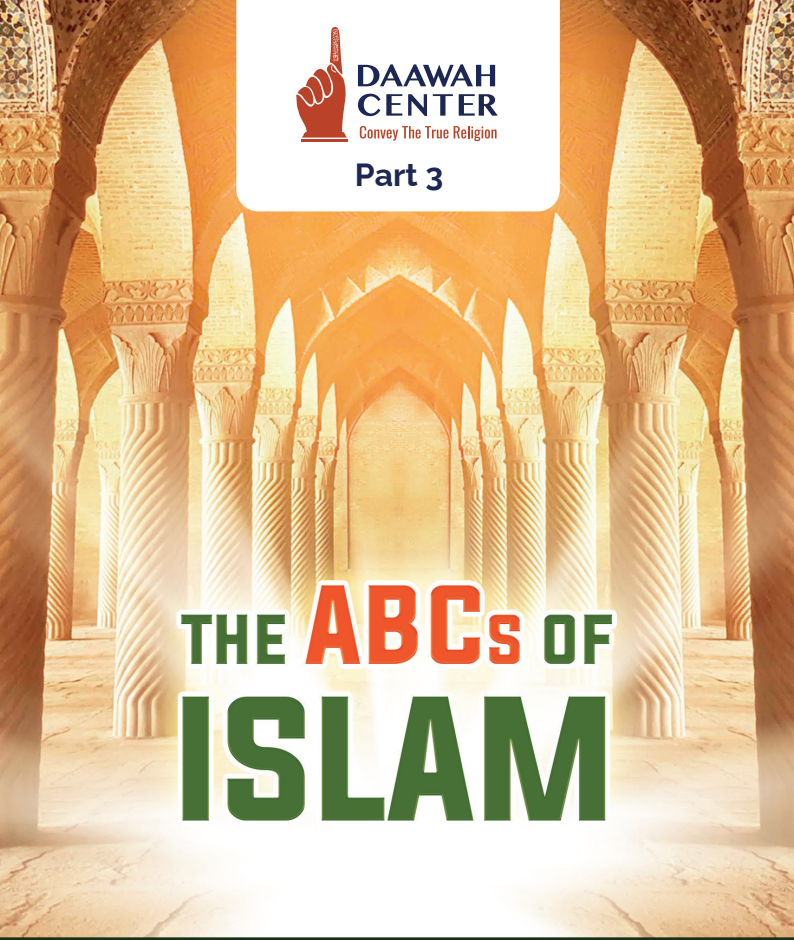


DR. NAJI IBRAHIM



Islam teaches us that the gateway to a happy, content, and eternal life is through believing in Allah the One True God and His final Prophet Muhammad ﷺ (may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him).

Islam also tells us that believing in God and His Prophets and Messengers is not enough to gain peace of mind, happiness, and salvation!

We must also carry out the Will of Allah; through worshipping Him **ALONE,** obeying His commandments, and doing good deeds.

Furthermore, Allah informs us in the Qur'an about the forgiveness, reward, and Paradise that He has prepared for those who believe and do good deeds:

- ***But they who believe and do righteous deeds – those are the companions of Paradise; they will abide therein eternally.*** (2:82)
- ***Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds [that] for them there is forgiveness and great reward.*** (5:9)
- ***Indeed, those who have believed and done righteous deeds – they will have the Gardens of Paradise as a lodging.*** (18:107)

