

A-level Religious Studies

ISLAM

- + Plan and organise your revision
- + Reinforce skills and understanding
- + Practise exam-style questions

For use with
all A-level
specifications



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A-level Religious Studies

ISLAM

Waqar Ahmad Ahmed

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My Revision Planner

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Specification mapping grid

	Topics	AQA		Edexcel		OCR		Pearson Edexcel		WJEC	
		AS	A	AS	A	AS	A	AS	A	AS	A
1	Islam: context and need										
	Jahiliyya			✓	✓					✓	✓
	The need for revelation			✓	✓					✓	✓
2	Life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad										
	Birth, childhood and early life			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
	The Night of Power (610CE)			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Further revelations and growth of Islam (610–621CE)			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Hijrah and the establishment of Islam in Madinah (622CE)			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Sources of authority and shari'a										
	What is shari'a?				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	What is the Qur'an?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	The revelation and compilation of the Qur'an	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	The treatment of the Qur'an			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
	What are the Sunnah and Hadith?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Ijma', qiyas, ijtihad				✓	✓	✓				✓
4	Beliefs and concepts: articles (Sunni) and roots of faith (Shi'a)										
	The six articles of faith (Sunni) and five roots of Usul al-Din (Shi'a)							✓	✓		
	Allah	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Angels			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Revelation (wahy) and the role and nature of prophets			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Nabi and rasul			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Islam and other Abrahamic faiths			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	The Prophet Muhammad	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	What is the Imamah?	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Resurrection and afterlife	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Divine decree and free will	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
5	Practices and identity										
	The foundations of Islam: Five Pillars (Sunni) and Ten Obligatory Acts (Shi'a)	✓	✓					✓	✓		
	Shahadah	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		
	Salah, worship and other forms of prayer	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
	The mosque (masjid)	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
	Charitable giving	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Hajj	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Sawm and Ramadan	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
	Festivals and commemorations			✓	✓				✓	✓	
	Jihad	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓

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		AQA		Edexcel		OCR		Pearson Edexcel		WJEC	
	Topics	AS	A	AS	A	AS	A	AS	A	AS	A
6	Developments and diversity										
	Muslim unity during the lifetime of Muhammad					✓	✓				
	The early Sunni/Shi'a split			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
	The Rightly Guided Caliphate			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
	Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties								✓		
	Interpretations of the Qur'an					✓	✓				
	Sufism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
7	Science										
	The relationship between science and Islam		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
	The origin of the universe		✓		✓						✓
	Human origins		✓								
	Are Islam and science compatible?		✓		✓						✓
8	Ethics										
	The five ethical categories	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Sanctity of life	✓	✓	✓	✓						
	Crime and punishment		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓
9	Gender and feminism in Islam										
	Gender in scripture and early Islam		✓		✓		✓		✓		
	Family life				✓		✓		✓		
	Secularity and contact with the West		✓		✓		✓				
	Feminism and equality		✓		✓		✓		✓		
10	Dialogues										
	Qur'anic teachings on the meaning of human existence	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	The dialogue between Islam and philosophy		✓			✓	✓				
	The Islamic Golden Age		✓	✓	✓		✓				
11	State, society and secularisation										
	Madinah as the model state				✓						✓
	Pluralism				✓		✓		✓		
	Non-Muslims in Muslim societies						✓		✓		
	Muslims in non-Muslim societies		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
	Issues facing a multi-faith society				✓		✓		✓		

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Assessment overview

For all of the exam boards the skills are the same. AO1 refers to knowledge and understanding and AO2 refers to evaluation and analysis. The question words used will reflect whether you should focus on AO1 or AO2.

Assessment Objectives	Skills	Question words
AO1	Knowledge and understanding	Explain, explore, clarify, examine
AO2	Evaluation and analysis	To what extent, discuss, analyse, assess, evaluate, critically analyse, critically assess

However, the number of marks given for AO1 and AO2 depends on the type of question and whether you are sitting the AS or A-level exam.

