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LORRAINE ABBOTT

STEVE CLARKE

EDITED BY GORDON KAY

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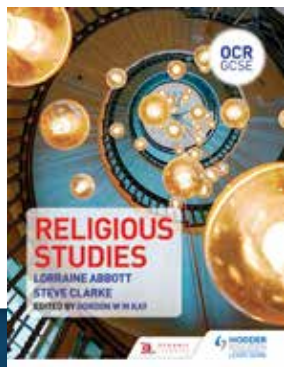
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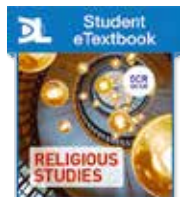
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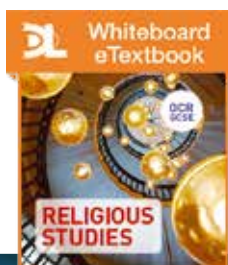
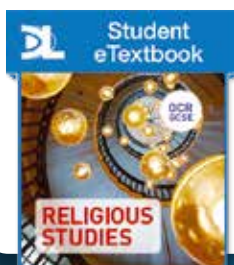
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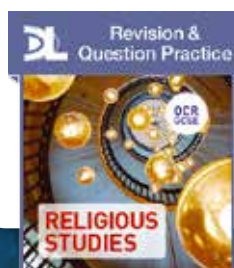
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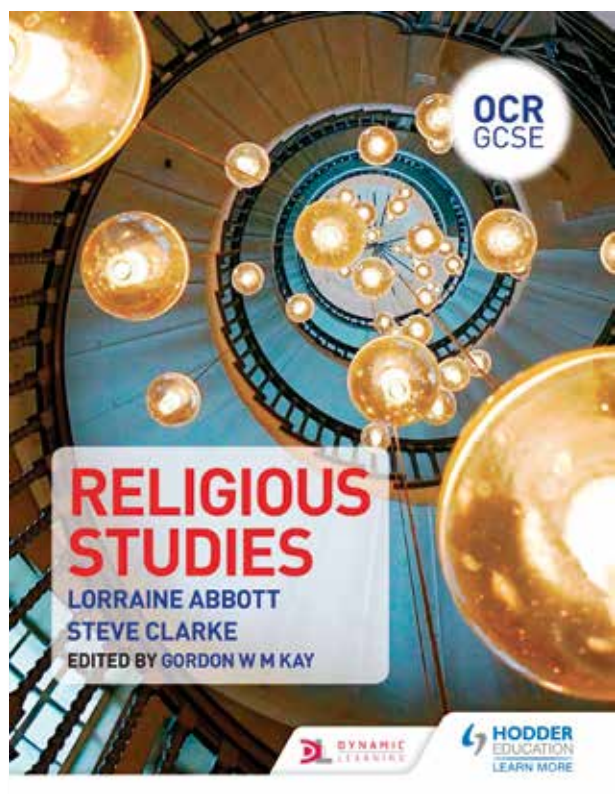
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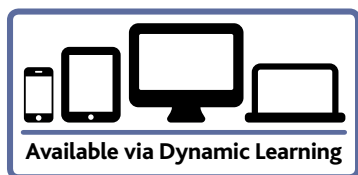
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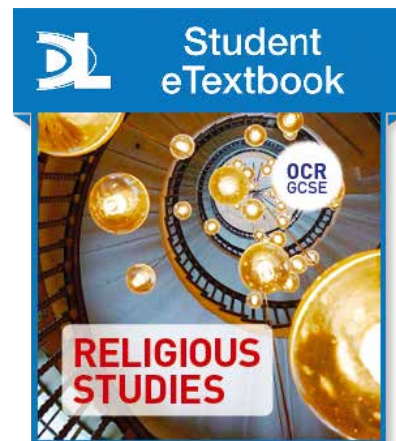
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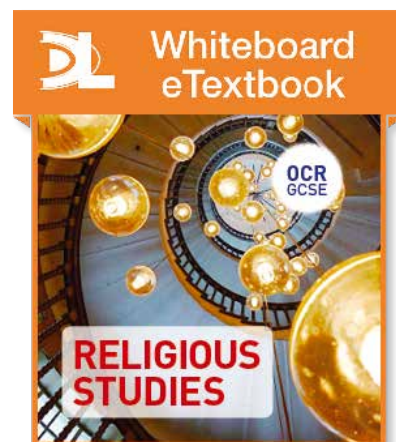
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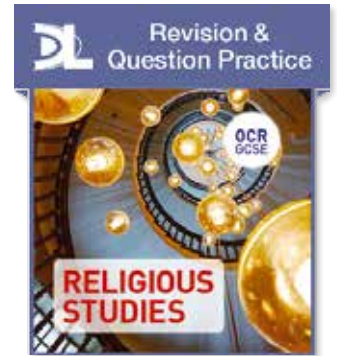
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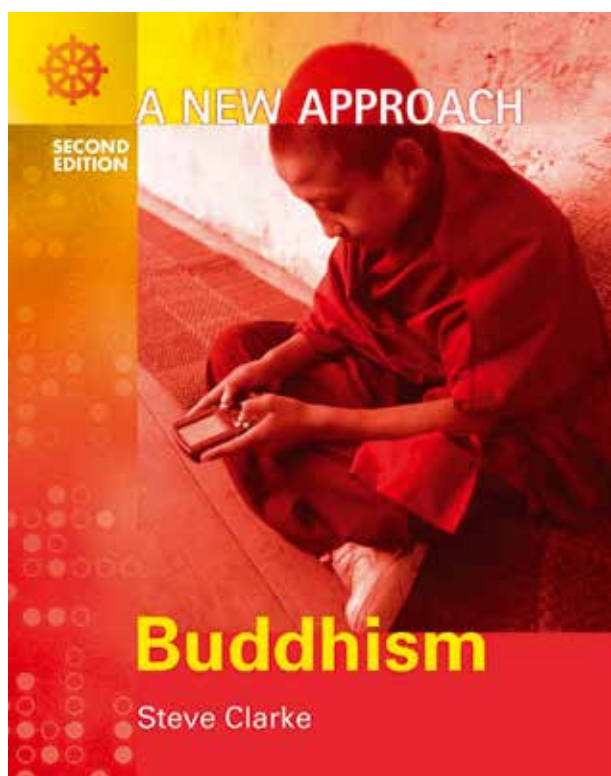
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- 5 Relationships and families
- 6 The existence of God
- 7 Religion, peace and conflict
- 8 Dialogue between religious and non-religious beliefs and attitudes

