

The Five Pillars of Islam



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All thanks and praises are due to Allâh, Who sustains all creation with His favor. He is the only deity worthy of worship. O Allâh! We only worship You, seek and invoke You for help for each and everything, and appreciate and praise You for Your bounties. I hereby testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allâh Alone, without partners and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger whom He sent as mercy for mankind and the jinn. O Allâh! Send Your mercy and blessings to Muhammad, his progeny, Companions and people of knowledge and correct guidance.

Allâh the Exalted said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَأَفْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

“O you who have believed! Bow down, and prostrate yourselves, and worship your Lord and do good that you may be successful.” (22:77)

In this *Āyah* Allâh commands His believing slaves to worship Him by bowing down in *Ruku'* and prostrating in *Sujud* for Him Alone. He also commands them to do good things so that they might acquire guidance. Doing good entails enjoining righteousness and forbidding evil, It also entails worshipping Allâh in *Tauhid* with sincerity, being kind and compassionate, offering sincere advice to all people and direct them to what ensures their happiness and correctness. All this Allâh commands us to do, prefers for us and rewards us if we implement and adhere by it.

O Allâh's slaves! Islam is built on five pillars. Believing in them makes a person Muslim, provided he or she abides by these pillars and implements them sincerely and faithfully. These pillars are: testifying that none has the right to be worshipped except Allâh and that Muhammad ﷺ is His slave and Messenger, performing prayer, paying what is due of *Zakât*, fasting the lunar month of Ramadhân, and

performing *Hajj* to the Sacred House of Allâh for those who can afford the journey.

'*Lâ ilâha illallâh*' means, 'None has the right or is worthy of being worshipped except Allâh.' This Testimonial requires performing all acts of worship for Allâh Alone, including invoking, supplicating and feeling humbleness and fright from Him Alone and none else. Furthermore, only Allâh should be feared and he should be the sole source of hope and aid. None of these acts can or should be directed towards anything or anyone other than Allâh. Otherwise, one's testimony that 'none has the right to be worshipped except Allâh' becomes useless.

Testifying that Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allâh requires adhering by the Prophet's command and refraining from whatever he forbids. This Testimonial also requires referring to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ for judgment and accepting his decisions with full submission.

﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحْكُمُواكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي
أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

"But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad ﷺ) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission." (4:65)

There are five compulsory daily prayers, and they constitute the second pillar of Islam after the Two Testimonials. One of the conditions of having prayer accepted and not rejected is that it is performed in total sincerity to Allâh, with faith and humbleness. The prayers do, (and should) forbid those who perform them from committing sins and evil acts, as long as they are performed properly and on time.

﴿إِنَّ السَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ﴾

"*As-Salât* (the prayer) prevents from *Al-Fahshâ*' and *Al-Munkar* (i.e. disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed)." (29:45)

The third pillar of Islam is the *Zakât*, especially if it was given away with a sincere good heart. The *Zakât* cleanses and purifies the heart and increases one's wealth. Paying it takes the Muslim away from the evil characteristics of miserliness. Also, the *Zakât* is the right that the poor and needy Muslims have on one's wealth and its amount is not substantial. When *Zakât* is paid with a good heart, Faith, sincerity and given to poor and needy Muslims who deserve it to comfort them, then this act of charity will purify the heart of its giver and cleanse his money. This is a primary wisdom behind the ordainment of *Zakât*. We should also assert that *Zakât* entails one's good use of his position and social status that Allâh had given him to intercede for good causes:

﴿مَنْ يَشْفَعْ سَفْعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِنْهَا﴾

“Whosoever intercedes for a good cause will have the reward thereof.” (4:85)

Also, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«اشْفَعُوا تُؤَجَّرُوا» .

“Intercede for a good cause and you will have a reward thereof.”

Therefore, O slaves of Allâh! Fear Allâh and purify your hearts and intentions for Him Alone in all of your actions.

Fasting the lunar month of Ramadhân is an obligation required by Allâh and has such a unique status that all the actions of mankind are theirs except the Fast, for it is for Allâh and He rewards for it. Allâh accepts the Fast from His believing slaves, rewards them for it, and indeed, He has the best rewards. During the Fast, one abandons his food, drink and satisfying his lusts as an act of drawing closer to his Lord, obeying His orders and seeking His mercy, pardon and kindness. The Fast requires one to restrain his senses from committing evil. For instance, the hand fasts by restraining it from committing harm and being used to consume unlawful things, while the leg fasts when it is restrained from walking to evil and any act that might bring Allâh's Anger. The tongue fasts when it is restrained from uttering evil, foolishness, lying and backbiting. The ear fasts by not listening to

words of calumny, lies, backbiting, musical instruments and songs. The eye fasts by not looking at unlawful things, especially women whom one is not allowed to look at. Also, the eyes should be restrained from peeking at other people's secrets and private affairs. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ included all these meanings in his comprehensive statement:

«إِنَّمَا الصَّوْمُ جُنَّةٌ، فَإِذَا كَانَ أَحَدُكُمْ صَائِمًا فَلَا يَرْفُثْ وَلَا يَجْهَلْ» .

“Verily, the Fast is *Junnah* (a shield or protection). Therefore, when it is a day when one of you is fasting, let him not commit *Rafath* (sexual intercourse with the wife), or dispute foolishly and unjustly.”

Allâh endowed Ramadhân, the Month of the Fast, with goodness, blessing and kindness, in addition to the revelation of the Qur'ân as guidance and mercy for mankind. Allâh ordained the Fast during Ramadhân and His Messenger established the *Sunnah* of *Qiyam* (voluntary prayer) during its nights. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ» .

“Whoever establishes prayers during the nights of Ramadhân faithfully, out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allâh's rewards (not for showing off), all his past sins will be forgiven.”

Allâh's slaves! Perform acts of righteousness and good deeds so that you earn Allâh's generous rewards. Invoke Allâh to forgive you your sins and to guide and direct you to success. Beg Allâh to save your Islam, to allow it to prevail above all other religions and to protect and aid its people and defenders. O Allâh! Make us among those who earn Your forgiveness and acquire safety from the Fire.¹

¹ *Ahadith Al-Minbar*, by Shaikh Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah bin Hasan Al-Shaikh, p. 109