Exam board	AS exam	A-level exam
AQA	AO1: 15 marks AO2: 15 marks	AO1: 10 marks AO2: 15 marks
Eduqas	AO1: 25 marks AO2: 25 marks	AO1: 20 marks AO2: 30 marks
OCR	AO1: 15 marks AO2: 15 marks	AO1: 16 marks AO2: 24 marks
Pearson Edexcel	Explore: AO1: 8 marks Assess: AO1: 3 marks, AO2: 9 marks Analyse: AO1: 5 marks, AO2: 15 marks	Explore: AO1: 8 marks Clarify: AO1: 10 marks Assess: AO1: 4 marks, AO2: 8 marks Analyse: AO1: 5 marks, AO2: 15 marks Evaluate: AO1: 5 marks, AO2: 25 marks
WJEC	AO1: 15 marks AO2: 15 marks	AO1: 30 marks AO2: 30 marks

The table below indicates the content covered in each chapter according to exam board, type of exam and Assessment Objectives.

Exam board	Level	AO1	AO2	AO1 and AO2
AQA	AS		Ch 3	
	A	Ch 4, 7, 8	Ch 10	
Eduqas	AS	Ch 8	Ch 5	
	A	Ch 1, 2	Ch 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Ch 9, 11
OCR	AS			Ch 3, 4, 5
	A	Ch 10	Ch 6, 10	Ch 5, 7, 9
Pearson Edexcel	AS	Ch 1, 2, 5		Ch 4
	A	Ch 9		Ch 11
WJEC	AS	Ch 4		
	A		Ch 3	

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AO1: Knowledge and understanding

For AO1 you will need to explain. An explanation is *not* a description. For example, think about the difference between describing a table to someone and explaining what a table is. A really good explanation:

- + **includes a wide range of knowledge.** Use specialist language and technical terminology correctly, throughout your answer. It is also a good idea to give examples to show that you know and understand what these technical terms mean
- + **includes a range of religious ideas and beliefs.** Select the right information to answer the question. This means that you should *never* just write everything you know, but instead select the key information needed to address the question
- + **develops key ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding.** Give examples and make connections between different concepts. Examples do not need to be long or complex but need to show that you understand the concept. For example, Muslims aim to connect with Allah, which is achieved through Salah. Making connections between concepts shows that you have a deeper understanding of the concepts. For example, risalah links to akhirah because following God's message in this life affects the next life
- + **includes scholarly views and quotes.** This could be quotes from Muslim writers or from the Qur'an, Hadith or Muslim scholars. If you cannot remember quotes word for word, then paraphrase them, giving an idea of what they said. These are also called sources of wisdom and authority.

AO2 Evaluation and analysis

For AO2 you need to discuss, evaluate and analyse. A really good evaluation includes:

- + **arguments for and against.** Why might people agree and disagree with a particular point of view?
- + **the strengths and weaknesses of an idea.** Why might something make sense, be logical or rational? Or why does it not make sense, is not logical or rational?
- + **critical analysis.** For example, explain why there is a weakness or strength rather than just saying what that weakness or strength is. Be critical of criticisms: ask how valid the criticisms are and how much they challenge a set of ideas. Critical analysis:
 - + evaluates strengths and weaknesses
 - + weighs one piece of information against another
 - + makes reasoned judgements
 - + shows why something is relevant or suitable
 - + identifies whether something is appropriate or suitable
 - + weighs up the importance of the component parts
 - + evaluates the relative significance of details
 - + shows the relevance of links between pieces of information
 - + gives the reasons for selecting each option.

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Get the most from this book

- + revised and understood a topic
- + tested yourself
- + practised the exam questions and gone online to check your answers.

You can also keep track of your revision by ticking off each topic heading in the book. You may find it helpful to add your own notes as you work through each topic.

Life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad

Features to help you succeed

Expert tips are given throughout the book to help you polish your exam technique in order to maximise your chances in the exam.

These short, knowledge-based questions provide the first step in testing your learning. Answers are available online.

Clear, concise definitions of essential key terms are provided where they first appear.

Key words from the specifications are highlighted in bold throughout the book.

These activities will help you to understand each topic in an interactive way.

Practice exam questions are provided for each topic categorised by the relevant exam board. Use them to consolidate your revision and practise your exam skills.

The summaries provide a quick-check bullet list for each topic.

Finally, you can go online to find suggested answers to exam practice at www.hoddereducation.co.uk/myrevisionnotesdownloads

1 Islam: Context and need

Islam is the religion that Muslims believe Allah has chosen for humanity. Muslims believe that all prophets, beginning with Adam, had taught Islam to a limited degree for many centuries (see Chapter 4), but that the faith reached its completion and perfection through Muhammad in seventh-century Arabia. Within his lifetime, Islam had spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula and less than three decades after his death, it had become established in other parts of Asia, North Africa and Europe, thus spanning three continents. This was through military expeditions, trade and migration. It is estimated that there are 1.8 billion Muslims today, making up almost a quarter of the global population and confirming Islam as the world's largest religion after Christianity.