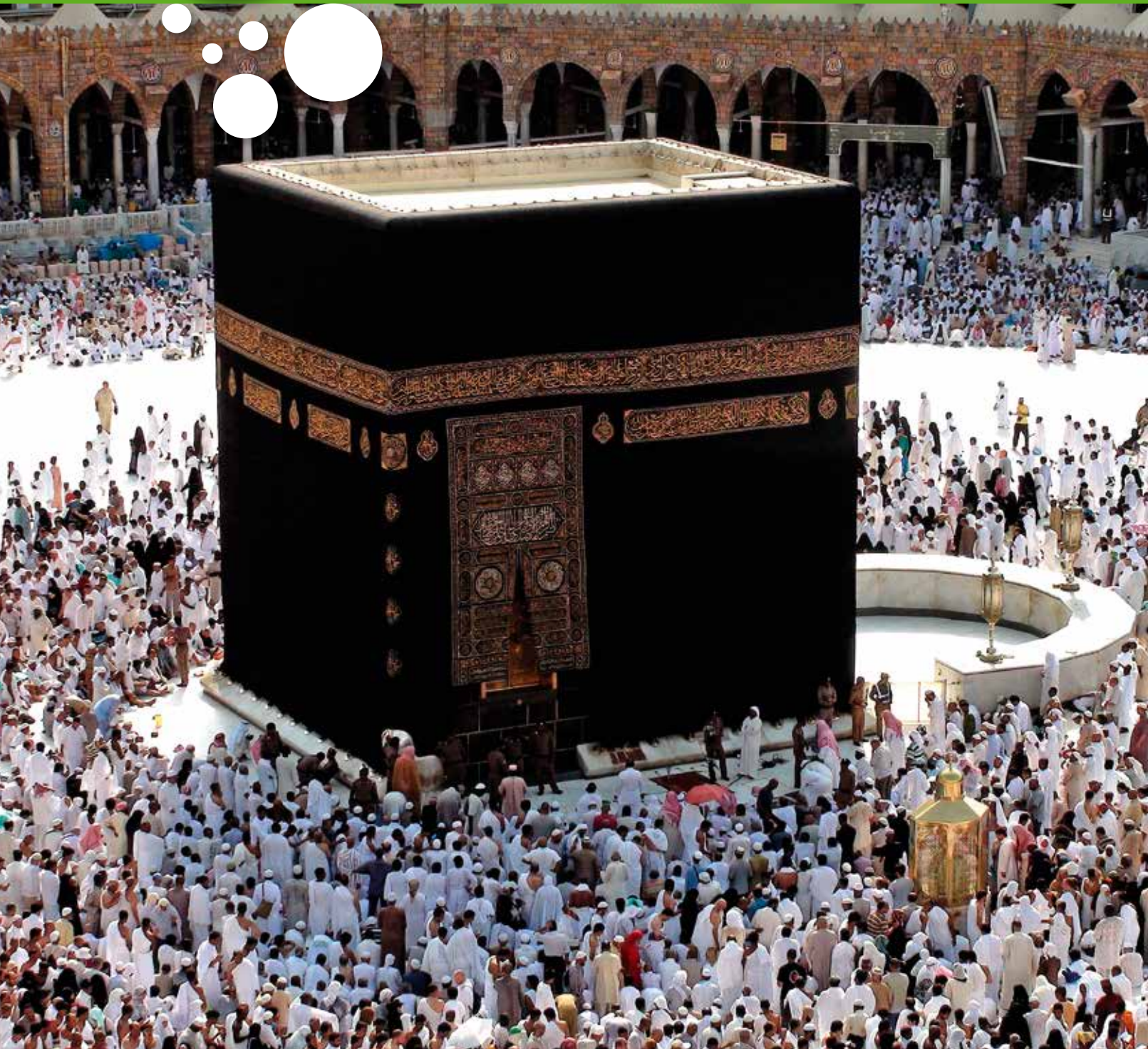
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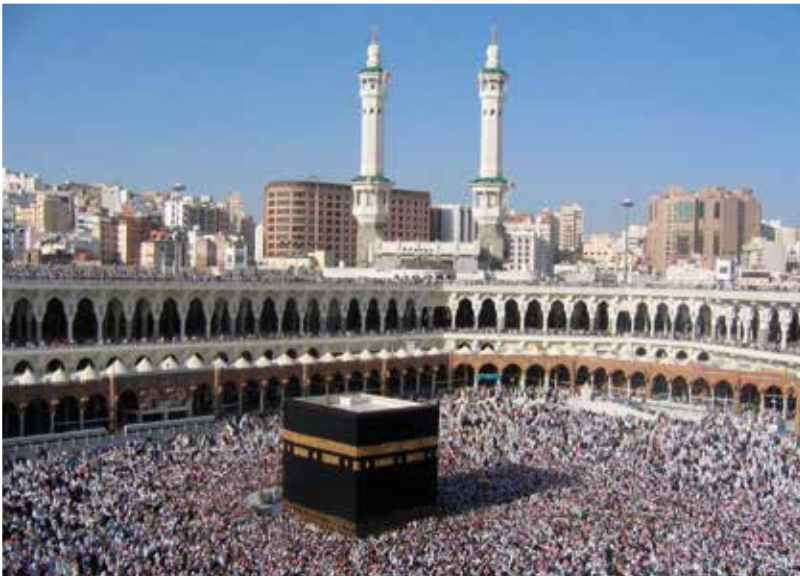
Islam



