

Islam teaches that people will be judged on their behaviour during their life by Allah.

Al-Qadr means Predestination

- 1) Al-Qadr is the idea that Allah has decided everything that will happen. This idea appears in teachings such as Sahih al-Bukhari 78:685, in which Muhammad said vowing to do something "does not bring about ... anything [Allah] has not decreed" — humans can't choose to do something Allah hasn't chosen for them.
- 2) This might seem to be contradicted by the idea of the Day of Judgement (see below) when Allah will judge people on the basis of their actions. That suggests people have free will and can choose how they act — there'd be no point judging them on their actions if what they did had already been decided by Allah.
- 3) However, many Muslims believe in a mix of these two ideas:

Sunnis tend to believe Allah knows everything that's going to happen — he's above normal laws of time, so knows what humans will choose before they've chosen it. It's believed humans choose their actions, but Allah has made it impossible that they'll choose anything other than what he's decided. Some think once someone's chosen to act, the act becomes 'theirs' so they can be judged for it.

Shi'as focus a bit more on free will. They often believe Allah has ultimate control and the power to change things in the world if he wants, but that people's lives are usually determined by their choices. Like Sunnis, they tend to believe Allah knows what's going to happen as he is outside 'human' time — but for Shi'as, what happens is what people choose for themselves.

- 4) To some Muslims, the idea of al-Qadr is comforting — if something bad has happened, it's reassuring to feel it's part of Allah's plan. Some people like to feel that they're guided to do Allah's will by al-Qadr.

Yawm ad-Din is the Day of Judgement

- 1) On Yawm ad-Din, Allah decides how people will spend the afterlife, based on their behaviour during their lives. It's then too late to beg forgiveness for any wrongdoing.
- 2) Allah will judge everyone — not just Muslims. On Yawm ad-Din, the dead will be resurrected to join those still living. Everyone will receive a record of their good and bad deeds, on which they'll be judged.
"We will call forth every people with their record [of deeds]." Qur'an 17:71
- 3) The idea of judgement is important as it encourages Muslims to live their lives in a good way. It can be comforting to think bad people will be punished. Other Muslims think it's best to concentrate on this life — they think people should do good things anyway, not just because they're focusing on their afterlife.
- 4) Intentions are also important — intending to do something good counts, but intending to do something bad but not doing it doesn't count against you (Sahih Muslim 1:233).



It was paradise for everyone except the gardeners...

"...for one whose scales are heavy [with good deeds], He will be in a pleasant life. ...for one whose scales are light, His refuge will be an abyss." Qur'an 101:6-9

Al-Akhirah Means the Afterlife

- 1) Belief in the afterlife — al-Akhirah — is a key part of Islam. The afterlife is where people go after the Day of Judgement.
- 2) The reward for good people will be entry into jannah (paradise) — this is a place of peace, happiness and beauty. The Qur'an refers to Paradise as "Gardens of Pleasure" (Qur'an 31:8).
- 3) For those who have done bad deeds, the punishment is jahannam (hell). The Qur'an describes jahannam as a place of scorching fire and boiling water. Here, those who have ignored Allah's teaching and failed to act righteously will be punished. Allah is merciful though, so they may eventually be sent to paradise.
- 4) The Qur'an sometimes mentions a 'barrier' between this world and the next called barzakh, where people's souls stay from the time they die until Yawm ad-Din. Many Muslims focus more on jannah and jahannam than barzakh.
"...behind them is a barrier until the Day they are resurrected." Qur'an 23:100

The Day of Judgement — yeah, when is the exam exactly?

To help you when the day arrives, try out this exam-style question.

Name two concepts linked to Muslim beliefs about the afterlife. [2]

