**‘The day of judgement is the most important belief in Islam’**

**Evaluate this statement. (12 marks)**

Supporters of the statement would say that the day of judgement has to be the most important belief because it is counted both in the six articles of Sunni faith and also the 5 roots of Usul ad-Din in Shi’a Islam. In both branches of Islam, the belief that Allah will hold us accountable by judging every person based on their book of deeds- a record of everything they have done, good or bad, in their lives. If the book is given in their right hand they will go to heaven where they will lounge ‘on couches of well-woven cloth’ (Qur’an) and be rewarded for eternity. This shows that the day of judgement is the most important belief for all types of Muslim because everything we do in our lifetime is in preparation for the day where our destiny for the rest of eternity will be decided.

A rejecting view would be that despite its inclusion in the six articles of faith and the five roots, the belief in the day of judgement is not first on these lists. The belief in Tawhid, as it is first on both these lists, is therefore surely the most important belief for both Sunni and Shi’a Muslims. In the Qur’an it is written that ‘He is God the One, God the eternal, He begot no one nor was he begotten.’ This is an important passage within Islamic tradition because it stresses the oneness of God, Tawhid, and is central to many Muslim practices such as reciting the Shahadah, one of the 5 pillars of Islam. Even the word Islam itself means ‘one who has submitted to God’ so this too shows that God and his oneness is a much more important belief than belief in the day of judgement.

Another supporting point would be that the day of judgement offers a great deal of comfort to good Muslims who face suffering in their lives. For example Muslims who are being persecuted in places of conflict like Syria would be comforted by the knowledge that their persecutors will be held accountable for their actions on the day of judgement and will ‘dwell amid scorching wind and scalding water’ as stated in the Qur’an. This means that belief in the day of judgement is the most important belief for Muslims who suffer.

Another rejecting view would be one that says despite it being able to offer comfort to those undergoing suffering, this is only one group of Muslims and the statement states ‘the most important belief in Islam.’ As there are 6 key articles of faith in Sunni Islam and 5 roots in Shi’a Islam, clearly there are many more beliefs which are regarded as equally important. To single just one belief as the most important would make these lists of beliefs irrelevant. If the day of judgement was most important, why have the other 4 (in Sunni Islam) and the other 5 (in Shi’a Islam)?

In conclusion, there are many important beliefs in Islam, most notably Tawhid, which appear to be more significant than belief in the day of judgement. Therefore I disagree with the statement in question.