Hajj

Hajj is both one of the Five Pillars of Sunni Islam and one of the Ten Obligatory Acts for Shi'a Muslims. The word 'Hajj' means to set out for a definite purpose, and for Muslims Hajj is the pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia and to the shrine of the Kaaba. It can be completed only during the eighth and thirteenth days of the last month in the Islamic year, Dhul-Hijjah. Hajj is the only one of the Five Pillars that Muslims are not obliged to perform; if they are physically unable or don't have the financial resources to go then they are exempt. Men who have completed the hajj are given the title hajji and women are given the title hajja. Only Muslims can enter Mecca – it is a city set apart for the sacred purpose of Hajj. It is haram, which in this case means it is sacred. On approaching the city everyone has to have their passes checked to confirm that they are Muslim and are arriving for pilgrimage.

Ihram



Muslims in their white ihram clothing on hajj

Ihram is a state of holiness that Muslims are required to be in before beginning on Hajj. This means that Muslims must wash their bodies fully or perform wudu before they arrive at Mecca. As part of this Muslims will wear special clothing, also known as **ihram**. For men ihram is two pieces of unsewn white cloth worn instead of their everyday clothes. One piece is tied around their waist the other placed over their left shoulder. Men wear sandals on their feet and leave their heads uncovered. Women have no set dress code but often they will choose to wear a simple white

dress and headscarf. Women will be fully covered, showing only their hands and face.

White is a symbol of purity and it serves as a reminder to Muslims not to sin. They will keep the ihram cloth and it will be used to wrap them in when they die. It is a reminder that they are there to focus entirely on their worship of Allah, disconnected from the things of their everyday lives. This simple dress is also symbolic of their humility before Allah. Every Muslim on Hajj takes on an equal status. They are all dressed the same and their personal appearance should be of no concern during this time because their focus ought to remain solely on Allah.

Once on Hajj many men and women choose to stay in separate accommodation from their spouses. They are not allowed to have sex during Hajj because it would take their focus away

