



GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES B 8063/2X

Paper 2X Perspectives on faith (Islam)

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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Mark Schemes for GCSE Religious Studies

This paper requires expert markers who have wide knowledge and understanding of the particular subject content of the Specification. With the exception of the multiple-choice question, many of the questions asked have many different creditable answers and students are able to bring to their answers their own knowledge, understanding and background. They will offer details, arguments and evidence which the examiner, with the help of the mark scheme, will need to judge as creditable or not. It is therefore important that the examiner has a good understanding of the principles and spirit of the mark scheme in order to be fair and consistent when marking students' answers. The Content included is designed to be as helpful as possible but in many cases is not exhaustive. So Content sections are introduced by the sentence:

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

this is to remind examiners that there may well be additional correct answers which, with their expertise, they will be able to allow. With all questions if an examiner has any doubt about answers being creditworthy they should consult their team leader.

Structure

The mark scheme for each question shows:

- the question; Each question is printed in full before its target and mark scheme. It is always important that examiners remind themselves of the exact question being asked. In particular, they will need to do this in instances where the answer appears to be 'straying' from the question set or perhaps offers a valid alternative not included in the mark scheme
- target; The target provides the specific assessment objective which the question is testing. It reminds examiners of the skills the question is designed to test, eg knowledge and understanding, evaluation
- the total marks available for the question and if Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar is assessed
- the typical answer(s) or content which are expected
- generic instructions related to the question target of how to award marks (ie levels of response grid).

General Guidance

.../.. means that these are acceptable alternative answers in the mark scheme, eg Guru Har Krishan / Guru Tegh Bahadur / Guru Gobind Singh.

Answers may include specialist terms, in Hebrew or Arabic for example. If this is the case, the mark scheme will usually indicate this by providing in brackets the English as well, eg 'Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement)'. In such questions, answers will be credited whether provided in the original language or in English.

Some mark schemes use bullet points to separate content. Each bullet point refers to a different possible 'belief' or 'teaching' or 'way', depending on the question. Obliques (.../..) used within the bullet point indicate different ways in which the point may be expressed and points which may be made to give the further detail or development needed for the second mark.

Where a student has crossed out a complete answer, it should be marked if it remains legible, unless an alternative is provided in which case only the alternative should be marked. When part of an answer is crossed out, then only what remains should be considered.

In questions where credit can be given to the development of a point, those developments can take the form of:

- example or evidence
- reference to different views
- detailed information.

1-mark multiple-choice questions

Such questions have four alternatives and the one correct answer will be given together with the correct letter, eg 'Answer: D Trinity'.

2-mark short-answer questions

The principle here is provided in the mark scheme: 'One mark for each of two correct points.' Students may give **more than** the two answers required by the question. In such instances:

- **award for the first two answers only, wherever they appear**
- if a student gives more than one answer on the first line and another answer / other answers on the second line, the 'first two answers' will be the **first two** on the first line and **only these two** should be considered for marks. Other answers must be ignored
- if on the first line the first two answers given are correct, award two marks, regardless of what is written elsewhere in the answer
- if the first two answers can only be awarded one mark yet there is a third answer that is correct, this correct third answer must be ignored and no mark given for it
- however, if the student gives some **elaboration after the first answer**, which is clearly developing their first answer, (which they are not required to do), do not consider this elaboration to be their second answer (unless the elaboration happens to contain a second correct answer to the question asked), regardless of whether there are other answers provided. In this case, the second answer also, if correct, may be credited for the second mark.

4 and 5-mark answer questions

Examiners should take care to note the target of the question. Clear information is provided for these types of question on how to award marking points. Examiners should carefully read the additional instructions provided for each type of question (eg for influence questions the final sentence in the general guidance box reminds the examiner that the second mark (detailed explanation) awarded in each case must show clear 'influence').