Map showing the spread of Islam 622–750ce

Jahiliyya

Muslims commonly refer to the pre-Islamic period in sixth-century Arabia as **Jahiliyya**, or 'ignorance'. Around the time of Muhammad, though Arab society had some respectable features, it was less admired in many others.

Arabs were keen businesspeople and commercial carnivals were very popular. Makkah was a successful city of trade. Arabs had high regard for their own honour as well as responsibilities. In a society governed by tribes, chieftains would grant protection to anyone who sought it and visitors were always treated with great hospitality. Arabs took great pride in their culture and language; most literature was preserved and transmitted through oral traditions such as speech and poetry, which was also used as a form of news, entertainment and teaching history. Some poems were hung on the walls of the **Ka'bah** (centre of worship in Makkah).

Jahiliyya State of ignorance according to Muslims which pre-dated the coming of the Prophet

Ka'bah Cube-shaped building in Makkah, which Muslims face towards while praying

Arabs were great orators and held regular competitions for the best speeches and poems. They were so advanced in eloquence that they called the rest of the world `ajami (dumb and mute). Poets were among the most influential people in Arabia. Much of the poetry from this period was put in written form later on.

However, there were several problems in Arab society. These included:

- + political instability and lack of social security – there was no unified state or authority as in the modern world, only a tribal system. Social groupings were based on clans loyal to their ancestors
- + nomadic lifestyles – many people lived a nomadic (moving from place to place), herding lifestyle, such as the Bedouin tribes who pastured camels, sheep or goats by using the scanty water resources of the desert, but some also earned their income by raiding other tribes
- + absence of an education system – as in many other societies, no schools existed, resulting in high rates of illiteracy
- + low status of women – unless they were from noble families or were successful in business, women were often treated as inferior to men. Incest and sex outside marriage were common
- + female infanticide – practised by some poor families who wanted boys rather than girls as a way out of poverty
- + slavery, extreme poverty and exploitation of the disadvantaged (for example, poorer) sections of society who were denied equal rights
- + abuse of animals – in some tribes it was customary upon the death of a person to tie his camel close to his grave to be left to die of hunger and thirst
- + violence, cruelty and cannibalism – tribes would go to war over the smallest disputes and would mutilate as well as eat the bodies of the dead
- + alcoholism, gambling and dishonesty in business were widespread.

These were the political, social, economic and moral characteristics to which the **Qur'an** refers:

Corruption has flourished on land and sea as a result of people's actions and He (God) will make them taste the consequences of some of their own actions so that they may turn back.

(Qur'an 30: 41, Haleem 2008)

Qur'an Muslim sacred text and most important source of authority in Islam

Revision activity

What features of Jahiliyya come under the following characteristics?

- + Political
- + Social
- + Economic
- + Moral

The need for revelation

Religion in Arabia was very ritualistic. Many Arabs were proud followers of the prophet Ibrahim (Abraham), who had lived in Makkah some 4,000 years ago. However, they did not think it was possible to communicate directly with Allah (God) as Ibrahim had done, due to his status as a prophet. They had not had a monotheistic teacher for a long time, and this led to the gradual rise of **polytheism** (belief in multiple gods) and the worship of 360 idols who they believed were the only means to reach God. These idols were housed in the Ka'bah, and animal and human sacrifices were offered to them. Pilgrims from all over Arabia would visit to pay homage to these gods and, as there were only a few temples at the time, the Ka'bah assumed a central place in the spiritual life of many Arabs.

This gave Makkah an important status; the city was among the most advanced in Arabia and was part of a region considered sacred due to its proximity to the Ka'bah. The custodianship of the Ka'bah was seen as a great privilege and the housing of the idols brought the city respect as well as revenue.

Polytheism Belief in multiple gods

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Many Arabs named their children after these gods, for example, 'Abd Manat' (son of Manat, one of the three supposed 'daughters' of God). Pagan beliefs, which included **animism** (belief that non-human entities, such as animals and plants have a spiritual essence) and faith in **jinns** (spirits believed to exist on Earth) were very popular, especially among the Bedouin tribes.

