

Muslim Terms and Cultural Issues

Limited use of Muslim terms

For the learner(s) to understand new ideas, it can be helpful to start with a bridge from their old ideas. This helps them compare and contrast the old with the new. It also helps them explain the Christian message to their Muslim friends in a way that makes sense and doesn't sound too foreign.

Therefore, to a *limited* extent this course uses a few Muslim terms as a starting-point, and as a bridge to take them from their familiar world to the new world of Christian teaching. For instance, when we talk about Christ's *shariah* (law), it helps learners reflect on their former *shariah* as Muslims and to realize that their new way of obeying Christ as Lord is different.

A glossary of terms

The following Arabic terms are mentioned in this course. Here we give them with a typical English spelling, without technical markings, and with their basic general meaning. More sophisticated spellings and definitions can be found in relevant books. Good introductions to Islam from a Christian perspective include *Friendship First* by Steve Bell, *Cross and Crescent* by Colin Chapman.

<i>Dua</i> (ch 5)	personal prayer
<i>Haji</i> (ch 20)	pilgrimage
<i>Halal</i> (ch 15)	ceremonially clean
<i>Injil</i> (ch 1)	the Gospels, the Gospel
<i>Jinn</i> (ch 18)	spirits
<i>Kafir</i> (ch 2)	infidel
<i>Kalima</i> (ch 1)	lit. 'a word' also used for <i>shahaaha</i> (see below)
<i>Murtadd</i> (ch 2)	an apostate who has abandoned Islam
<i>Paradise</i> (ch 1, 9, 20)	Muslim concept of heaven
<i>Qibla</i> (ch 20)	the geographical focal point of prayer - for Muslims, Mecca
<i>Salah/Namaz</i> (ch 5)	ritual prayer done five times daily by Muslims
<i>Sawm/Roza</i> (ch 17)	fasting done in the month of Ramadan by Muslims
<i>Shahada</i> (ch 13, 20)	witness or testimony. Especially the Muslim creed "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His apostle"
<i>Shariah</i> (ch 17)	religious law and way of life
<i>Shirk</i> (ch 3)	idolatry, associating something with God
<i>Sunnah</i> (ch 17)	example or pattern for living (for Muslims, this is especially Muhammad's example)
<i>Tawrat</i> (ch 4)	the books of Moses, Pentateuch
<i>Ummah</i> (ch 7,14)	Arabic term for the worldwide community of believers
<i>Zabur</i> (ch 6)	the Psalms
<i>Zakat</i> (ch 17)	compulsory charity-tax for Muslims

The 'five pillars', mentioned in ch 20, are the five fundamental Islamic practices; *shahada*, ritual prayer, fasting, *zakat* and *hajj* (see definitions above).

Muslim cultural issues

Most lessons in this course are written with specific cultural issues in mind. These are explained with the Advisors notes for each lesson. However, remember that not all BMBs are influenced by these to the same extent, so you should adapt the application of the lessons to your particular learner(s).