12-mark answer questions

The 12-mark questions test Evaluation skills (AO2). The mark scheme for these answers is based on Levels of Response marking in which the examiner is required to make a judgement on the completed answer taken as a whole.

Level of response marking instructions

In GCSE Religious Studies, differentiation is largely achieved by outcome on the basis of students' responses. To facilitate this, level of response marking has been devised for many questions.

Level of response marking requires a quite different approach from the examiner than the traditional 'point for point' marking. It is essential that the **whole response is read** and then **allocated to the level** it best fits.

If a student demonstrates knowledge, understanding and/or evaluation at a certain level, he/she must be credited at that level. **Length** of response or **literary ability** should **not be confused with genuine religious studies skills**. For example, a short answer which shows a high level of conceptual ability must be credited at that level. (If there is a band of marks allocated to a level, discrimination should be made with reference to the development of the answer.)

Examiners should **refer to the stated assessment target** objective of a question (see mark scheme) when there is any doubt as to the relevance of a student's response.

Level of response mark schemes include either **examples** of possible students' responses or **material** which they might use. These are intended as a **guide** only. It is anticipated that students will produce a wide range of responses to each question.

It is a feature of levels of response mark schemes that examiners are prepared to reward fully responses which are obviously valid and of high ability but do not conform exactly to the requirements of a particular level. If examiners have any doubt about what level to award a response, they should consult their team leader.

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before examiners apply the mark scheme to a student's answer they should read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. They should then apply the mark scheme. It may be necessary to read the answer more than once to be sure of assigning the correct level.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)

Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in 12-mark questions.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be assessed against the following criteria:

Level	Performance descriptor	Marks awarded
High performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall. • Learners use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate. 	3
Intermediate performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall. • Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate. 	2
Threshold performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall. • Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate. 	1
No marks awarded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learner writes nothing. • The learner's response does not relate to the question. • The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning. 	0

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Islam: Beliefs

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Which one of the following words refers to life after death?**[1 mark]**

- A Adalat**
- B Risalah**
- C Akhirah**
- D Surah**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

Answer: C Akhirah

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Give two Muslim beliefs about the prophet Adam.**[2 marks]**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

One mark for each of two correct points.

If students provide more than two responses only the first two responses should be considered for marking.

Students may include two of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

The first man on earth / the father of the human race / created by God from the dust of the earth / the first prophet / superior to the angels (they were told to bow down to him) / he was given understanding by God / and passed on his knowledge to humanity / he was taught the names of things by God / he told humans what food they could eat and how to grow it / he told them how to repent / he was tempted by Shaytan / he and his wife ate the forbidden fruit / and were expelled from the garden / thus bringing sin into the world / he built the first ka'ba, etc.

0 1 . 3 Explain two contrasting Muslim views about heaven and hell.

[4 marks]

Target: AO1:3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs.

First contrasting view

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

Second contrasting view

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

Contrast may mean opposing or mean different views.

If similar views are given, only one of them may be credited up to 2 marks max.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- Some Muslims take the descriptions of heaven and hell in the Qur'an literally / heaven is a beautiful garden containing all they could desire / hell is a place of fire, scorching wind and scalding water, etc.
- Some think that they are just hints / of how wonderful heaven will be / and how terrible hell will be / the language of human experience has to be used / as the nature of the afterlife is beyond human understanding, etc.
- Some think that the language used to describe heaven and hell is purely symbolic / it points to a spiritual life after death / heaven is being in the presence of God / hell is living in the absence of God, etc.
- Heaven is seen as a reward / for those who obey God's teachings / hell is a punishment / for those who disobey God's teachings, etc.

0 1 . 4 Explain two Muslim beliefs about God's relationship with the world.

