

An Introduction to Pillars of Islam and Articles of Faith (part 2 of 2)

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The essential teachings of Islam are based on five principles, referred to as the 'Five Pillars of Islam', and six fundamental beliefs, known as the 'Six Articles of Faith.' Part 2: The six articles of faith and what they entail.

The Six Articles of Faith

Faith is referred to in Arabic as ***Iman***. It represents firm belief in the heart, and not simply blind faith. Islamic doctrine revolves around six aspects described by the Prophet.

1. Belief in Allah, which entails the following:

- (i) Belief in Allah's existence.
- (ii) Allah is the Lord. He is the Creator, the Provider, the Sustainer, and the Owner of the entire universe. None has any share in these roles.
- (iii) Allah is the only being entitled to worship. No worship, service or veneration is to be offered to others besides Allah or along with Him, whether they be prophets, priests, saints, angels, idols, or stones.
- (iv) Allah has the most beautiful and perfect of names and attributes, which none can be compared to. He is Unique, separate and unlike His creation. No evil or deficiency can be attributed to Him.

2. Belief in the Angels, which entails the following:

- (i) Belief in the existence of angels, a creation of Allah.
- (ii) Belief that they have no right to receive any form of worship
- (iii) Belief in the names by which the angels are identified in the Quran and *Sunnah* (teachings of Prophet Muhammad).
- (iv) Belief in the special tasks assigned to each of them by Allah in the Quran and Sunnah

(teachings of Prophet Muhammad).

3. Belief in the Revealed Scriptures, which entails the following:

- (i) Belief that Allah revealed scriptures to various prophets.
- (ii) Belief that they contained the truth from Allah.
- (iii) Belief that all previous scriptures other than the Quran have been altered.
- (iv) Belief in the Quran has several aspects:
 - a) Belief that it is one of the scriptures of Allah.
 - b) Belief that it is the Final Revelation to humanity, and that no other scripture will be revealed after it.
 - c) Belief that everything in it is true, containing no falseness.
 - d) Belief that it has remained unchanged, and will remain so for eternity.
 - e) Belief that it has abrogated all previous scriptures before it.

4. Belief in the Messengers, which entails the following:

- (i) Belief that Allah sent prophets to every nation, calling them to worship and obey Allah Alone. One must believe in all of them, known or unknown, without rejecting any of them.
- (ii) Belief that they were the best of humanity, chosen due to their virtuousness.
- (iii) Belief that they were mere humans, not divine in any way, and that they do not have any right to receive worship, nor did they claim so.
- (iv) Belief that they merely conveyed the message from Allah and did not legislate from their own selves.
- (v) Belief that they did not err in conveying the message.
- (vi) Belief that obedience to them is a must.
- (vi) Belief that Muhammad was a prophet, which entails those issues discussed in the lesson entitled *The Testimony of Faith*.

5. Belief in Life after Death and the Final Day of Judgment, which entails the following:

- (i) Belief that a day will come when everything will come to an end, and Allah will raise the creation and judge them according to their deeds.
- (ii) Belief that those who believed and practically followed the correct religion by following the prophets will enter Paradise for eternity, and that those who disbelieved will enter the Hellfire for eternity.

6. Belief in Divine Decree, which entails the following:

- (i) Belief that Allah's Foreknowledge is all inclusive and complete. He has always known everything that would or would not happen, even before the creation of mankind.
- (ii) Belief that Allah has recorded everything that was going to occur until the Day of Judgment in a book known as "The Mother of the Books" or "The Preserved Tablet".
- (iii) Belief that whatever Allah willed has occurred, is occurring, and will occur. Nothing occurs against or without this Will.
- (iv) Allah created everything.

We have mentioned here the minimal requirements of faith in each of these six categories that Muslims believe in, as the Prophet, may Allah praise him, mentioned that these articles form the basis of Islamic belief and faith.

In subsequent lessons, we will explore the essential teachings by studying each of the Five Pillars of Islam and the Six Articles of Faith in detail.

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