The three main religions at the time were:

- ✚ Judaism – first founded by Abraham (Ibrahim) and later established by Moses (Musa). Both are mentioned in the Old Testament. Jews believe they were God's chosen people to be in a special covenant with Him. Jewish tribes in Arabia had initially migrated from Syria and were influential over the economic life of the region of Hijaz.
- ✚ Christianity – founded by Isa (Jesus) who is the main figure mentioned in the New Testament. Christians believe him to be the Messiah and the son of God. In Arabia, the region of Najran was the main centre of Christianity. It is said that statues of Isa and his mother Maryam (Mary) were also housed in the Ka'bah.
- ✚ Zoroastrianism – founded by the Iranian prophet Zoroaster. It involved the worship of the god Ahura Mazda who required the good deeds of his followers to help in his cosmic struggle against the evil spirit Ahriman.

These religions had moved away from their monotheistic origins and developed practices that were regarded as idolatrous, apparently influenced by Arab culture at the time. Among these traditions were People of the Book devoted to the remembrance of one God (Qur'an 3: 113–15) and strict **monotheists** (believers in one God) known as 'Hanifs', though these were few in number.

The existing religions did not do a great deal to address the widespread problems in Arabia. Muslims believed there was a need for a new revelation that would meet the spiritual, moral, intellectual and social needs of all people – not just particular communities, as with Christianity whose message was confined to the lost sheep of Israel (Matthew 10: 5–6) – and that this was fulfilled with the appearance of Muhammad.

Remember that God revives the earth after it dies.

(Qur'an 57: 17, Haleem 2008)

Now test yourself

TESTED 

- 1 List three reasons why Muslims believe seventh-century Arabia was in need of reform.

Chapter summary

- ✚ The Jahaliyya is the period of ignorance Muslims believe Arabia was in prior to Islam.
- ✚ Arab society mostly suffered from many problems including tribal feuds, the absence of an education system, and the denial of equal rights to many sections of society, including women and slaves.
- ✚ The conditions at the time necessitated in a new faith that would meet the spiritual, moral, intellectual and social needs of all people.

Exam practice

In your exam, you may be asked about pre-Islamic Arabia. Some example questions include:

Explain why Muslims believe there was a need for revelation at the time of Muhammad.

[Educas, AO1, 20 marks]

Explore the status of Makkah at the time of Muhammad.

[Pearson Edexcel, AO1, 8 marks]

Animism Belief that spirits exist in animate and inanimate objects

Jinns Spirits or hidden beings

Monotheists Believers in one God

2 Life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad

Birth, childhood and early life

Most accounts trace Muhammad's birth to Makkah in either 570 or 571ce. The name Muhammad means 'most praiseworthy' and was told to his mother Aminah in a dream. His family belonged to the Quraysh (a ruling Arab tribe).

Muslims believe that when Muhammad was four years old, an angel was seen to cut open Muhammad's chest and clean his heart. This was similar to what was to happen at other times in his life including during the Mi'raj experience, although these events have been interpreted by some to be visions and symbolic of his body being filled with light and wisdom.

By the time of his birth, it is believed Muhammad's father Abdullah had died. Muhammad was orphaned by the age of six when his mother died, after which he was raised by his grandfather. His grandfather died two years later. Muhammad was then brought up by his uncle Abu Talib. He spent his youth tending to cattle and goats but started to accompany and assist Abu Talib on trading trips between Arabia and Syria, where the Quraysh had their biggest business ties. He also went to Yemen and Bahrain. For some time, Muhammad worked as a camel driver and then managed caravans on behalf of merchants. He developed a reputation as an honest and successful trader. He was employed by Khadija, a wealthy businesswoman.

Muhammad's life – timeline

REVISED 

The Makkan years

- 1st year – 610: Night of Power experience and beginning of preaching
- 6th year – 615: First Muslim migration to Abyssinia; Mi'raj (ascension) experience
- 10th year – 619: Death of wife Khadija and uncle Abu Talib during social boycott of Muslims
- 11th year – 620: Isra' (night journey)
- 12th year – 621: Meeting with people of Yathrib and first pledge at 'Aqabah

The Madinan years

- 1st year – 622: Hijrah and arrival at Madinah; second pledge at 'Aqabah; built Quba Mosque and Prophet's Mosque; first call to prayer; establishment of fraternity between Ansar (Muslims of Madinah) and Muhajirun (Muslim migrants from Makkah); signed treaty with Jews of the area
- 2nd year – 623: Marriage to Aishah (see Chapter 9)
- 3rd year – 624: Change of the qiblah (prayer direction) from Jerusalem to Makkah; first Id-ul-Fitr (see Chapter 5); Battle of Badr (see Chapter 5)
- 4th year – 625: Battle of Uhud
- 5th year – 626: Expulsion of Banu Nadir from Madinah (see Chapter 11)
- 6th year – 627: Battle of the Ditch and punishment of Banu Qurayzah (see Chapter 11)