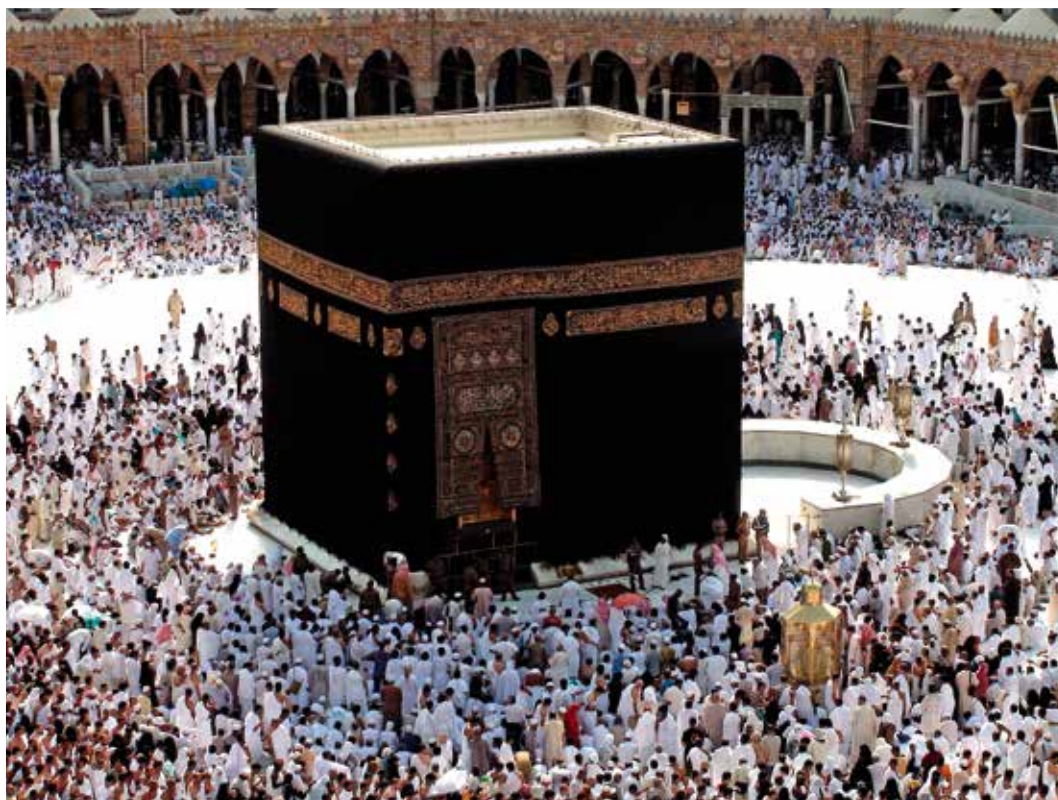
from Allah. In other expressions of self-control during this time, Muslims show no violence nor do they cut their nails, shave, wear perfume, swear, argue, lie, damage plants or marry. In this state of Ihram Muslims will recite the Talbiyah prayer, which says:

'Here I am at Thy service O Lord, here I am. Here I am at Thy service and Thou hast no partners. Thine alone is All Praise and All Bounty, and Thine alone is The Sovereignty. Thou hast no partners.'

This prayer is said often during Hajj and it is a repeated submission to Allah and a commitment to ongoing service to Him. This commitment to service is also an indication of a Muslim's love for Allah and their desire to become closer and closer to Him.

The Kaaba

In the courtyard of the Sacred Mosque in Mecca is the Kaaba. The Kaaba is a large, cube-shaped shrine, measuring 15.25 metres in height. It is believed that it was originally built by Adam and then later rebuilt by the Prophet Ibrahim. In the courtyard of the Sacred Mosque is the Station of Ibrahim, believed to be the spot from which he began the process of rebuilding it. Just as Ibrahim prayed here, so pilgrims are required to do the same. In front of the Kaaba, behind a semi-circular wall, is the site that is believed to be where the graves of Hagar, Ibrahim's wife, and Isma'il, his son, are.



Muslims circle the Kaaba at the start of hajj

To Discuss

- a To what extent does what you wear affect your attitude and thinking?
- b How can putting on ihram be understood as a spiritual act?

