

GCSE Ethics and Society Islam – Crime and Punishment

Justice

- Islam teaches that justice is extremely important.
- Muslims are taught to give true evidence in all cases, even if it requires testifying against themselves, family, and friends.
- Muslims are required to be fair and to support victims of injustice.

Treatment of criminals

- Islam teaches the humane treatment of criminals.
- The vast majority of Muslims reject the use of torture as a form of punishment.
- The Qur'an and the Hadith support human rights and the right criminals to a fair trial and trial by jury.

Good, evil, and suffering

- Muslims believe that humans have been created pure, with a capacity to do good, but also with the freedom to do evil.
- The Qur'an says good actions are rewarded in paradise, while evil deeds are punished in hell.
- Muslims and many non-religious people believe that everyone has a responsibility to relieve suffering wherever it occurs.

Punishment

- Muslims believe that failure to follow laws must have consequences.
- The law of qisas allows for a murderer to be out to death, unless the victim's family act with mercy or offer forgiveness.
- Punishments are important in society to ensure laws are upheld and people are safe.

Aims of punishment

- There are four aims of punishment: protection, retribution, deterrence, and reformation.
- Muslims have different views about which aim has the higher greatest importance.
- There are verses in the Qur'an that support each of these aims.

Crime

- Punishments for crimes of Islam comes under three categories: hudud, qisas, and ta'zir.
- There are many causes of crime, including poor socialization and lack of opportunity.
- Islam teaches Muslims to keep away from anything that might distract them from remembering God, and which could lead to committing crimes.
- Muslim individuals and groups are trying to help Muslims who have been convicted of crimes.

Forgiveness

- Forgiveness is at the heart of Islam. All but one of the Surahs of the Qur'an begins with a prayer about Allah's mercy.
- Many parts of the Qur'an and the life of the Prophet Muhammad teach Muslims the importance of overlooking other people's faults.
- There are many examples of restorative justice in the Muslim community.

The death penalty

- Capital punishment is designed to act as a deterrent to committing certain crimes, such as murder.
- There are divergent views among Muslims about whether Islam allows the death penalty in relation to particular offences, such as adultery, apostasy and blasphemy.
- Many non-religious people oppose capital punishment.

Sources of Wisdom

1. "Uphold justice." Qur'an, Surah 4:135
2. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." Qur'an, Surah 5:44-45
3. "Allah the merciful."
4. "Do not let hatred of others lead you away from justice." Qur'an, Surah 5:8
5. "Do not take life, which God has made sacred, except by right."
6. Qur'an, Surah 6:151

Key Terminology

1. **Blood money** - Money paid to relatives of a murder victim.
2. **Capital punishment** - Legal or authorised killing of a person for committing a crime. Also known as the death penalty
3. **Deterrence** - Something to put people off wrongdoing
4. **Fair trial** - A public hearing by an independent tribunal established by law that takes place within a reasonable time.
5. **Humanity** - All human beings
6. **Justice** - Doing what is right and fair based on the law
7. **Reconciliation** - Restoring harmony after relationships have broken down
8. **Reformation** - Changing for the better
9. **Restorative justice** - An action that focuses on the rehabilitation of offenders through conciliating victims and the community at large.
10. **Retribution** - Punishment for a wrong or criminal act
11. **Treason** - Being disloyal to one's country by plotting to overthrow the government or ruler
12. **Trial by Jury** - A trial where the jury's decision directs the actions of the judge