7th year – 628:	Treaty of Hudaibiyyah
8th year – 628–629:	Letters to various kings inviting them to Islam; Umrat al-Qada'
9th year – 630:	Conquest of Makkah
10th year – 631:	Battle of Tabuk
11th year – 632:	Hajjat al-Wida (farewell Hajj performed by Muhammad)
12th year – 633:	Final illness and death (see Chapter 6)

Contact with different religions and other notable events

REVISED

During his early life, Muhammad came into contact with other faiths and learned of their merits as well as their flaws. As a citizen of Makkah, he was already aware of past prophets, traditions and the central place of the Ka'bah, but as the religion he was to lead later – Islam – is so critical of many of the fundamental tenets of other religions (for example, the Trinity and the belief that Jesus is the son of God) it seems unlikely that he was very influenced by them.

Around this time Muhammad:

- + joined an association called Hilful Fudul, which was committed to protecting the rights of the oppressed
- + participated in the Harb-e-Fijar war between tribes, but in a non-combatant role
- + assisted in the reconstruction of the Ka'bah after it was damaged
- + was appointed by different tribes to direct the installation of the Ka'bah's black stone to its permanent place.

His sincerity and integrity as observed by the people of Makkah earned him the titles 'Al-Amin' (The Trustworthy) and 'Al-Sadiq' (The Truthful).

Revision activity

Explain why these qualities might have been important when Muhammad started preaching Islam.

Marriage and family

REVISED

These qualities also greatly impressed his employer Khadija. Having been widowed, she sent him a marriage proposal. Although Muhammad was fifteen years younger than her (she was 40) and thought they might be incompatible due to her higher status, he was persuaded to marry her. They had a loving and happy marriage and although polygamy was common at the time, Muhammad did not marry again until her death 25 years later. Through their marriage Muhammad became rich but he used his wealth to free slaves and help the poor. Together they had six children – four daughters and two sons – although the boys all died in infancy.

Now test yourself

TESTED

- 1 What qualities made Muhammad popular with people?
- 2 Who was Khadija? Limit your answer to 50 words.
- 3 Give two examples of Muhammad's care and concern for society's most disadvantaged.

The Night of Power (610CE)

Muhammad was quiet and reflective and often visited a nearby cave, Hira, to spend time in solitude and the remembrance of one God, away from the worship of idols in and around the Ka'bah. He was dissatisfied with life in Makkah as it was full of corruption and immorality and used this time to

search for solutions through prayer and to seek a deeper connection with Allah.

Did He not find you an orphan and shelter you?

(Qur'an 93: 6, Haleem 2008)

During one of these retreats in Ramadan (the ninth month in the Islamic year), Muhammad, aged 40, had a powerful religious experience. He received a visit by the angel Jibril (Gabriel) who instructed 'Iqra!', meaning 'Proclaim!' or 'Read!', three times. Muhammad, who was illiterate, was unsure what was being said. Jibril continued 'Read! In the name of your Lord who created: He created man from a clinging form. Read! Your Lord is the Most Bountiful One who taught by [means of] the pen, who taught man what he did not know.' (Qur'an 96: 1–5). The message meant that Muhammad was being told to convey the message of God's oneness to the people. He responded hesitantly, saying that he could not. The experience overwhelmed Muhammad and he wanted to run home, but Jibril informed him that he had been chosen as a prophet. When he got home Muhammad was shivering and had to be comforted by Khadija who wrapped him in a blanket. After hearing what happened and observing his confusion, she reassured him that he was not possessed by anything satanic; instead, he had been appointed by Allah for a special purpose.

God is witness, He has not sent you this Word that you should fail and prove unworthy, that He should then give you up. How can God do such a thing, while you are kind and considerate to your relations, help the poor and the forlorn and bear their burdens? You are restoring the virtues which had disappeared from our country. You treat guests with honour and help those who are in distress. Can you be subjected by God to any trial?

(Bukhari)

Khadija took Muhammad to her Christian relative, Waraqah bin Nawfal, who after hearing what had happened, said that it appeared that Muhammad had been chosen as a prophet. This event is known as the **Night of Power** (Laylat al-Qadr) and proved to be a turning point, not just for Muhammad but for Makkah and Islam as well.