The Black Stone

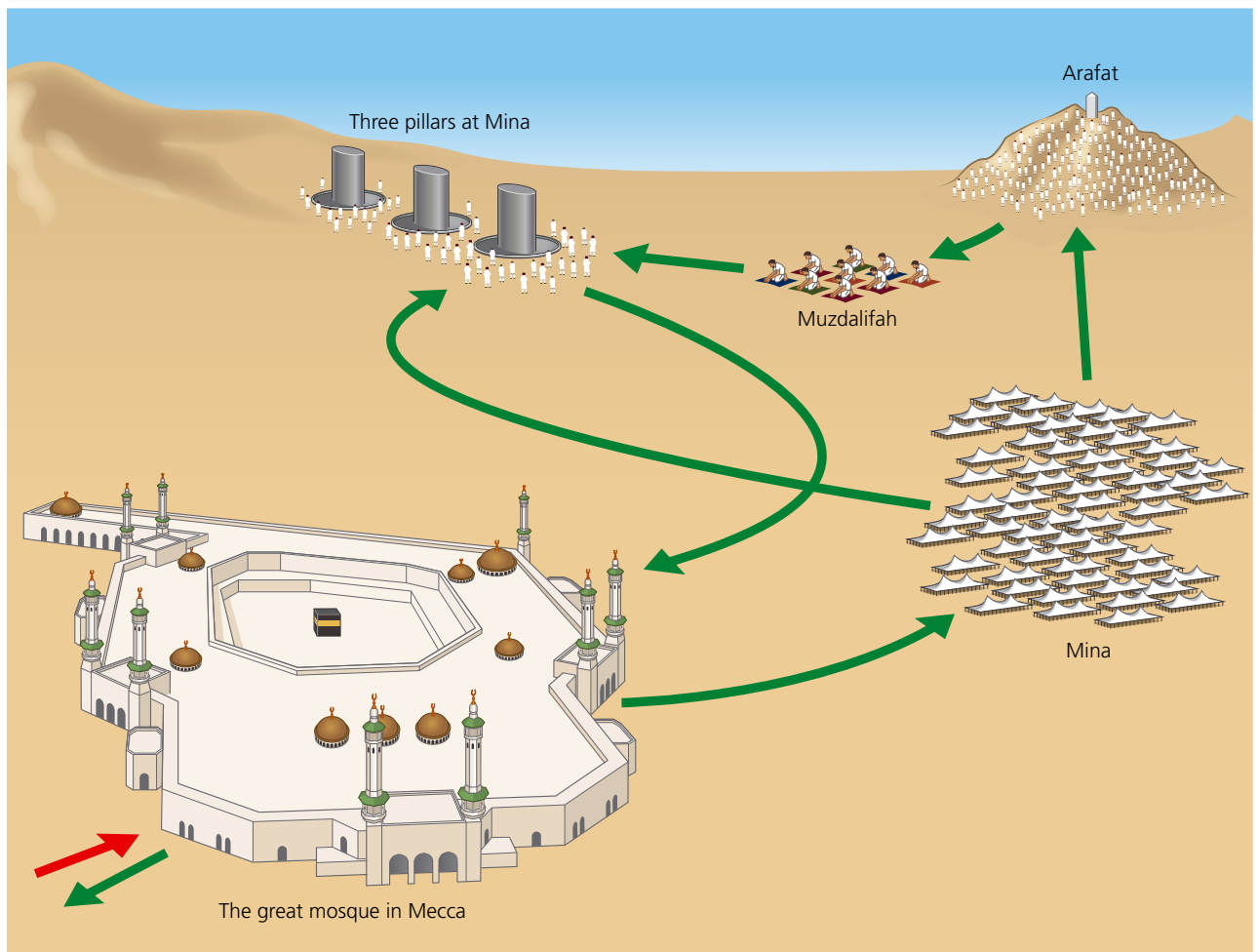
In the south-east corner of the Kaaba is a black stone. Some Muslims believe that the stone was given to Ibrahim by the Angel Jibril, others think it is a meteorite sent down from heaven. One tradition teaches that the stone was originally white, shining like a light, but that human sin caused it to go black. Muslims try to kiss the Black Stone as they circle the Kaaba, which has caused an indentation in the centre of the stone where the kisses have worn it down.

It was Muhammad ﷺ who in 630CE removed all the idols from the Kaaba and dedicated it to the worship of Allah alone. The Kaaba is covered with a black cloth made of silk and wool, this covering is called the **Kiswah**. Sections from the Qur'an are incorporated into it with gold embroidery. On the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah the cloth is replaced with a new one. The old cloth is then cut into sections and sold to pilgrims.

Tawaf

It is in the Great Mosque that Muslims begin their pilgrimage. On his final visit to Mecca, Muhammad ﷺ visited the Kaaba and this is copied by the pilgrims. In an act of drawing closer to Allah, pilgrims circle around the Kaaba seven times in an anti-

The route Muslims take on hajj



clockwise direction. Before beginning this circling, known as 'tawaf', each Muslim says the niyyah, a prayer of intent:

'O Allah, I perform Tawaf of Umrah to please You. Make it easy for me and accept it from me.'

They start from the corner of the Black Stone, running the first three circuits and walking the final four. On the fourth circuit Muslims will try to touch or kiss the Black Stone just like Muhammad ﷺ did. The number of Muslims participating in Hajj often makes this impossible, however, and many Muslims will simply salute the Black Stone as they pass it the fourth time. During the tawaf each Muslim will recite a verse from the Qur'an. Tawaf is a powerful demonstration of Muslim unity and of their desire to worship their one true god, Allah. Having completed the seven circuits Muslims will then move to the Station of Ibrahim to pray and to complete two rak'ahs.

Sa'y

Sa'y is the running, or hurrying, between two hills known as As-Safa and Al-Marwa. The hills are about 420 metres apart and nowadays are linked by a covered walkway. Muslims will move seven times between the two hills in re-enactment of Hagar's search for water when she was left alone in the desert with her son Isma'il (see p.XXX). It was only when her son dug his heel into the ground that a spring of water rose up. This spring can be visited today at the Well of Zamzam. Some pilgrims take home water from the well.

