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Glossary

'Adil: fair, just

'AdI: the concept of the justice of God

Ahadith: singular of **hadith,** a statement (usually attributed either to the Prophet [pbuh] or to one of the members of his Progeny or companions)

Ahilla: plural of hilal, crescent

'Alim: scholar, theologian, a highly knowledgeable person

A'mal: highly recommended acts of adoration

'Arsh: literally: throne, symbol of the Almighty's Authority

Ashar: plural of *sahar*, the time immediately preceding daybreak

'Athan: the call for prayers, mu'aththin is one who performs 'athan.

Awqaf: plural of waqf, a charitable trust

Ayah: verse (from a sacred scripture); plural: ayat

Barzakh: the place and time wherein the souls of the dead live till the Day of Judgment; see the Holy Qur'an, 23:100.

Basmala: the uttering of: "Bismillahir-Ramanir-Raim" (In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious, the

most Merciful)

Bee: plural of abyas, white

Dahr: time, age, eternity

Dinar: an Islamic (now Arab) gold currency varying in weight

Dirham: an Islamic silver currency weighing approx. 3.12 grams

Diwan: meeting place, also a collection of poems

Diyya: blood money, monetary compensation for manslaughter or intentional murder

Du'a': supplication, invocation

'Id: an Islamic feast, a joyous celebration, a merry occasion

Fa'izeen: (or Fa'izùn) winners

Fair: pre-dawn, daybreak

Fagih: jurist, one who is knowledgeable in Islamic jurisprudence

Farasikh: plural of farsakh, parasang (a loan Persian word), a measure of length (distance). According to Lisan al-'Arab, it may be three to six miles. "It is called so," the author of Lisan al-'Arab goes on, "because one who walks one farsakh will have to sit to rest," suggesting that the original meaning of the word is: to halt, to come to a stand still, to rest.

Fatawa: plural of fatwa, a religious edict or decision

Figh: the science of Islamic jurisprudence

Firdaws: Paradise

Fitra: the amount (in cash or kind) paid to the needy at the end of the month of Ramadan; see text for

more details

Ghazwa: a military campaign, an invasion; invader: *ghazi*

Ghusl: ceremonial bath

hadith: (singular:) tradition, a statement made by Prophet Muhammad; plural: ahadith

Hadi: sacrificial animals offered at Mecca's holy precincts

Hafiz: one who has learned the entire text of the Holy Qur'an by heart; plural: Huffaz

Hajj: Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca during the prescribed period

Halal: Islamically permissible, admissible, allowed

Haram: Islamically prohibitive, inadmissible, forbidden

Hijab: veil, curtain

Hilal: crescent, singular of ahilla

Hizb: literally, it means: party (plural: ahzab); another meaning: the 60th part of the Holy Qur'an

Hujja: proof, argument, authority

Huri: heavenly wife with large lovely eyes married to the male residents of Paradise

Ihram: pilgrimage garb, white unwoven cotton shroud worn by pilgrims

litihad: the degree one reaches in order to be qualified as a mujtahid, one who is capable of deriving

religious decisions on his own

'Illiyeen: the highest pinnacle of Paradise; see Holy Qur'an, 83:18.

Imam: leader of an *ummah*, a group of people (small or big); he may be the one who leads others in

congregational prayers, or a supreme relgious authority, or one of the Twelve Infallible Imams (as)

Iman: faith, conviction

Igama: the prouncement of certain statements in preparation for the performing of the prayers, usually

following the athan

'Isha': nighttime, evening

Isnad: the method whereby one *hadith* is traced and in the end attributed to a *muhaddith*, traditionist,

one who transmitted it the first time

'Isyan: transgression against the Almighty's Commandments.

l'tikaf: the act of remaining most of the time at a mosque for prayers and supplications

Iftar: the time or the meal to break the fast

Igama: the statements recited immediately before starting the ritual prayer

Isra': night journey; usually a reference to the Prophet's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem

Jahannam: hell

Jahiliyya: pre-Islamic period of ignorance

Jami'a: inclusive, universal, university; it also means: handcuffs

Janaba: uncleanness caused by seminal discharge

Jannat: heaven, Paradise, garden, singular of jannat

Jihad: a struggle, an effort exerted, or a war waged in defense of Islam

Jizya: protection tax paid to Muslims by non-Muslims residing in areas under Islamic control whereby

the Muslims protect their lives and property and extempt them from the military service

Kaffara: atonement from sin

Kafir: infidel, apostate, atheist, one who does not believe in the existence of the Creator; noun: kufr

Kalima: synonymous to "shahada," it is a Muslim's declaration of faith (that is, to testify that there is no

god except Allah, and that Muammad is the Messenger of Allah), and it is always pronounced in Arabic

Kantar: in Arabic: qintar, a varying weight of 100 ratls (rotls); a ratl in Syria is roughly 3.202 kg.,

whereas in England it is 449.28 grams, and in Lebanon it is 2.566 kg.