We sent it down on the Night of Glory. What will explain to you what the Night of Glory is? The Night of Glory is better than a thousand months; on that night the angels and the Spirit descend again and again with their Lord's permission on every task; Peace it is until the rising of the dawn.

(Qur'an 97: 1–5, Haleem 2008)

Now test yourself

TESTED

- 4 Why might this experience have been called the Night of Power?
- 5 How might Khadija's words have comforted Muhammad?

Night of Power (Laylat al-Qadr) The night the Prophet received his first Qur'anic revelation

Further revelations and growth of Islam (610–21CE)

After his initial anxieties, Muhammad accepted that he had been chosen as a prophet and messenger. More revelations followed and the messages he received addressed many of the problems he perceived in his society, such as idolatry, inequality and injustice. For the first three years, Muhammad shared these teachings secretly. Once he had gained some followers, he began to teach openly (Qur'an 15: 94). He taught people strict monotheism, challenged

the worship of idols, emphasised a strong moral code, promoted service to all of creation and taught that there was hope for eternal life after death.

Those they invoke beside God create nothing; they are themselves created. They are dead, not living. They do not know when they will be raised up. Your God is the One God.

(Qur'an 16: 20–22, Haleem 2008)

Initially the weaker members of society, such as the poor, accepted him, but soon influential figures joined the new religion too. Those who accepted him became known as Muslims. This did not sit well with the Makkan leaders who were very defensive of their way of life. Reasons for their rejection of Muhammad included:

- + the worship of idols was entrenched in their culture and also brought money
- + they were proud of maintaining the traditions of their ancestors
- + they were contented with the social status quo of masters owning slaves and living luxuriously
- + Muhammad was not a chieftain or man of high status, so he was not worthy of attention.

Initially they merely mocked Muhammad, but as they began to worry about his increasing popularity, they offered him authority, money, beautiful women, and more, on the condition he stopped preaching. Muhammad declined, insisting that his message was from Allah, and continued undeterred. The leaders were insulted by this rejection and believed that the new faith Islam posed a threat to their position and the reputation of the city. They began a campaign of persecution.

Now test yourself

TESTED

- 6 Why did the Makkan leaders not like Muhammad?
- 7 Why did Muhammad turn down their offers?

The first targets were the poorer Muslims who were subjected to verbal as well as physical abuse and torture, and many were murdered. A three-year social boycott was enforced during which Muslim properties were attacked and businesses were forbidden to sell their goods to Muslims. It was during this period of oppression that both Khadija and Abu Talib died.

Far from arresting the growth of Islam, cruelty towards Muslims created more sympathy and curiosity about the new faith, and more people converted. This included people from other parts of Arabia, particularly Yathrib – around 250 miles from Makkah – who visited Muhammad at 'Aqabah to pledge allegiance to him.

These people were mainly representatives of tribes who were at war and desperately sought mediation. They also believed Muhammad was the Musa-like prophet foretold in the Tawrat (Torah).

We shall believe in one God, shall not associate partners with God, shall not steal, shall not commit adultery or fornication, shall abstain from murder, shall not defame anyone, and shall obey you in everything good.

(First Pledge at 'Aqabah)

Within the first thirteen years of his preaching, the number of Muslims in Makkah was relatively low (approximately 100) but had grown to around 800 in Yathrib.

Revision activity

What parts of this pledge were a challenge to the life and customs in Arabia?

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Hijrah and the establishment of Islam in Madinah (622CE)

The Makkan leaders intensified their efforts to end Islam and it became clear that it was unsafe for Muslims to stay in Makkah. Throughout this period of persecution, Muslims did not retaliate and maintained a policy of non-violence. The Prophet Muhammad himself continued to pray earnestly for his enemies to change their attitude (Qur'an 18: 6).

Muhammad and the first Muslims were commanded by Allah to leave the city in secret and settle elsewhere. Some had already been instructed to migrate to Abyssinia, but the majority of Muslims, including Muhammad, decided upon Yathrib. Muhammad was invited to a second meeting at 'Aqabah, by its leaders, and was promised protection and their loyalty. Muslims left the city a few at a time. Muhammad was one of the last Muslims to leave Makkah, as he wanted to put the safety of others first. This historic journey is known as the **hijrah** (migration) and marks the start of the Islamic calendar.