Task

Sketch your own map of the route of hajj using the map on page 12. Read through the content on pages 10–15 to add detail on what happens at each of the places on the map.



There is now a covered walkway between Al-Safa and Al-Marwa for pilgrims to walk through

Arafat

After dawn prayer at Mina, Muslims travel the 24 km to the Mount of Mercy at the Plain of Arafat in the east. The pilgrims have to be there from midday to dusk on the ninth of Dhul-Hijjah. They face towards the Kaaba, just as it is believed the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did. Many will hold umbrellas to keep off the scorching heat of the sun. It is here that the pilgrims stand before Allah and plead for the forgiveness of their sins. It is one of the most important rituals during the Hajj. Even Muslims who are not on Hajj may set this day aside for prayer and fasting.



Muslims stand in the scorching sun on the Mount of Mercy and plead with Allah for the forgiveness of their sins

From here Muslims move on to Muzdalifah where they will complete their sunset and night prayers and camp in the open. They will collect 49 stones ready for use at Mina over the next three days.

Mina

On the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah pilgrims travel to Mina and it is here that the 'Stoning of Iblis' takes place. Pilgrims throw seven pebbles at the pillar known as 'jamrah', meaning great devil. This ritual is repeated on the eleventh and twelfth of Dhul-Hijjah, when they throw seven pebbles at each of the three pillars.

It recalls the time when Allah told Ibrahim to sacrifice his son, Isma'il, as a test of Ibrahim's faith. Three times Iblis told Ibrahim to not do it and encouraged Isma'il to run away. Both resisted Iblis' temptations, driving him away by throwing stones at him. Allah was testing Ibrahim's and Isma'il's faith, and instead of sacrificing Isma'il Allah provided Ibrahim with a ram as an alternative sacrifice. By throwing the stones the pilgrims are demonstrating their own rejection of evil and Iblis. It is an action that symbolises their desire to withstand any temptations and to remain faithful to Allah.

At Mina pilgrims who can afford to are required to offer an animal sacrifice. The meat is roasted and eaten by the pilgrims, with at least one-third being given away to pilgrims who cannot



Stones are thrown at the pillars at Mina to remember when Ibrahim drove away Iblis by throwing stones at him

afford to make their own sacrifice. This sacrifice is a further reminder of Allah's provision to Ibrahim of a sacrificial ram in place of sacrificing Ishma'il. Muslims recognise what Allah has provided them and that everything they possess is because of Allah's goodness to them. This can encourage an even-greater sense of humility in the pilgrims. Muslims around the world also participate in this animal sacrifice as they celebrate Id-ul-Adha (see p.XXX).

Pilgrims then have their hair cut. For women this may just be a lock of hair but men may have their whole head shaved. This symbolises coming out of the time of Ihram.

Most Muslims return to the Great Mosque when Hajj is complete to perform final tawaf around the Kaaba.

What does Hajj mean for Muslims?

Having completed Hajj the pilgrims will have memories of all that they have done. There may well be a greater sense of ummah (community) as they have worshipped together with more than 2 million other Muslims, standing shoulder to shoulder in ihram. The closeness to Allah that they have felt during this time, especially from their experience at Arafat, will encourage them and probably leave them with a lasting sense of awe. Many pilgrims will feel relieved of their weight of sin as they have pleaded with Allah for His forgiveness, and this may drive them on to being more obedient Muslims in their everyday life. They will be joyous at completing Hajj as commanded by Allah and more certain of their place in Paradise after death.

Task

- 1 What are the rituals associated with the Great Mosque, Mina and Arafat?
- 2 Explain what it is that makes the ritual at Arafat so significant.
- 3 Create a leaflet that focuses on the spiritual effects of each of the rituals undertaken during the Hajj.
- 4 Explain how these spiritual benefits may have an impact on Muslims after they return from Hajj.
- 5 To what extent do you believe that a once-in-a-lifetime experience, such as Hajj, can have a lasting impact on a person's life?

Features in the book

Bible Bitz



In order to explain religious beliefs and teachings you need to understand what they are based on. Quotes from sources of wisdom and authority support your knowledge and understanding.

Case study: Relate



Case studies of key organisations help show how beliefs are put in to practice.

To Discuss



Discussing ideas with others helps develop an understanding of different viewpoints and the issues raised in the content.

Task

The tasks help you record information and develop your written communication in preparation for the exam. The tasks are varied and challenging.

Stretch what you know



To support the extension of your learning there are a series of these 'stretching tasks' throughout the book.

Link it up



You need to be able to link beliefs to behaviour. This feature gives you the opportunity to practise this skill.

Ruth Bushyager

I grew up going to church every Sunday, so I knew some prayers, and I knew what

This feature contains real views from people of faith. It shows how the beliefs and teachings you're learning about can be applied in society today.



6

The existence of God



The nature of reality

For centuries philosophers have been coming up with reasoned arguments, based upon evidence, which try to prove the existence of God.