**Refer to scripture or another source of Muslim belief and teaching in your answer.
[5 marks]**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

First belief

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 2 marks

Second belief

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to scripture or another source of Muslim belief and teaching – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- God is immanent / as creator and sustainer of the world he is involved in what happens / eg providing sustenance, etc.
- God is merciful / as a beneficent Being, God cares about his creation / he provides people with what they need to live, etc.
- God is transcendent / outside the universe / beyond human comprehension / not limited by the world of space and time / God cannot be contained by the universe, etc.
- God is in control of, and has a plan for, all that happens in the world / God is omnipotent / nothing in the world happens without his will, etc.
- God is omniscient / he is aware of everything that happens in the world / his relationship with humans is based on justice, etc.

Sources of authority might include:

'Only what God has decreed will happen to us.' (Qur'an 9:51)

'We are closer to him than his jugular vein.' (Qur'an 50:16)

'Verily, your Lord is Allah who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne, arranging the matter.' (Qur'an 10:3)

'To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth.' (Qur'an 2:255)

'He is with you wherever you are, for Allah sees what you do.' (Qur'an 57:4)

Accept all other sources of authority that correctly support the beliefs given.

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‘Belief in holy books is the most important Article of Faith for Sunni Muslims.’

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- refer to Muslim teaching
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]
[Plus SPaG 3 marks]

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10–12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7–9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons/evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4–6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1–3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be assessed against the following criteria:

Level	Performance descriptor	Marks awarded
High performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall. • Learners use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate. 	3
Intermediate performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall. • Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate. 	2
Threshold performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy. 	1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall. • Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate. 	
No marks awarded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learner writes nothing. • The learner's response does not relate to the question. • The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning. 	0

Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:

Arguments in support:

- Holy books are something that can be heard or read every day / they help Muslims feel connected to God / all holy books come from God, etc.
- The Qur'an is the highest authority in Islam / directly revealed to Muhammad / the word of God, etc.
- They go back to ancient times / infallible teachings / the imam can explain their teachings / still relevant today, etc.
- Contain teachings about the past, present and future / the nature of God / instructions for worship / moral guidance / the main source of Shari'ah law, etc.
- Other holy books (the Torah, the Psalms, the Gospel, the Scrolls of Abraham) were also revealed by God / contain guidance / proclaim monotheism / the hadith contain Muhammad's insights, etc.

Arguments in support of other views:

- Belief in tawhid (the Oneness of Allah) is the most important article of faith / this is seen in the requirement to repeat the Shahadah daily / it stresses God's uniqueness / he is incomparable / he alone created the universe, etc.
- Belief in the supremacy of God's will is most important / it is the belief that God already knows everything that happens in the world / he is in control / his will cannot ultimately be defied, etc.
- Belief in angels is most important / God's message is also communicated to humans by angels / the Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad through Jibril / Mika'il is an angel bringing God's mercy to humans / rewarding the righteous / controlling the weather, etc.
- Belief in risalah is most important / the prophets are role models for Muslims / providing guidance / Muhammad has particular importance as the seal of the prophets, etc.
- Belief in akhirah is most important / belief in the day of judgement reminds Muslims that they need to live in accordance with God's will / so that they receive a favourable judgement / and the rewards of heaven, etc.
- The six articles are equal in importance / each of the articles is mentioned in the Qur'an / each one informs a different part of Muslim belief eg belief in prophets is necessary for belief in holy books, etc.

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Islam: Practices

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Which one of the following refers to ablution (the Muslim ritual of washing before prayer)?

[1 mark]**A Jummah****B Rak'ah****C Salah****D Wudu**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

Answer: D Wudu

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Give two of the ways in which Khums is used.

[2 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

One mark for each of two correct points.

If students provide more than two responses only the first two responses should be considered for marking.

Students may include two of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

It is given to Shi'a religious leaders / to the mosque / used to fund educational institutions / to support scholars / to build mosques / to print Islamic literature / to provide healthcare / to provide disaster relief / emergency aid / to help stranded travellers / given to charity / to those in poverty / to fulfil one of the Ten Obligatory Acts / to show love for God, etc.

