no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah, but

that Allah raises his status.” If a person refuses to pay the zakat, he/she could become a non-Muslim.

Zakat is given by people who really can afford it. If a person can, he/she should give away 1 out of 40 of his/her wealth (or 2.5% out of 100%). Also, a small hadith not giving zakat by Abu Huraira reported Allah’s Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: “No owner of the treasure who does not pay Zakat (would be spared) but (his hoards) would be heated in the Fire of Hell and these would be made into plates and with these his sides, his forehead would be cauterized till Allah would pronounce judgment among His servants during a day.” So, if the person has the chance to give zakat to people in need, he/she should do it.

The fourth pillar of Islam is Fasting (sawm). Fasting was mentioned in the Qur’an and the hadiths of Prophet Muhammed. It is called Ramadhan in Islam and usually lasts 29 or 30 days. It starts before Farj namaz time and ends after Maghrib namaz time. During the Ramazan, people are not allowed to eat, drink, etc. It is required for all adult Muslims, but sick people are allowed to not fast during the Ramadhan. People fast during the Ramadhan because it is mandatory, showing that person truly believes in Allah. Also, Fasting is good for the body.

Moreover, the **fifth pillar of Islam** is the Pilgrimage (hajj). The Muslim dream is to visit Mecca and Medina because Medina has Prophet Muhammed’s grave, and Mecca has the Kaaba. Every Muslim should visit these places at least once in his/her life and pray there. there.

4. Why would the Meccans oppose Muhammad? What kind of opportunities did they think they would lose if Muhammad was successful?

Meccans were opposed to Prophet Muhammad. After all, he wanted to break down to Polytheism in Mecca because people worldwide came to Mecca to pray to idols and sacrifice

money, believing they were the gods. Meccans accepted that if the prophet Muhammad became successful in Mecca, then the Meccans would lose power and wealth because people would become monotheistic and stop sacrificing money to idols.

In other words, if the people would stop sacrificing to idols, then the Meccans would not get any profits from idols and stop getting rich. Also, Prophet Muhammed wanted to stop slavery in Mecca and make everyone equal (no enslaved people). Also, he wanted to prevent killing people's daughters, saying that having daughters is not a dishonor. To avoid this, the Meccan wanted to kill Prophet Muhammed and save their business from getting money from idols and having power in Mecca because if you had more money and more members in the tribe, then you could control the city at that time.

At a young age, Prophet Muhammad lost his mother (Aminah) and father (Abdullah), so his first supporter and protector was his grandfather (Abdul-Muttalib). The latter was protecting him from his sons. After the death of the grandfather, the uncle (Abu Talib) became the second person among the Quraysh tribe to be able to protect him from his uncles. However, when his uncle died, every other uncle started hunting Muhammad to kill him. In the beginning, his followers were a little bit year by year, and the followers increased dramatically.

5. How would you describe the Qur'an? Please elaborate.

Qur'an is the book of all Muslims. Qur'an is the last book of Allah which has not been changed or edited like previous books of Allah. Qur'an, of course, was written in Arabic, and it is the rule of Allah. The first appearance of the Qur'an was at Mount Hira when the prophet Muhammed wanted to pray to Allah, and suddenly, the angel Gabriel showed up and gave it to

Muhammed. This book was not written by Prophet Muhammed or any other people but only by Allah.

Furthermore, usually, Muslims say that Qur'an came to us in the last ten days of Ramadhan. Qur'an also has the intersection of religions like Christianity and Judaism since it is the last book of Allah. Before Qur'an, Allah sent books to Prophet Musa and Prophet Jesus, but these books were not changed and edited by many people, so they lost their value. Furthermore, the surah of the Qur'an is very well known as surah al-Fatihah because Muslims, during the praying namaz, should pronounce surah al-Fatihah in every rakats. Qur'an has 114 surahs and over 6000 ayats. So, Al-Fatihah is one surah out of 114. So, the result is that if you want to pray namaz you have to know at least 2 surahs (al-Fatihah and second one is any)