Four of the main arguments are:

- The design argument
- The anthropic principle
- The first cause argument, or the cosmological argument
- The moral argument.

Such arguments are important because they enable people to consider whether belief in God is reasonable. While Christianity requires faith on the part of the believer, this does not mean the belief is irrational. These philosophical arguments help demonstrate logical ways in which it is possible to accept that God may exist. Some of these arguments reflect aspects of the teaching found in the Bible, for example the nature of God as creator. Other arguments focus on human behaviour as an indicator of God's existence, for example the moral argument. These arguments enable people with, or without, a faith to enter into discussions and considerations about God's existence.



To Discuss

- a Try to identify what is shown by each of the images A–F.
- b What conclusions might you draw about the natural world from this collection of images? For example, would any of the images lead you to agree with the following points?
 - The natural world contains a great deal of beauty.
 - The world is intricate.
 - The world has been carefully designed.
 - Every person is unique.
- c What other images would you add to these six to reflect your conclusions?

The design argument

Some philosophers have suggested that observation of the natural world reveals an order and complexity that could only have been achieved through intelligent design. This means that instead of coming into existence through a chain of natural events, the world is the result of design by an intelligent being – God. This argument for the existence of God is known as the **teleological argument**. It takes its name from the Greek word *telos*, meaning ‘purpose’, and suggests that because the world was designed, it has a purpose. This argument is also known as the argument from design.

Experiences of awe and wonder

The fascination and awe created by observation of the natural world can for some people be a revelation. Recognising the intricacy and complexity of the world around them may move them to a belief in a designer God. Many people are amazed by things in nature, such as huge landscapes like the Grand Canyon and sand dunes in the desert. Equally, the smallest things may cause the same degree of wonder – for instance the beauty of a butterfly. Even the most everyday events can cause such a response, for example a sunrise. Many Christians feel closer to God through such experiences.

William Paley

William Paley (1743–1805), a philosopher, uses the example of a watch to explain the argument from design. He said that the way in which all the parts of a watch work together to meet a purpose suggests that the watch must have a designer. This is because such order and purpose could not be simply the result of an accident. He said that, in the same way, if you look at the world and the way nature appears to work to meet a purpose, it also suggests that the world must have a designer – God.

John Stuart Mill

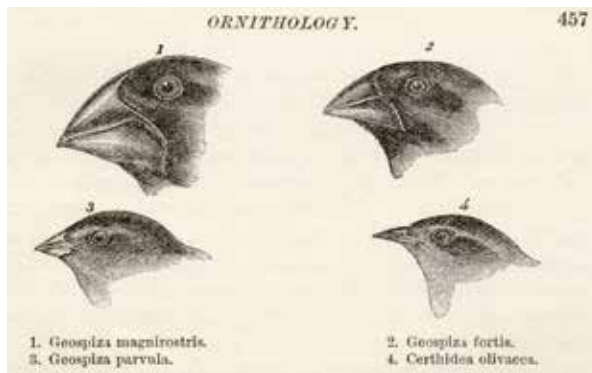
John Stuart Mill (1806–73) disagreed with Paley’s argument. His main line of reasoning was to examine the way nature operates. Mill pointed to the cruelty that is part of the natural order of things, for example certain animals being efficient killers or certain creatures living on other animals. Other elements of nature occur as the result of faults in the Earth’s structure, such as earthquakes, tsunamis or volcanic eruptions. This cruelty, and what he believed to be evidence of bad design in nature, led him to argue that if a designer God existed, He would in fact be a cruel God. After all, His creation brings about all kinds of pain and suffering. Mill argued that people surely cannot want to worship a God who would design such a world.

Task

Read Paley’s accounts of the teleological argument and then:

- 1 explain the argument in your own words
- 2 list any problems that you can see with this argument.

Stretch what you know



The theory of evolution

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution was first published in 1859 in his work *On the Origin of Species*. Darwin suggested that species have developed ('evolved') over millions of years through a process he called natural selection. According to this process, individual members of a species might be born with a certain characteristic at random, for example a distinctly shaped beak for a bird. In certain circumstances this characteristic might prove useful, for instance the differently shaped beak might help the bird access food more easily than a normal beak. So individuals with that characteristic would be more likely to survive and

breed and thus pass that characteristic on to their offspring – this is called 'survival of the fittest'. In this way species change over time and ultimately whole new species are created, leading to the complex world we see today. This is obviously very different from traditional Christian beliefs that God created the world and all the species in it exactly as they are today.

Darwin's work has been developed by much scientific research and is supported by the atheist Richard Dawkins. Dawkins argues that as science discovers and understands more about the natural world, the less need there is for a belief in God. He famously wrote in *River Out of Eden* that 'life is just bytes and bytes and bytes of digital information', meaning that DNA is the explanation for the cause of life.