0 2 . 3**Explain two ways in which going to the mosque for prayer influences the lives of Muslims.****[4 marks]****Target: AO1:2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence on individuals, communities and societies.****First way**

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

Second way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

To be a 'detailed' explanation, the influence of the way must be included.**Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:**

- By going to the mosque, they encourage other Muslims to pray / bear witness to their faith / set a good example, etc.
- They feel part of the ummah / it makes them more aware of the worldwide unity of Islam / gives them a sense of belonging, etc.
- Praying with others strengthens their faith / especially in times of need or persecution, etc.
- The imam's sermon in the Friday prayers teaches them more about Islam / gives moral guidance / gives encouragement in times of difficulty, etc.
- For some Muslims, going to the mosque is not important and so does not influence their lives / female Muslims may prefer to perform salah at home / Muslims with disabilities or those who are sick may be unable to go to the mosque, etc.

0 2 . 4 Explain two reasons why Ashura is important for Muslims.

**Refer to scripture or another source of Muslim belief and teaching in your answer.
[5 marks]**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

First reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Second reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to scripture or another source of Muslim belief and teaching – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- For Shi'a Muslims, it commemorates the battle of Karbala / the death of Muhammad's grandson Husayn (Hussein) / seen as martyrdom, etc.
- It is a symbol of the struggle against oppression / especially when Muslims feel they are a persecuted minority / it reminds them to stand up for justice, etc.
- For Sunni Muslims, it commemorates the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt / Prophet Muhammad encouraged Muslims to fast on Ashura to commemorate this, etc.
- Others think it commemorates Noah (Nuh) leaving the ark after the flood / this is an example of God's mercy, etc.
- It is a day of fasting / giving to charity / showing kindness to the family and those in need, etc.

Sources of authority might include:

'He directed all the followers to fast on the day of Ashura.' (Hadith)

'Fasting on the day of Ashura is the best way to pay off all the sins of one year.' (Hadith)

Visiting the shrine of Husayn is obligatory for Shi'a Muslims. (Hadith)

Accept all other sources of authority that correctly support the reasons given.

0 2 . 5 'Fasting during Ramadan is the best way for Muslims to show their love for God.'

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- refer to Muslim teaching
- reach a justified conclusion.

**[12 marks]
[Plus SPaG 3 marks]**

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10–12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7–9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons/evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4–6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1–3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be assessed against the following criteria:

Level	Performance descriptor	Marks awarded
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Intermediate performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall. • Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate. 	2
Threshold performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall. • Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate. 	1

No marks awarded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learner writes nothing. • The learner's response does not relate to the question. • The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning. 	0
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Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:

Arguments in support:

- Self-discipline entailed in the fast shows devotion to God / putting God before physical desires / focus entirely on God, etc.
- Fasting shows absolute submission to God / in the modern world adults who have to work and young people who are in education have to resist the temptation to eat and drink with their non-Muslim colleagues and friends, etc.
- Fasting purifies the soul and brings Muslims closer to God / it makes them appreciative of what he has given them, etc.
- Being hungry enables Muslims to empathise with the poor / and to find ways of helping them / this act of service to others is a sign of their love for God, etc.

Arguments in support of other views:

- Performing the other Pillars is also an effective way of showing love for God / repeating the Shahadah shows their belief and trust in the one God, etc.
- Prayer five times a day also requires self-discipline / a time of focus on God and absolute submission to him / this is done more regularly than fasting, showing more love for God, etc.
- Giving zakah may require self-sacrifice for many but shows devotion to God / being willing to give up their own wealth for the sake of God, etc.
- Going on hajj requires a great deal of self-sacrifice / the long journey and the rituals performed show absolute devotion to God / eg tawaf, ihram, sacrificing an animal, etc.
- Uncomplaining acceptance of hardships in life and trying always to serve God in every situation shows a deep love for God / it shows Muslims accept God is in control of what happens to them / everything they do is for him, etc.