

...Isma'il, Musa, Dawud, Isa and Muhammad were Prophets too

- 1) Ibrahim's son Isma'il was also a prophet and helped him build the Ka'aba. It's believed many Arabs, including Muhammad, are descended from Isma'il — he's known as Abul Arab, the father of the Arabs.
- 2) Musa is the only prophet that Allah spoke to directly, rather than through the angel Jibril (Gabriel). He's important as he kept trying to guide people to believing in one god, even when they worshipped others.
- 3) Dawud is known for killing Jalut (Goliath) during a battle between Jalut's large army and Talut's (Saul's) smaller one. Dawud later succeeded Talut as king. As well as his bravery, Muslims can learn from his wisdom and his loyalty to Allah — he would pray for a third of each night.
- 4) Allah sent Isa when he thought people had strayed from Musa's teachings. Muslims believe Isa wasn't crucified (Allah wouldn't let that happen) but after 3 years' teaching Allah brought him up into heaven.
- 5) Muslims believe all these prophets paved the way for Muhammad:

Muhammad

- Muhammad was born about 570 CE in Makkah (Mecca). One day, while Muhammad was meditating, Allah sent the angel Jibril to him with a message.
- Muhammad was scared at first, but as Jibril gradually revealed more and more of the message from Allah, Muhammad began preaching this message to others.
- The early messages said people should worship one god, Allah, and that people would be judged on their behaviour. Later on, the revelations gave more detail on how Muslims should live their lives.
- Eventually, this message from Allah was written down as the Qur'an. The Qur'an is seen by Muslims as a miracle — the final revelation from Allah.
- Muhammad is often called the 'seal of the prophets' — most Muslims believe he was the last prophet that there will be. He is believed to have been a wise leader, who settled disputes and brought different communities together. He performed several miracles.
- As Muhammad was Allah's last prophet, Muslims pay particular attention to his words and actions. They use them to work out how to live their lives (p.19), as they see him as a role model.

The Qur'an is the Word of Allah

Qur'an is sometimes spelt 'Koran' in English.

- 1) Muslims think the Qur'an is the most important holy book. They believe it's a complete and accurate record of Allah's exact words to Muhammad, as Qur'an 53:10-11 describes: "he revealed to His Servant what he revealed. The heart did not lie [about] what it saw." The Qur'an allows humans to know Allah.
- 2) In the Qur'an, Allah tells Muslims what they need to know and how to lead their lives to please him. Muslims try to live according to its guidance. This helps them be rewarded by Allah and get to Paradise.
- 3) Many Muslims learn the Qur'an by heart. The Qur'an was revealed in Arabic — if it's written in another language the meaning might change, so Muslims learn Arabic to ensure they're reading the true Qur'an.
- 4) There's often dispute over how to interpret the Qur'an though, e.g. in relation to jihad (p.23). It can be difficult to apply its teachings to modern life, because so much has changed since it was revealed.

The Qur'an is Divided into 114 Surahs

- 1) The Qur'an is organised into 114 surahs (chapters), each made up of ayahs (verses). The surahs are in order of length — longest first, shortest last (except surah 1, a short statement of Muslims' basic beliefs).
- 2) Because the Qur'an is so important, Muslims treat it with great respect. The Qur'an is often ornately decorated, inside and out. Many Muslims:

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| 1. keep their Qur'an <u>wrapped up</u> to keep it clean | 3. keep it on a <u>higher shelf</u> than all other books |
| 2. <u>wash their hands</u> before touching it | 4. place it on a <u>special stand</u> when they read it |



- 3) The Qur'an is read during private and public prayers, so Muslims get to know it well.

Key Beliefs in Islam

Islam

Allah revealed holy books to other prophets as well. Angels were messengers for Allah.

There are Other Holy Books in Islam

As well as the Qur'an, Muslims see the Sahifah, the Tawrat, the Zabur and the Injil as holy books. But they believe they've been changed over time through editing, and only the Qur'an exists in its original form.

- 1) The first holy book is thought to have been given to Ibrahim. Known as the Sahifah (scrolls), it is now lost. The Qur'an mentions it several times, for example in Qur'an 87:18-19.
- 2) The Tawrat (Torah) is the book given to Musa. It's the main Jewish holy book. The Qur'an says it contains the "judgement of Allah" (Qur'an 5:43) so it's valued by Muslims. It includes the Ten Commandments, basic rules for a religious life.
"We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light." Qur'an 5:44
- 3) The Zabur (Psalms) was given to Dawud. It's thought to be linked to the Psalms of David in the Christian Bible and the Jewish Tenakh, but many Muslims believe the original has been corrupted, perhaps beyond recognition.
"...to David We gave the book [of Psalms]." Qur'an 4:163
- 4) Muslims believe Allah gave the Injil to Isa — Qur'an 57:27 says "We sent ... Our messengers and followed [them] with Jesus ... and gave him the Gospel". They think the Injil prophesies the coming of Muhammad. Many Muslims believe the Christian New Testament contains the same ideas as those given to Isa, but not his exact words. Others think the Injil was another book entirely.
- 5) Muslims also pay a lot of attention to the guidance and example they get from the following:

Hadith

The hadith are reports of Muhammad's words and actions, recorded by his followers. They're not in the Qur'an — they weren't revealed by Allah. Each one's been assessed as to how authentic it is. There are different collections of them, e.g. Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim and Sunan Abi Dawud.

Sunnah

The sunnah sets out Muhammad's way of life, as recorded in the hadith.

- 6) The hadith and the sunnah give valuable advice in addition to the Qur'an, especially on issues concerning daily life — but some Muslims believe it's best just to use the Qur'an, as the hadith might be unreliable.
- 7) Shi'a Muslims also follow the hadith (sayings) of the imams, especially those of Ali.

Angels are Allah's Messengers

"They exalt [Him] night and day [and] do not slacken." Qur'an 21:20

- 1) The purpose of angels is to follow Allah's orders and communicate with humans, often via the prophets. In heaven, they praise him and guard his throne. They welcome humans into paradise.
- 2) They're thought to be genderless, made of light and to have wings. They're immortal and don't have free will, as their role is to obey Allah — they're therefore incapable of sin. Allah created them before humans.
- 3) Some angels record people's good and bad deeds for the Day of Judgement — Qur'an 43:80 says "Our messengers are with them recording". Guardian angels protect people from danger and evil. Some think they're the same thing and recording angels act as guardians too.
- 4) Belief in angels is an article of faith for Sunnis, so it's important. The thought of a guardian angel can be comforting for Muslims. Having an angel recording their deeds can influence Muslims to do good things.
- 5) Jibril (who you might know as Gabriel) is an important angel. He revealed Allah's words (the Qur'an) to Muhammad. He also revealed messages to other prophets, so he's known as the angel of revelation. He told Maryam (Mary) she was pregnant with Isa (Jesus) — see Qur'an 19:16-22.
"Gabriel ... has brought the Qur'an down upon your heart, [O Muhammad], by permission of Allah." Qur'an 2:97
- 6) Mika'il (Michael) is important too — he's named in Qur'an 2:98. He asks Allah to forgive people's sins.
- 7) Izra'il (Azrael) is the angel of death (Qur'an 32:11). He takes souls from people's bodies when they die.
- 8) It's believed that Israfil (Raphael) will blow the trumpet on the Day of Judgement.

Tawrat, Zabur, Injil, Jibril, Izra'il...

...there are lots of names on this page. Without looking at the book, see if you can write down all the names of the holy books and of the angels, as well as a sentence about each one.

