

Celebrating Birth in Different Religions



A New Baby

It is an exciting time when a new baby is born and people celebrate it in lots of different ways.

Different religions celebrate the arrival of a new baby in their own special ways.

We have already learnt how babies are welcomed in Christianity. Today we are going to learn how babies are welcomed in a different religion.



Islam

We are going to learn how Muslim people welcome a new baby. Muslims are people who follow a religion called Islam.



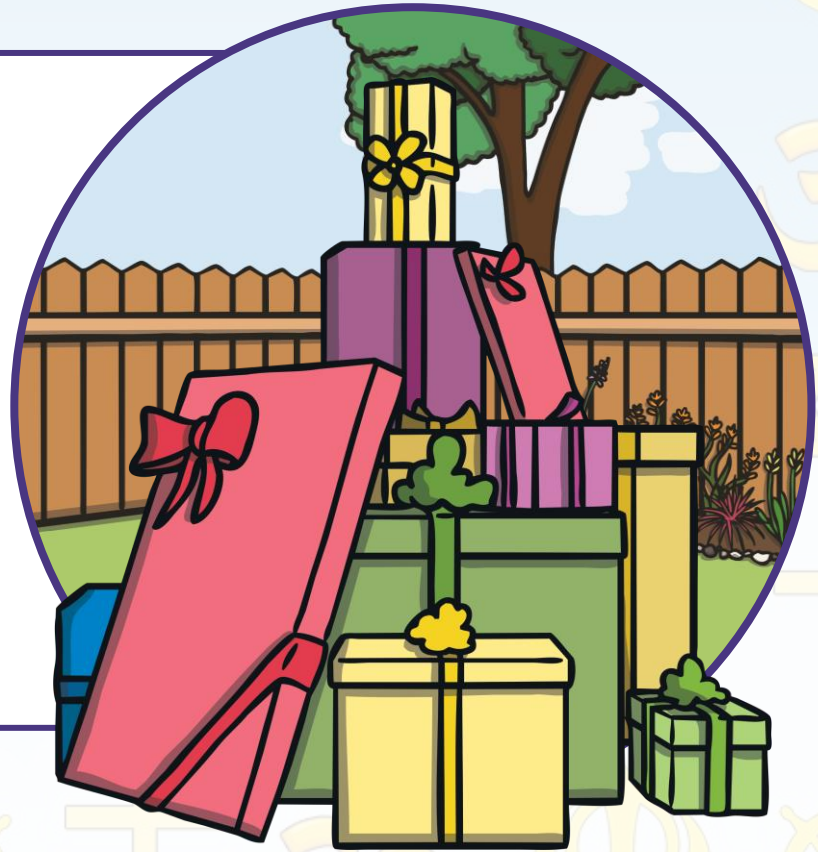
Aqiqah

Muslims celebrate the birth of a baby in a ceremony called Aqiqah. Aqiqah is usually performed seven days after a baby is born.



Giving Thanks

The most important reason for having an Aqiqah ceremony is so that Muslims can say thank you to Allah (God) for the birth of a baby. Parents invite friends and family to celebrate and join them in thanking Allah. They share a special meal together. Friends and family might bring gifts for the baby.



Shaving the Baby's Head

An important part of Aqiqah is when the baby's head is shaved. Shaving a baby's head is mentioned in the Muslim holy book, the Qu'ran. It shows that the baby belongs to Allah.

After the baby's head has been shaved, the name of the baby is announced. Muslim parents choose their baby's names very carefully. Boys will often be named after one of Allah's special messengers. Girls will often be named after women in the Qu'ran.

The baby's hair is weighed. The parents will then give the same weight in silver to charity. Giving to charity is an important part of being a Muslim.



Making an Offering

In some places, a baby's family will make an offering of meat. They will share this meat with their friends and give some of it to poor people who don't have much to eat.

In Britain, Muslims might order the meat from a special Islamic butcher. This meat will also be given to people who don't have much money.

Instead of sharing the meat, parents could choose to donate money to a charity, such as Islamic Aid, who will give food to the poor on their behalf. They can even give money online.