Remember [Prophet] when the disbelievers plotted to take you captive, kill, or expel you. They schemed and so did God: He is the best of schemers.

(Qur'an 8: 30, Haleem 2008)

Muhammad was accompanied by his friend Abu Bakr. The journey took eight days. There were efforts to track and capture or kill them, but none of these succeeded. When Muhammad arrived at Yathrib, its people welcomed him with open arms and unanimously agreed to appoint him as the leader of the city. Yathrib was renamed Madinat al-Nabi, literally 'City of the Prophet', or simply Madinah ('City'). Three key events marked this new chapter in Islam:

- 1 The first central mosque – Al-Masjid al-Nabawi (Prophet's Mosque) – was built, which would become the religious, social, political and legal centre of Islam.
- 2 Fraternity was established between the Muhajirun or migrants (Muslims from Makkah) and Ansar or helpers (Muslims of Madinah) – each helper would take in a migrant and treat them like a member of their own family.
- 3 The **Constitution of Madinah** was drawn up by Muhammad, and effectively established a unified sovereign state, based on the principle of justice as instructed by the Qur'an (Qur'an 16: 91). The new government defined the rights and responsibilities of all citizens and also stated that Madinah was a multi-faith city, made up mainly of Muslim, Jewish and pagan people, in which freedom of belief thrived.

Although every community in the city was free in terms of its religious and internal affairs, they were regulated by a common law and central government, headed by Muhammad.

The Constitution stated:

- + Muslims and Jews would live together with sympathy and sincerity and would not oppress or wrong each other
- + all people would enjoy religious freedom
- + the lives and wealth of all citizens would be honoured and safeguarded, except if someone was guilty of oppression or criminality
- + all disputes and conflicts would be presented to Muhammad for his judgement, with all verdicts in accordance with Divine Command in the Qur'an and Tawrat
- + nobody would set out for war without Muhammad's permission
- + if another nation waged war against the Jews or Muslims, each would defend the other
- + if Madinah was attacked, everyone would defend it collectively

Hijrah The journey from Makkah to Madinah by the Prophet and other Muslims in the year 622CE. The Muslim calendar is called the hijri calendar because it begins from this date

Constitution of Madinah

An agreement drawn up by the Prophet for the people of Madinah

Revision activity

Write a brief explanation of how these three events helped the growth of Islam in Madinah.

- + the Jews would not provide any aid or protection to the Quraysh of Makkah or their allies
- + every community would bear their own expenses
- + no tyrant, criminal or wrongdoer would be protected from punishment or retribution.

The migration was significant for Muhammad and the Muslims. Whereas in Makkah the Prophet's message enjoyed limited success due to the city's oppressive rulers, Madinah offered a safe harbour and ideal context for Islamic theocracy to flourish, despite being a minority faith, and play a role in the secular as well as religious life of the city.

The revelations no longer covered only personal spiritual matters but started to address the public sphere. This reinforced the belief that Islam had become a complete way of life.

Muhammad as leader

REVISED

In addition to his religious status as a prophet, Muhammad proved himself to be a very able politician, statesman and moral guide. With the signing of the constitution, he was able to unite the conflicting tribes of the city. The theocracy strengthened and his reputation spread rapidly. Muslims believe his benevolent personality and democratic style of leadership made him both popular and successful.

Out of mercy from God, you [Prophet] were gentle in your dealings with them – had you been harsh, or hard-hearted, they would have dispersed and left you – so pardon them and ask forgiveness for them. Consult with them about matters, then, when you have decided on a course of action, put your trust in God; God loves those who put their trust in Him.

(Qur'an 3: 159, Haleem 2008)

For the first few months, Muslims lived in peace and security, but the leaders in Makkah, not content with the migration, had amassed an army to attack Madinah and to try to end Islam once and for all. Muhammad now assumed a military role to lead a Muslim army to fight in self-defence. Even though the Muslims were outnumbered, they defeated their enemies, first at Badr and then after a setback at Uhud (in which Muhammad himself was wounded), they succeeded in subsequent wars. The last battle led by Muhammad was the Battle of Tabuk, when he was about 60 years of age.

In 629, Muhammad and 1,500 Muslims proceeded towards Makkah to perform **umrah** (lesser pilgrimage), based on a pilgrimage that Muhammad had made in a dream. The Makkan leaders prevented their entry but offered a ten-year peace agreement known as the Treaty of Hudaibiya. This gave permission for Muslims to perform the pilgrimage the following year, which took place as agreed and is known as the Umrat al-Qada'. It was during this period that Muhammad wrote letters to the rulers of neighbouring countries informing them of his mission and inviting them to Islam.

