

Exploring Pilgrimage: A Journey of Faith

Learning objective: To understand the meaning of pilgrimage, identify key sites for major world religions, and explain why people undertake these journeys.

Use these flashcards to test your knowledge of pilgrimage. Read the term or question on the left, then check your answer on the right. Discuss your answers with a partner to deepen your understanding.

Pilgrimage

A spiritual or religious journey to a place considered sacred or significant by a believer.

What is a 'Sacred' place?

A location that is set apart as holy or deeply important to a religious tradition.

Hajj

The annual pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, which is a core duty for Muslims to perform at least once in their lifetime if they are able.

Varanasi

A city in India on the banks of the River Ganges, considered one of the most sacred places for Hindus to visit for prayer and ritual bathing.

Lourdes

A town in France that is a major site of pilgrimage for Christians, famous for its grotto where people go to pray for healing and peace.

Jerusalem

A city of great historical and religious importance to Christians, Jews, and Muslims, containing many significant shrines and holy sites.

Shrine

A holy or sacred place, which is often dedicated to a specific saint, deity, or ancestor, where people go to worship or remember.

Devotion

A feeling of strong love, loyalty, and commitment to a religious faith, often expressed through the act of pilgrimage.

Explain why a believer might choose to go on a pilgrimage instead of just praying at home?

Pilgrims believe that visiting a physical location can provide a stronger connection to their faith, a chance for deep reflection, and a sense of community with other believers.

Compare and contrast a holiday with a pilgrimage.

A holiday is usually for relaxation and leisure, whereas a pilgrimage is a purposeful, disciplined journey focused on spiritual growth and religious devotion.

Justify why many religions view the journey itself as important as the destination.

The journey requires sacrifice, patience, and effort, which prepares the pilgrim's mind and heart to be more open to the sacred experience when they arrive.

What might happen if a person was physically unable to go on a pilgrimage?

Most religions teach that faith is in the heart; therefore, spiritual intentions and alternative acts of devotion or charity are often considered just as valuable as the physical journey.