

Fundamentals of Faith 2 - The Pillars of Islam and Eemaan

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

The Pillars of Islam are the cornerstones on which Islam is built.

There are five pillars of Islam. They are mentioned in the Hadeeth of ibn 'Umar [May Allaah be pleased with them], that the Prophet [May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him] said, what translated means, **'Islam is built around five (pillars):**

1. The testimony that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah and that Muhammad [May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him] is His slave and Messenger,
2. To establish prayer,
3. To give Zakaat (obligatory charity),
4. To fast in Ramadhan, and,
5. To perform Hajj (pilgrimage).” [Saheeh Muslim and Saheeh al-Bukharee]

1. The Sha'ha'dah (the testimony) that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah and that Muhammad [May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him] is His slave and Messenger, requires solid belief, in the heart, in it. This belief must also be confirmed by the tongue. It is called Shahadah (testimony) to show that when a believer believes in it, his belief is as solid as if he is an eyewitness. This Sha'ha'dah is one cornerstone, although it contains many aspects that must be taken as belief. This testimony (comprised of two testimonies as is apparent), is considered one cornerstone, either because it contains testifying that Muhammad [May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him] is only a conveyer of the Message from Allaah and His slave and Messenger, thus completing the testimony that Allaah is One or because these two testimonies together are the reason behind the acceptance of deeds by Allaah. Deeds are neither valid nor accepted unless they are done with sincerity for the sake of Allaah alone, and this is called “ikhlas,” and through following the way of the Messenger of Allaah [May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him].

Realising the essence of this testimony, that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah, is a result of Ikhlas (sincerity) to Allaah. Realising the essence of testifying that Muhammad [May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him] is His slave and Messenger, comes as a result of following the Messenger of Allaah. This magnificent testimony leads to many sweet results.

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It frees the hearts and souls from being enslaved to the creation and from following other than the Messenger.

2. Establishing the prayers means to worship Allaah by praying to Him. One must preserve the prayers by establishing them on time and in the best manner, as taught by the Prophet [May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him]. Rewards for establishing the prayers include tranquillity and happiness that are felt in the heart. Prayer also leads one to abandoning evil deeds and behaviour.

3. Paying Zakaat is worshipping Allaah by paying the amount of charity obligated on the ones who have enough money or possessions that require paying Zakaat. Paying the required Zakaat leads to cleansing the heart from the evil of misery. It also fulfils the needs of Islam and Muslims.

4. Fasting Ramadhan contains worshipping Allaah by fasting during the days of this month, by not eating or drinking from dawn to sunset. Fasting trains the souls to abandon what is preferred and desired, seeking the pleasure of Allaah.

5. Performing Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) is worshipping Allaah by visiting the Holy House to perform the rituals of Hajj. Hajj trains the souls to spend time and physical effort, seeking to obey Allaah. This is why Hajj is considered a type of Jihaad (struggle).

These fruits of performing the pillars of Islam, along with many others we did not mention, make the Muslim nation pure and clean. They lead the nation to preserving the religion of Truth and dealing with the creation in the best manners of justice and truthfulness. All other acts of the religion depend on how well these pillars are preserved. The Ummah (Muslim nation) can reach success as long as its members preserve the religion. This Ummah will not reach the desired success as long as the religion is not fully respected and preserved.

Whoever wants to be certain of the above-mentioned facts, let him read the following Ayat (verses),

[“And if the people of the towns had believed and had piety, certainly, We should have opened for them blessings form the heaven and the earth, but they belied (the Messengers). So We took them (with punishment) for what they used to earn (of evil deeds). Did the people of the towns then feel secure against the coming of Our punishment by night while they were asleep? Or, did the people of the towns then feel secure against the coming of Our punishment in the forenoon while they play? Did they then feel secure against the plot of Allaah? None feels secure form the plot of Allaah except the people who are lost”] [7:96-99].

Let him also read the history of previous nations, which gives valuable lessons for whoever is in possession of a mind that comprehends and is rightly guided. This history is a light for those whose hearts are not blocked from the truth. All our dependence is on Allaah.

Pillars of Islamic Belief

Islam, as we explained before, is belief and Laws. We mentioned some pillars of the Laws. These pillars are the basis of Islamic Law. As for the Islamic 'Aqeedah (creed), its pillars are: Believing in Allaah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and the good or bad that Qadar (predestination) brings. These pillars are mentioned in the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger [May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him].

Allaah said, what translated means,

["Righteousness is not that you (only) turn your faces towards the East and (or) the West (in prayers); but righteousness is (the quality) of the one who believes in Allaah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets"] [2:177],

and with regards to Qadar,

["Verily, We have created all things with Qadar. And Our Commandment is but one, as the twinkling of an eye."] [54:49].

In the Sunnah, the Messenger of Allaah [May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him] said, in answer to Jibreel [May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him] when he asked him about Eemaan (belief), **"Eemaan is to believe in Allaah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and to believe in the Qadar and what it brings of good or bad."**¹

¹ Saheeh Muslim