Umrah Lesser pilgrimage to Makkah

Return to Makkah

REVISED

The pact was broken when Makkans attacked allies of Muhammad. With the Makkan leaders showing no regard for the treaty and more and more people converting to Islam, Muhammad marched to Makkah with 10,000 Muslims. It was a bloodless coup with Muhammad granting a general pardon to the people who had persecuted Muslims – an act of forgiveness that some non-Muslim historians consider unparalleled. All idols in the Ka'bah were destroyed to restore it as a house for the worship of one God.

Even in this moment of triumph, Muhammad did not forget his first wife Khadija, who had been his rock throughout their marriage, as well as his first believer. Despite numerous offers of hospitality from his followers, he chose

to spend time in a tent pitched next to Khadija's grave in Hajun cemetery, which is also known by the name of Jannat al-Mu'allah.

Just before his death, in his Last Sermon delivered on the occasion of Hajj, Muhammad said:

All mankind is from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety and good action.

(The Last Sermon)

Muhammad died in 632CE. By this time almost the entire population of Makkah had become Muslim. Within two years, Islamic rule had spread over the entire Arabian Peninsula and Islam was the dominant religion. Muhammad's successes and achievements as a prophet, moral guide, politician and military commander earned him respect as an outstanding leader.

Philosopher, Orator, Apostle, Legislator, Conqueror of Ideas, Restorer of Rational beliefs ... The founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire – that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?

(Alphonse de Lamartine, French author and statesman, 1854)

Karen Armstrong said that 'Muhammad was frequently in deadly peril and his survival was a near miracle. But he did succeed.'

Now test yourself

TESTED ☐

8 Give at least one example of Muhammad's:

- + religious leadership
- + moral leadership
- + political leadership
- + military leadership.

Chapter summary

- + Muhammad demonstrated many great qualities prior to prophethood, including honesty and faithfulness.
- + The Night of Power experience and his appointment as a messenger signalled a turning point for Muhammad and also life in Makkah and beyond.
- + His teachings led to persecution by the leaders of Makkah, causing Muslims to migrate to Madinah where Muhammad headed a new state.
- + A number of battles were fought between Muslims and the non-believers and the Prophet and his followers were able to return victoriously to Makkah, where the Ka'bah was restored as a house for the worship of one God.

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Exam practice

For a question which focuses just on AO1 you need to demonstrate the following:

- + A wide range of knowledge: this can be shown by using specialist language and technical terminology correctly throughout your answer. Giving examples to show that you know and understand what these technical terms mean is also good.
- + Knowledge and understanding of a range of religious ideas and beliefs: you can show this by selecting the right information to answer the question. This means that you should never just write everything you know, but instead select the key information needed to address the question.
- + Develop key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs: you can do this by giving examples and making connections between different concepts. Examples do not need to be long or complex but need to show that you understand the concept. For example, hijrah refers to when persecuted Muslims left Makkah for a safer life elsewhere. In your answer you should refer to the circumstances that led to the hijrah, any important events during it and the impact it had on Muhammad and the early Muslim community. For example, you could discuss the impact of the move from Makkah to Madinah on Muhammad's role and the growth of Islam.

A higher-level answer should also, where appropriate:

- + demonstrate thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding
- + be extensive and relevant, and answer the specific demands of the question
- + have extensive depth and/or breadth, and make excellent use of evidence and examples
- + make thorough and accurate reference to the Qur'an and other sources of wisdom
- + make insightful connections between the various approaches studied
- + include an extensive range of views of scholars/schools of thought used accurately and effectively
- + make thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.

Here are a couple of examples of AO1 questions:

Explain the significance of the hijrah.

[Eduqas, AO1, 20]

- + In your answer you should refer to the circumstances that led to the hijrah, any important events during it and the impact it had on Muhammad and the early Muslim community. For example, you could discuss the impact of the move from Makkah to Madinah on Muhammad's role and the growth of Islam.

Explore the main features of the accounts of Muhammad's Night of Power.

[Pearson Edexcel, AO1, 8]

- + In your answer you should refer to Muhammad's reasons for retreating to Cave Hira and include key information about what happened during the first Qur'anic revelation (angel Jibril's visit).

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