Glossary

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Word	Definition
‘ādil	of a person in whom piety is so deeply embedded that he does not commit a sinful act on purpose.
‘Aliyyullāhī	a member of the sect that believes that Imam Ali (a.) is Allah.
‘āriyah	to loan something — which you have the right to use — to somebody for free.
‘aṣr	the third daily prayer said by a Muslim.
‘īd	a religious festival celebrated as a happy occasion.
‘Īd of Aḍḥā	the tenth day of the last month of the lunar calendar. On this day the Muslims in Minā sacrifice animals.
‘Īd of Fiṭr	a religious festival celebrated on the first day after the month of Ramadan by Muslims.
‘Īd of Ghadīr Khum	the eighteenth day of the last month of lunar calendar. On this day Imam Ali (a.) was declared by the Holy prophet (s.a.w.) as his successor.
‘irfān	mysticism.
‘ishā’	the fifth daily prayer said by a Muslim.
‘menopause’	the time when a woman stops menstruating provided that she has completed fifty years (for a sayyidah sixty years).
‘puerperium’	nifās , i.e., usually only a few days of puerperium.
a poor person	a person who does not have, and is not able to acquire, enough money/property to pay his yearly expenses or that of his dependants.
Abulfaḍl al-‘Abbās	a brother of Imam Ḥusayn (a.).
adā’	(to perform religious rites) on time.
adhān	the call to prayer.
Ahlul-Bayt (a.)	the Household of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).
al-Ḥujjah	one of the epithets of the last Imam (a.).
al-maẓālim	the property you owe to an unknown/inaccessible person.
an āyāt prayer	an obligatory prayer performed on the occurrence of eclipses, etc. detailed information about which is available in the chapter on āyāt prayers.
anfāl	a part of the property at the disposal of an infallible imam (a.) or his vicegerent due to their rule over the Muslims.
Aṣḥāb al-Kisā’	the Five Infallibles (a.).
authorized religious authority	a competent mujtahid or his representative.
Āyah al-Kursī	the verses 255-7 of the baqarah chapter.

Ba‘thist	of the Ba‘th Party which ruled Iraq during the Saddam era.
bā’ir	unusable land.
Basīj	certain volunteer forces.
basmalah	it is the abbreviation for ‘bismillāhir raḥmānir raḥīm’.
blood money	compensation paid to the heirs of a killed person or to somebody who is injured.
dawr	repetition of qaḍā’ prayers to ascertain their performance in order.
de facto contract / transaction	a contract/transaction concluded practically and not by pronouncing its special formula.
dhikr	any expression containing the remembrance of Allah. The ṣalawāt upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.) and his household is one of the best dhikrs.
dhimmī	a non-Muslim among the People of the Book who lives under the protection of an Islamic government under special terms.
dinar	a gold coin weighing 3.6 grams.
Du‘ā’ Tawassul	a certain supplication in which one asks the help of Allah through the intercession of the Infallibles.
endowment (waqf)	to allocate some property to be used — whether the very property or its profit — by certain people or for a public cause.
fajr	before the morning adhān a brightness (called false fajr) appears on the eastern sky, when it expands (called true fajr), it is the starting time for the morning adhān/prayer.
farsakh	a unit of distance equal to 5.125 km.
Fātiḥah	the first chapter of the Holy Qur’an.
fatwā	a mujtahid’s clear cut opinion about a jurisprudential issue.
Fātimah al-Zahrā’ (a.)	The beloved daughter of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) who married Imam Ali (a.).
fuḍūlī	of a contract, e.g., a purchase or a marriage, concluded on behalf of somebody without their permission.
ghinā’	voice of a human being produced in an undulating pattern to create the effect of rapture that is suitable for gatherings of merrymaking and sin. It is ḥarām to engage in this type of singing; as well as to listen to it.
ghusl	taking a bath/shower in certain manners intending nearness to Allah.
hoarding	to keep and hoard goods needed by people expecting a rise in the price while there is no other centre to supply it.
ḥukm	not fatwā; the order of the Jurist Leader regarding administration of the Islamic Country or issues related to Muslims in general.
ḥabs	a transaction similar to waqf (endowment). However,

