

Islam

Questions answered

What are some of the Muslim rites of passage?

Birth

When a baby is born, the Muslim call to prayer, known as the Adhan, ("**God is great, there is no God but Allah. Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. Come to prayer.**") is recited into the baby's right ear by the father.

The baby is given a taste of something sweet, so parents may chew a piece of date and rub the juice along the baby's gums. It was a practice carried out by the **Prophet Muhammad** and is believed to help the digestive systems get started.

After seven days the **Aqeeqah** ceremony is performed in which the baby's scalp is shaved of hair. This is to show that the child is the servant of Allah. Parents then weigh the hair and give the equivalent weight in silver to charity or distribute meat to the poor.

Baby boys are circumcised (although this can be done at any time up until puberty).

What is Zakat?

Zakat is the compulsory giving of 2.5% of a person's wealth to charity every year.

The purpose of this is to:

- Help the poor
- Help the giver to remember that everything comes from God (Allah) and is on loan - they do not own anything themselves
- Help the giver to obey Allah
- Help to free the person from the love of money and love of self.

Zakat is a form of worship and self-purification. It is the third pillar of Islam

There are strict guidelines which govern how any money given as Zakat is used.