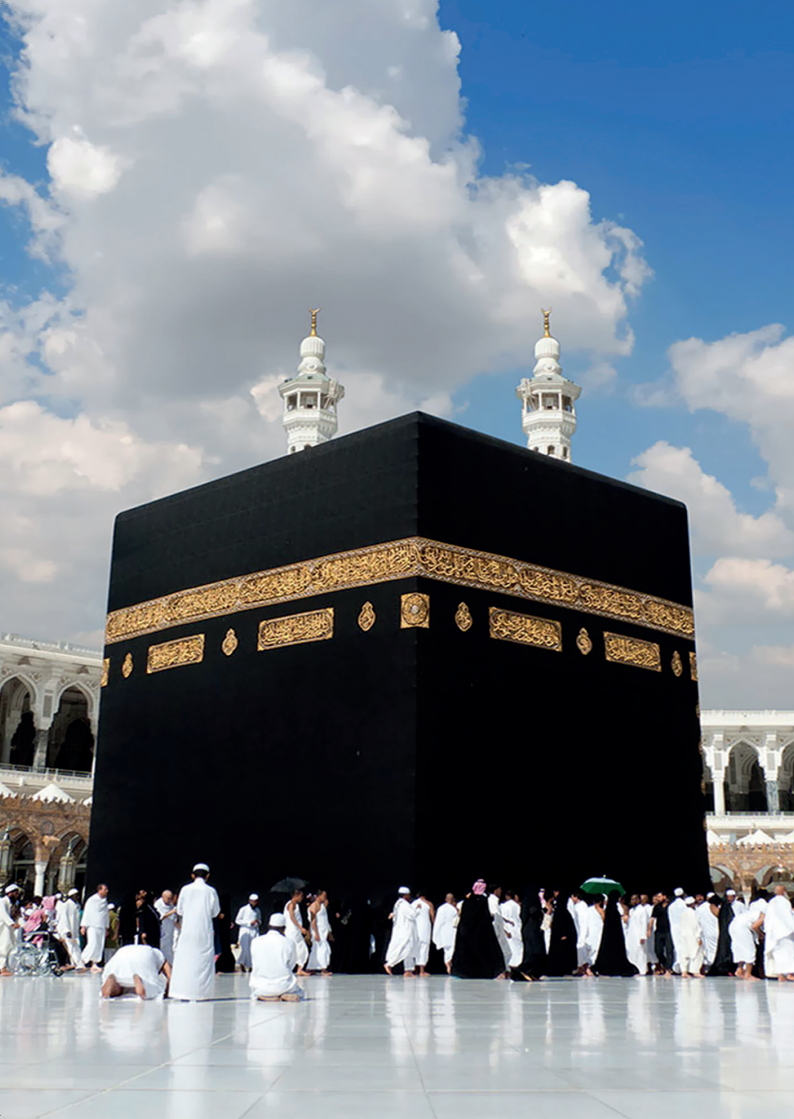


The Meaning of Islam

Islam means submission to the Will of Allah the One True God. Thus, believing in the Oneness of God ***(Tawheed),*** worshipping Him alone, obeying His commandments, and submitting to His Will are the essence of Allah's message sent to all His Prophets and Messengers. This word ***'submission'*** is the meaning of the Arabic word ***'ISLAM'***.

Since the Prophets and Messengers of Allah (God) all preached the same message; therefore, their religion must be the same! The Qur'an confirms that ***'Islam' (Submission to Allah)*** is the true religion of Adam and Eve and their descendants until the Day of Judgment. The Qur'an states:

- ***Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam (submission to God).*** (3:19)
- ***Say, "Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the true guidance; and we have been commanded to submit to the Lord of the worlds."*** (6:71)
- ***So is it other than the religion of Allah (Islam, submission to God) they desire? And to Him have submitted [all] those within the heavens and earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him they will be returned.*** (3:83)



The Meaning of Islam (cont.)

- ***Say, [O believers], "We have believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Descendants and what was given to Moses and Jesus and what was given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him."*** (2:136)

Interestingly, the meaning of Islam is also traceable in the Bible which states:

- ***Submit to God and be at peace with him; in this way prosperity will come to you.*** (Job 22:21)
- ***Submit yourselves therefore to God.*** (James 4:7)

Similar to the teachings of Islam which tell us that faith in God – without doing good deeds and righteous works - is not enough to enable us to gain salvation and eternal life (Paradise), the Bible reports:

- ***I, the Lord, search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.*** (Jeremiah 17:10)

- ***You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone… For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*** (James 2:24-26)

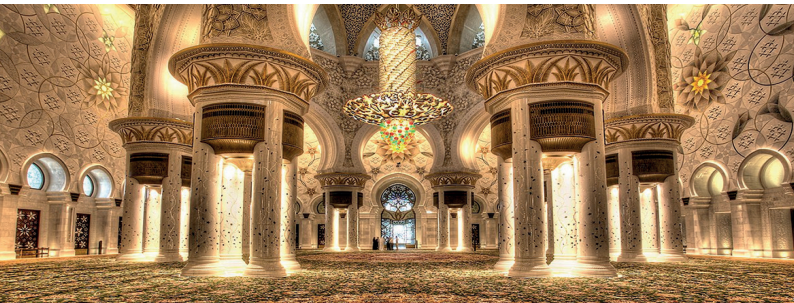


Practicing Muslims

Indeed, Muslims do not only have faith in Allah (the One True God), but also do good deeds. They obey the commandments that Jesus, Muhammad, and all of the Prophets taught and obeyed, such as believing in One True God, praying, kneeling down, and prostrating in worship, fasting, giving alms and charity, saying "if God wills ***(Insha Allah)***" for something in the future, and using the greeting of Jesus and the Prophets, "Peace be upon you ***(Assalamu Alaikum).***"

These are just a few examples and pieces of evidence that clearly demonstrate the truth, unity, and universality of this magnificent and beautiful religion of all the Prophets of Allah: ***'Islam' (Submission to Allah)***.