Khandaq: moat, ditch

Khums: one-fifth of one's savings (usually paid by Shi'a Muslims) set aside from annual income

Kunya: the use of "Abu" (father of) or "Umm" (mother of) often as a prefix for one's name

Kursi: literally: chair, symbol of the Almighty's Seat of Judgment and Authority; see Holy Qur'an, 2:255

Khutba: lecture, sermon; a speech delivered on a specific occasion

Kufr: apostacy, infidelity, disbelief

Labbayk: an exclamation conveying the meaning of "At your service!" or "Here I am!"

Ma'ad: the Return: a reference to the returning of the souls to their new bodies after the period of barzakh (see above), and their ultimate returning to their Maker for judgment; generally, it is used to refer to death and the life hereafter.

Mahr: dowry paid by the groom to the bride (or *vice versa* as is the case in some cultures)

Majalis: meetings or gatherings held to commemorate certain religious occasion, mostly applied to those held during the month of Muharram or to recite the Fatiha for a deceased person; singular of majlis, a place where people sit

Marji' taqlid: the highest theological authority-referee followed

Mas'um: infallible, divinely protected against sinning

Mash 'ar: a place where certain rites are to be conducted, a sacred area or place or precinct

Mawla: depending on its usage, it may mean either "master" or "slave," or it may mean one who is most fit for a specific position of honor and prestige. Derived from the adjective awla (one who is best qualified), it means: the person who is best suited to be the religious and temporal leader of all Muslims.

Mi'raj: the Prophet's ascension from Jerusalem to the heavens

Mithqal: a weight equivalent to 24 karats or 4.68 grams

Mufassir: a theologian who is well-versed in the exegesis of the Holy Qur'an

Muaddith: traditionist, one who quotes statements of Prophet Muhammad

Mujahid: one who practices *jihad* (see *jihad* above)

Mujtahid: one who acquires the degree of *ijtihad* and thus becomes capable of deriving religious

decisions on his own

Mu'min: believer, one who has iman, conviction, true belief

Munafiqun: hypocrites

Musnad: a compilation of traditions (ahadith) that are consecutively and chronologically traced to their

transmitters

Mutawatir: consecutively reported, traced by a perfect chronological chain of ascertained narrators of

hadith

Mu'aththin: caller to prayers (usually at a mosque)

Mu'min: (Muslim) believer, a man of conviction

Nafl: optional, non-compulsory, supererotatory, highly recommended act of worship; plural: nawafil

Najasa: uncleanness, impurity; adjective: najis

Nathr: One's pledge to do something very good to show appreciation for the Almighty's favorable

response to his supplication and the attainment of his worldly wish

Nur: divine or celestial light the source of which is neither fire nor reflection

Nubuwwah: prophethood, the belief in prophets and their messages

Qaniteen: those who are constantly supplicating

Qasa: compensatory, making up for a missed rite

Qibla: direction towards the Ka'ba, Mecca

Qiyam: standing

Qudsi: divine, related to the Almighty

Qunoot: supplication during prayers

Rak'ah: (singular) prostration (during prayer or a ritual) (plural: rak'at)

Rukoo': kneeling

Sabeel: path, way, avenue

Sadaqa: (singular) charity offered voluntarily; its plural is: sadaqat

Sadeed: pus collected from bleeding wounds to be served to the sinners in hell when they ask for water to quench their thirst

Sahaba: companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad; its singular is: Sahabi

Sahifa: tablet, scroll, parchment, a written document

Sahih: literally: authentic, correct, accurate; it is generally used to refer to the collection, group of collections, or book, of verified and authenticated *ahadith* of Prophet Muhammad

Sa'i: the running between the Safa and the Marwa near the Ka'ba

Sajda: prostration

Salat: Islamic prayers, optional or mandatory; plural: salawat

Salatul-'Id: late morning prayers comprised of two *rak'at* (prostrations) performed in the day that follows 'Id al-Fitr (the feat of fast-breaking) signaling the end of the fast of the month of Ramadan

Saraya: (plural) military campagins personally ordered by Prophet Muhammad; singular: sariya