	unlike waqf, you may make something ḥabs temporarily.
ḥadith	a word of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) or that of the Infallible Imam (a.).
ḥajj al-tamattu‘	a set of rites that pilgrims to Mecca perform in the last month of the lunar calendar.
ḥalāl	of a work permissible to do or food allowed to eat.
ḥarām	forbidden, an act which leads to Divine punishment.
hāshimī	of a descendant of Hāshim, the Holy Prophet’s ancestor, through paternal lineage.
ḥiḍānah	nursing and bringing up a child.
ḥijāb	girls’ covering in accordance with rules of Islam.
ḥisbī	of affairs to which the Legislator does not consent to be neglected and rest with the Jurist Leader or his representative, like managing the property of an orphan who does not have a shar‘ī guardian.
ḥusayniyyah	a place dedicated to religious ceremonies about Imam Ḥusayn (a.).
i‘tikāf	to stay and fast in a masjid at least for three days in order to worship Allah.
ijtihād	(enjoying requirements) to infer shar‘ī rules from the Glorious Qur’an, traditions, etc.
Ikhlāṣ	a chapter of the Glorious Qur’an.
Imam Riḍā (a.)	the eighth Imam (a.).
iqāmah	a special dhikr to be said after adhān and before prayer.
Ismā‘īlī	of a member of the sect that believes that Ismā‘īl — a son of the Sixth Imam (a.) — was his successor.
istiḥāḍah	in some cases the blood women see is referred to as istiḥāḍah.
istikhārah	istikhārah literally means to ask [Allah] for good. It is a way of removing a state of indecision through consulting the Glorious Qur’an or prayer beads. One may resort to istikhārah if pondering and consulting experienced trustworthy people fails to remove the state of indecision.
jafr	a kind of divination.
jāmi‘ masjid	a masjid built in the city for the gathering of most of the residents of that city without being specific to a particular tribe or group of people.
janābah	the state of being junub.
ju‘ālah	a kind of contract in Islam, e.g., a person declares that he will pay certain amount of money as compensation to whoever does a certain work.
ju‘l	the compensation determined in a ju‘ālah contract.
Junub	of a person after having sexual intercourse or discharging manī.
ka‘bah	the cube-shaped holy building at Mecca, to which Muslims face when they pray.

kaffārah	atonement done/paid for a sin.
kāfir	a non-Muslim.
karāhah	being disliked in Islamic law but not forbidden.
khums	twenty percent of annual savings from one's income or that of certain properties. It contains two equal portions: the imam's portion and the sayyids' portion.
kifā'ī	of an obligatory act which is discharged if performed by anyone.
kitābī (plural : the People of the Book/ahl al-kitāb)	A non-Muslim with a Book, i.e., a Jew, a Christian, a Zoroastrian or a Sabaean. A non-Muslim other than the above-mentioned is referred to as non-kitābī.
Kurr	of an amount of water not less than 384 liters in volume.
la'ib	game; jest; fun.
lahw	irrational useless acts.
Ma'sūmah (a.)	The beloved daughter of the seventh Imam (a.) whose shrine is located in Qum.
ma'ūnah	the money one spends on himself and his dependants provided that it does not exceed one's station as judged by common people.
madhī	a liquid that comes out after foreplay. It is pure and does not invalidate wuḍū'.
maghrib	starting time for the fourth daily prayer, i.e., when the redness in the eastern sky disappears.
maḥram	a person who is ḥarām for one to marry and/or it is permissible for one to see them without ḥijāb. There are three categories of maḥrams: a) blood-maḥrams like aunts and uncles; b) maḥrams by marriage like spouse, mother in law, father in law, son in law, daughter in law; and c) maḥrams through breast feeding.
makrūh	of an act disliked but not forbidden in Islamic law.
manī	certain liquid discharged from a mature person at the time of orgasm.
marji'	a qualified Islamic scholar you consult about jurisprudence.
marji'iyyah	the state of being a marji'.
Marwah	see 'sa'y'.
masjid	a mosque.
mīqāt	one of a few select places where a pilgrim to Mecca dons special clothing and starts the rituals.
mītah	of an animal which has not been slaughtered, hunted or fished in accordance with Islamic law.
mudāwarah	the act of receiving khums and lending it back to the giver by the authority in charge of khums or the marji' when the giver owes some khums but is not able to pay.
Muḥarram	the first month of the lunar calendar on the 10th of which Imam Ḥusayn (a.) and his companions were martyred.

mujtahid	a great scholar in Islam who is able to do ijtihād.
mukallaf	a sane person who has reached the age of shar'ī puberty.
mustaḥabb	of an act desired in the shar' but there is no punishment in case you neglect it.
muṣālaḥah	reconciliation and mutual agreement; the name for a certain contract in Islamic law.
mutajazzī mujtahid	of a person who is mujtahid only regarding some issues in Islamic jurisprudence.
muthlah	to cut off a person's ear, nose, or lip.
nadhr	to commit oneself to a course of action, which is desired in the shar', by reciting a special formula.
nāfilah prayers	mustaḥabb prayers.
najāsah	the state of being najis.
najis	not pure. One should not eat najis food. Wearing najis clothes during prayer makes it invalid.
Nawrouz	The 20th/21st of March corresponding to the New Year's Day in the Islamic Republic of Iran celebrated in some other countries as well.
non-maḥram	of a person who is not maḥram to somebody else.
qaḍā'	of an obligatory action not performed on time.
qalīl	of an amount of water less than 384 liters in volume.
qayyim	a person appointed by the authorized religious authority or specified in the will of the deceased to be in charge of affairs of a ward.
qiblah	the direction toward the Ka'bah.
qiṣāṣ	punishment of a killer or a person who injured someone else to the same extent by the injured party or by the heirs of who was killed.
qunūt	a part of prayer performed in the second rak'ah in which a supplication is recited.
rahn	the property made as security for a debt/loan; deposit made at the time of renting a house.
rak'ah	a part of prayer consisting of one rukū', two prostrations, etc.
raml	a kind of divination.
rebelliousness (of a wife)	not observing the rights of one's husband.
ribā	there are two kinds of ribā: a) Loan ribā, i.e., the mark up paid by the borrower to the lender. It is ḥarām if the loan contract is concluded on the explicit/implicit condition of the mark up. b) Ribā of a sale transaction, i.e., to sell an item – normally sold by weight/ volume – in exchange for something of the same category in Islamic law plus extra.
risālah	a book on practical laws of Islam according to a certain marji'.
riyā'	to do a good act/worship intending for other than Allah in

