

Section 2, *continued*

or convert people to Islam. The word has also been translated as “holy war.”

**THE SUNNAH**

Another important holy book in Islam is the **Sunnah** (SOOH-nuh), a collection of Muhammad’s words and actions. The Sunnah spells out the main duties for Muslims. These are known as the **Five Pillars of Islam**. The first pillar is a statement of faith. The second pillar says a Muslim must pray five times daily. The third pillar is a yearly donation to charity. The fourth pillar is fasting during the holy month of Ramadan (RAH-muh-dahn). The fifth pillar is the hajj (HAJ), a pilgrimage to Mecca. The hajj must be made at least once in a lifetime.

The Sunnah also preaches moral duties that must be met in daily life, in business, and in government. For example, it is considered immoral to owe someone money or to disobey a leader.

**ISLAMIC LAW**

The Qur’an and the Sunnah form the basis of Islamic law, or Shariah (shuh-REE-uh). Shariah lists rewards or punishments for obeying or disobeying laws. Shariah punishments can be severe. Shariah makes no distinction between religious and secular life. Most Islamic countries today blend Islamic law with a legal system much like that in the United States.

**CHALLENGE ACTIVITY**

**Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences** Write a brief essay evaluating the differences and similarities between the two earlier religions of Judaism and Christianity with Islam. Focus not only on beliefs but also on practices and what social conditions might have influenced these practices in all the religions.

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**Do Muslims believe that the Sunnah is the direct word of God?**

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**What is the third pillar of Islam?**

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**Is Shariah the only law used in Islamic countries?**

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