Shahada: martyrdom; it also means: testimony

Shahr: month

Shaikh: also **shaykh,** an honorific title with many meanings; literally, it means an old man; in Islamic theology and philosophy, however, it is used to denote a mentor, professor, or scholar of a high caliber

Shari'ah: Islam's legislative system

Shirk: polytheism, the belief in the existence of partners with God

Shubha: (singular) doubt, suspicion; its plural is: *shubuhat*

Shùra: the principle of mutual consultation, Islam's form of democracy

Siddeeq: one who testifies to the truthfulness of a prophet

Sirat: path, highway; same as Sabeel

Siyam: Islam's norm of fast

Suhoor: time or meal taken before daybreak in preparation to fast during the day

Sultan: ruler who rules in the name of Islam, a Muslim monarch

Sunan: plural of **sunnah:** a highly commended act of worship or way whereby a Muslim seeks nearness to Allah

Sùra: (also Sùrah) a chapter of the Holy Qur'an

Tabi'een: plural of **tabi'**, one who accompanied for a good period of time, learned from and followed a *Sahabi*, a companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad; its plural is: *tabi'een*

Tafsir: (singular) exegesis or explanation of Qur'anic verses; its plural is: tafasir

Tahajjud: night devotions; a **mutahajjid** is one who keeps religious vigilance, spending the night in prayer

Tahara: purification, the act of removing najasa, uncleanness or impurity

Takbeer: the act of glorifying Allah by declaring in an audible voice: "Allaho Akbar!" Allah is Great!

Talbiya: the reciting of "Labbayka Allahomma labbayk!" (Here, I come, Lord, in response to your call!)

Taqiyya: one's way of exerting precaution in order to save his creed or life when either is in jeopardy, Shi'as' way of trying to survive in the presence of sure perils

Taqleed: the concept of following a *mujtahid* or an authority recognized as the *a'lam*, the most knowledgeable in Islamics

Tarwiyah: The Day of Tarwiyah is the 8th of Thul-Hijjah when the pilgrims fill their water bags and prepare to go to Mina.

Tashahhud: the testimony regarding Allah being the Lord and Muammad being His Servant and Messenger; it is the uttering of "Ashhadu an la ilaha illa-Allah, wa anna Muhammad abdoho wa rasooloh"

Tashreeq: the cutting and sun-drying of sacrificed meat

Tawaf: circling around a sacred site

Tawatur: consecutive reporting, the tracing of one particular *hadith* to its respective chronological chain of narrators

Tawhid: the concept of the absolute Unity of God, the belief that God is One and indivisible, One – and Only One – God

Tawwabeen: the penitent ones, those who repented their reluctance to go to the rescue of Imam Husayn when he was confronted with Yazid's armies and who enlisted under the military command of al-Mukhtar and pursued those who massacred Imam Husayn Ibn "Ali Ibn Abù Talib ('a) and killed them

Thakireen: those who often mention the Name of the Almighty and Glorify Him

Thayyib: a deflowered woman, a widow or divorcee

Thireed: pieces of bread cut and dipped in stew

'Ulema': plural of 'alim, scholar-theologian

Umma: nation, group of people

Umm walad: "Freed mother of son" means a bondmaid who bears sons by her master and who is set

free on that account but remains in his custody as his wife.

'Umra: the pilgrimage to Mecca during any time other than the prescribed (first ten) days of the month of

Thul-Hijjah

Usul: the basics of jurisprudence

Wajib: compulsory, obligatory, binding

Wali: person to whom wilayat is obligatory; a waali, however, is a governor appointed by a Muslim ruler

of a higher authority (such as a caliph, a sultan, etc.)

Waqf: a charitable trust

Wasi: successor to a prophet

Wilayat: a binding supreme authority that combines both temporal and religious powers

Wisal: fasting the last day of every lunar calendar month

Wunu: ablution

Zakat: Literally, it means "purification;" it is a compulsory 2.5% tax on one of three categories of wealth: 1) metal coins (gold, silver, etc.), 2) grain crops (barley, wheat, grain, rice, etc.), and 3) animals raised for food consumption. Zakat is somehow a complicated issue, and for details, readers are advised to consult books dealing with figh. Among its types are: zakat al-mal (taxable wealth accumulated during one full year), and zakat al-fitr (a tax to be paid by the head of a household at the end of the fast of the month of Ramadan).

Zihar: the making of a similitude between the back of one's wife with that of his mother; i.e. saying that

his wife's back looks similar to his mother's back (zahr)

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