	order to show off and seek status among people.
rukn	a part of some forms of worship such as hajj or prayer that are so necessary that the worship becomes invalidated if it is neglected even unintentionally.
rukū‘	a part of prayer in which one bows down and puts the hands on the knees.
sa‘y	to walk to and fro between Ṣafā and Marwah in a long passage adjacent to the Masjid al-ḥarām.
Ṣafā	see ‘sa‘y’.
saḥar	the time before the morning adhān.
salaf/salam	to buy something for which you pay now but receive the goods later.
salām	the Islamic greeting of “peace”.
salām of the prayer	the last part of the prayer.
Sarqoflī	a right or preference that in some countries a businessman or shopkeeper is maintained to have to his place of work due to his making it popular, attracting customer, or that he was the first man who rented the place, etc.
sayyid	a male descendant of Hāshim – the Holy Prophet’s ancestor/ the grandfather of ‘Abbas, Ja‘far, Abū Tālib, Ḥārith, ‘Abdullāh – through paternal lineage.
Sayyidah	a female descendant of Hāshim – the Holy Prophet’s ancestor/ the grandfather of ‘Abbas, Ja‘far, Abū Tālib, Ḥārith, ‘Abdullāh – through paternal lineage.
Sha‘bān	the month before Ramadan.
shaf‘	a two-rak‘ah mustaḥabb prayer said before watr prayer.
shar‘ or sharī‘ah	the Muslim code of religious law.
shar‘ī	in accordance with the Islamic law.
sharī‘ah	the Islamic law.
Shawwāl	the month after Ramadan.
solar hijrī year	a type of calendar common in the Islamic Republic of Iran starting on the first day of spring and calculated from the migration of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) to Medina.
Sunnah	word, act or confirmation of the infallibles.
Ṣāḥib al-Zamān	an epithet for the Twelfth Imam (may Allah bring forward his reappearance.
ṣalawāt	"Allāhumma ṣalli ‘alā Muhammad wa āli Muhammad".
Ṣulḥ	a contract through which both parties declare their agreement on something such as the transfer of some property, discharge from debt, or relinquishment of a right.
ta‘zīr	the punishment whose quantity and quality – unlike ḥadd – is determined by the authorized religious authority.
tab‘īḍ in taqlīd	to follow one marji‘ on some issues and (an)other marji‘/s on other issues.
tajāfī position	to sit in a special position as if ready to stand up, i.e., in a

	congregational prayer when the imam is saying tashahhud but it is not the time for the follower to say it due to delay the latter sits in this way.
Tajwīd	Phonetics of the Arabic language.
takbīrah al-iḥrām	the first takbīrah with which the prayer starts.
takiyah	a certain place for religious ceremonies.
taqlīd	to follow a mujtahid as far as Islamic law is concerned.
tarakhkhuṣ limit	a place outside the city from where a traveler may shorten his prayer and break his fast in some cases, i.e., where one cannot hear the city's adhān.
tasbīḥāt al-arba'ah	the phrase 'subḥānallāhi wal ḥamdu lillāhi wa lā ilāha illallāhu wal lāhu akbar' said in the third and fourth rak'ahs of a prayer.
tashahhud	a part of prayer said in the second and the last rak'ah of a prayer in a sitting position.
tawriyah	to say something intending other than what is normally understood from it, this is a way to refrain from telling a lie.
tayammum	the dry ablution.
the Ja'farī jurisprudence	Islamic law according to Imam Ṣādiq (a.) observed by the shī'ah denomination.
the People of the Book	see kitābī.
turbah	earth from the grave of Imam Ḥusayn (a.).
tahārah	a state of having ghusl and wuḍū'; a state of not being najis.
wadhī	A liquid that occasionally comes out after discharging semen. It is ruled pure and does not invalidate wuḍū'.
wadī	A liquid that occasionally comes out after urinating. It is ruled pure and does not invalidate wuḍū'.
watr	a one-rak'ah prayer said as the last part of the mustaḥabb night prayer.
watan	a city/place where you were born and grew up or which you choose as your permanent residence.
wilā'ī	authoritative.
wilāyah	the special authority the Prophet (s.a.w.) and the Infallible Imams (a.) enjoy over human beings, etc.; the custody/guardianship of a ward by certain people.
wuḍū'	ablution.
wuḍū'less	see wuḍū'.
zakāt	a religious tax paid on certain crops, animals, and gold and silver coins under certain conditions. This term is also used for what Muslims pay at the end of the month of Ramadan.