

Islamic Practices Glossary

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Alms	charitable donations given to the poor and needy, one of the five pillars of Islam.
Ashura	day of mourning for Shia Muslims, commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Hussain.
Charity tax	zakah, involving the giving of alms to the poor and needy.
Faith	belief in and devotion to God and the teachings of Islam.
Fast-breaking	meal eaten at sunset to break the daily fast during Ramadan.
Fasting	going without food and drink from dawn till sunset during Ramadan.
Five pillars	five main acts of worship in Islam: shahadah (faith), salah (prayer), zakah (charity), sawm (fasting), and hajj (pilgrimage).
Greater jihad	inner struggle to be a good Muslim, against one's own weaknesses and temptations.
Hajj	pilgrimage to Makkah, one of the Five Pillars of Islam, performed once in a lifetime if able.
Halal	permissible or lawful according to shariah (Islamic law).
Haram	forbidden or prohibited according to shariah (Islamic law).
Id-ul-Adha	Festival of Sacrifice, celebrated by Muslims worldwide to commemorate Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son Ismael.
Id-ul-Fitr	Festival of Breaking the Fast, marking the end of Ramadan.
Jihad	often translated as "struggle," it can refer to both the internal struggle to be a good Muslim and the physical struggle (war) to defend Islam.
Jummah prayer	congregational prayer held on Fridays at midday in mosques.
Kabbah (Ka'ba)	cube structure in Makkah towards which Muslims pray.
Khums	tax paid by Shia Muslims on their annual extra income, used for religious and charitable purposes.
Lesser Jihad	armed struggle in defence of Islam, permissible only under specific conditions.
Makkah (Mecca)	holiest city in Islam, birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad and location of the Kabbah.

Mosque	holy building and place of worship for Muslims.
Nahil Anril Munkar	duty to forbid or discourage evil or wrongdoing.
Night of Power	night during Ramadan, believed to be the night the Quran was first revealed.
Pilgrimage	journey to a sacred place for religious purposes, including hajj to Makkah in Islam.
Qur'an	main holy book in Islam, believed to be the word of God revealed to Muhammad.
Ramadan	ninth month of the Islamic calendar, observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting, prayer, and reflection.
Revelation	communication of God's truth or knowledge from God to humanity.
Salah	ritual prayer performed five times a day by Muslims.
Sawm	fasting, particularly during Ramadan, one of the five pillars of Islam.
Shahadah	declaration of faith, the first pillar of Islam, stating belief in one God and Muhammad as God's prophet.
Shariah	Islamic law, made using the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.
Shiah Islam (Shia, Shi'a)	one of the main branches of Islam, believing in the leadership of Islam by Ali and his descendants.
Shiah shrines	holy sites for Shiah Muslims, often the tombs of Imams or other important figures.
Sunni Islam	largest branch of Islam, following the traditions of the majority of Muslims.
Tabarra	not associating with the enemies of God.
Tawalia	loving and showing allegiance to the friends of God and the Ahl al-Bayt.
Ten Obligatory Acts	ten acts considered compulsory by Shiah Muslims, including prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, etc.
Ummah	worldwide community of Muslims.
Zakah	compulsory annual payment made on certain types of wealth, used for charitable purposes. One of the five pillars.