- Describe the impact you think Darwin's theory of evolution has upon the design argument that was originally put forward by Paley.
- In what way could scientific discovery reduce the human need for God?
- Explain how you could counter Dawkins' view that there is less need for God as scientific discovery develops.

'The improbability of the fine tuning for the existence of the universe is one in 10 billion multiplied by 123'

(Calculated by Roger Penrose, mathematician and philosopher)

What does this statistic make you think about your own existence?

The anthropic principle

The phrase 'anthropic principle' was first used by F.R. Tennant (1866–1957). He used it to refer to the way that the universe was so perfectly structured to ensure life would develop. Tennant saw evolution as further evidence for the existence of a designer God. He argued that the very process of evolution has a purpose, which is to develop increasingly complex life forms. These increasingly complex life forms become more intelligent and ultimately, in the form of humans, also come to possess moral awareness. Tennant believed this demonstrated that evolution was guided by God, rather than using evolution as an argument against a designer.

Professor John Polkinghorne is a theoretical physicist and an Anglican minister. He explains that in order for life to exist there has to have been a precise development of the universe. He writes:

'A fruitful universe has to have exactly the right sort of stars. A universe exactly the same as ours except that in it gravity was three times stronger, would have been boring and sterile in its history because its stars would have burnt themselves out in a few million years, long before any life could get going on an encircling planet.'

The second role the stars have to perform is to produce the raw materials of life in their nuclear furnaces. The chemistry of life is the chemistry of carbon (since all life on earth depends on it) and there is only one place in the whole universe where carbon can be made, namely inside stars.'

(www.faradayschools.com)

For Polkinghorne, the need for such precision in the universe in order to allow our existence supports an anthropic principle. That means he believes God created the universe in this way so as to ensure human existence. He rejects the view that it is all simply luck, random chance or coincidence. This belief is supported by the biblical account of Creation in Genesis. In the accounts in Genesis 1 and 2, God creates an environment that is suitable for human habitation. The stars are put in place, plants grow and in turn ensure food for the creatures that God creates. Once all this is in place God creates man and then woman, thus ensuring the possibility of human reproduction. Whether this story is taken literally or as a myth, it is clear that the writer is demonstrating the way God ensured human existence and survival.

The first cause argument

Another philosophical argument for the existence of God is the first cause argument, also known as the **cosmological argument**.

There is, in fact, no event in the natural world that doesn't have a cause. This idea was identified by the philosopher Plato (428–348 BCE), who said that everything must be created by

To Discuss

- a Look at the pictures below and what is happening in each. Discuss what may be the cause(s) for each event.
- b Is it possible for something to happen that has no cause?



To Discuss

Apart from the teleological and first cause arguments, what other reasons do you think Christians might give for their belief in the existence of God?

Stretch what you know

Thomas Aquinas' arguments for the existence of God are often referred to as the Five Ways:

- The unmoved mover
 - The uncaused causer
 - Possibility and necessity
 - Goodness, truth and nobility
 - Teleological.
- a** Find out what is meant by the second and third of Aquinas' arguments.
- b** Summarise these two arguments in two clear written paragraphs.

some cause. The cosmological argument suggests, therefore, that the universe too must have a cause, since something must have triggered the process that started the development of the universe – rather like someone pushing over the first domino in a line and then observing the rest falling down. In this argument, God is this 'prime mover', or first cause. God Himself doesn't have a cause. One philosopher who developed this argument was Thomas Aquinas (1225–74).

Both the teleological (see p.19) and the cosmological arguments for the existence of God rely on reasoning to try to prove their case.

The world and moral consequence

Some Christians may use the moral argument to explain their belief in God. Various forms of this argument have been put forward. One of these came from Cardinal John Newman (1801–90), who linked our sense of guilt when we do something wrong with the voice of God speaking through our conscience. He argued that it was God who enabled each person to know right from wrong. When people do something wrong, they become aware of it within themselves. Obviously people can choose to ignore their conscience because humans have been given free will, but Newman taught that God's voice within us was a reminder that we were responsible to Him. If there was no God then humans would not have this inner sense of right and wrong.

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) also developed a moral argument for God's existence. Kant argued that humans are aware of what they should do in any given situation in which they face a moral dilemma, and they are also aware they have a duty to do the right and good thing. He recognised, however, that sometimes – even though people try to achieve this – it may not happen. He also recognised that good does not necessarily get rewarded in this life, for example a good person may have terrible suffering in their life, while conversely someone who has done bad things and hurt people may be wealthy and healthy. Kant therefore argued that God must exist in order for this to be fair, so that after death people will be rightly rewarded or punished for what they have done in this life. He claimed that believing in God and in judgement after death is the only reason people would commit to living morally good lives now.

To Discuss

- a** Apart from God, what other explanations could a person give for having a moral conscience?
- b** Whose argument do you think is stronger – Newman's or Kant's? How would you support this claim?
- c** How could a Christian use their beliefs about God to support the argument that humans' moral conscience comes from Him?

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