Practically speaking, a Muslim, or a person who would like to embrace Islam, must believe in the articles and fundamentals of faith in Islam.



Belief in Allah

The One True God

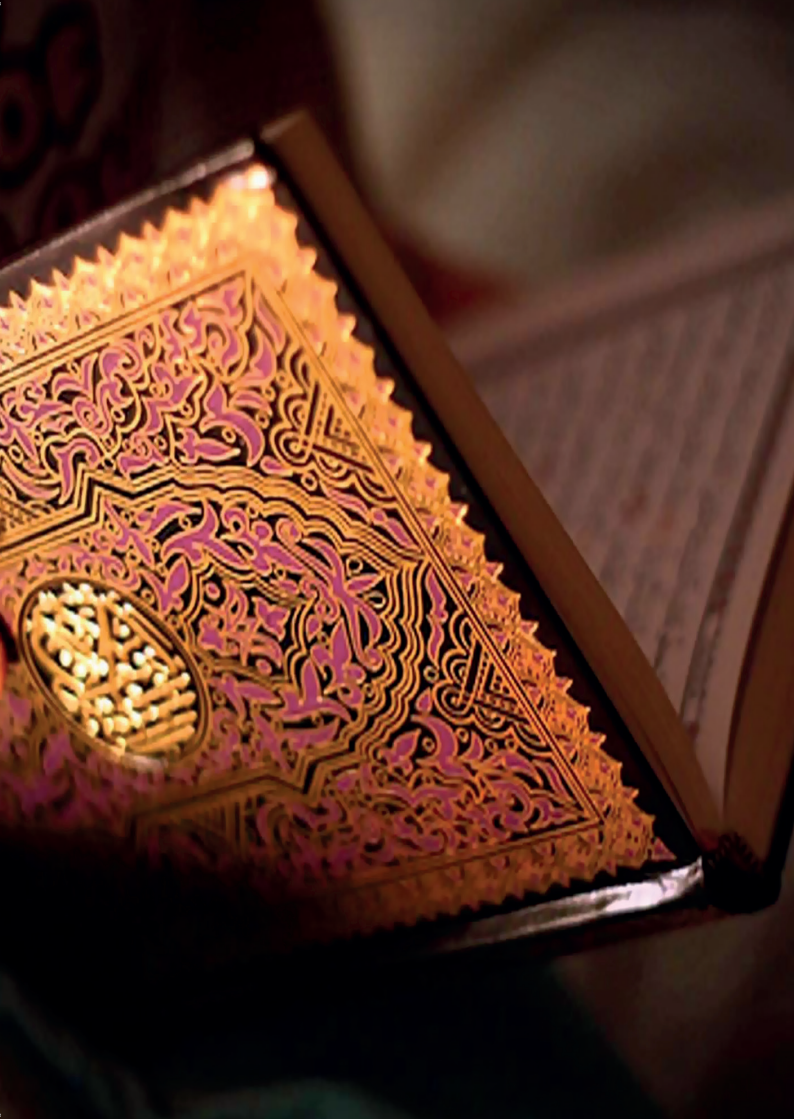


1. Belief in Allah (God) – in His existence, His Oneness (in Arabic, ***Tawheed***), His Lordship, His unique names and attributes, and that He is the only One deserving of worship.

The Glorious Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad taught us about the names and attributes of Allah, the One True God. We can never comprehend the greatness of Allah, but the more we know about Him, the better we can love and worship Him.

The following are just some of His names and attributes: ***Allah*** (the proper name of God), The ***Lord,*** The ***One True God,*** The ***Compassionate,*** The ***Merciful,*** The ***Creator,*** The ***Sovereign Lord,*** The ***Holy,*** The ***Pure,*** The ***Blessed,*** The ***Source of Peace and Perfection,*** The ***Judge,*** The ***All-Knowing,*** The ***All-Seeing,*** The ***All-Hearing,*** The ***Great One,*** The ***All-Forgiving,*** The ***Most High,*** The ***Sublime,*** The ***Most Loving,*** The ***Most Kind,*** The ***Provider,*** and ***The Truth***.

Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him) said, ***"The absolute qualities of beauty and perfection belong to Allah. Indeed, Allah loves beauty."***



2. Belief in Allah's Angels, whom He created to praise Him and to obey Him by carrying out His orders.

3. Belief in Allah's Revelations, including the original Words of Allah revealed to Abraham, David, Moses, and Jesus. The Glorious Qur'an is the final, pure, and authentic Word of God, sent to Prophet Muhammad.

4. Belief in all of Allah's Messengers and Prophets, including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, John the Baptist, Jesus, and Muhammad. In fact, a Muslim is not a true believer if he or she does not believe in Moses and Jesus (and the others) as Prophets sent from Allah the One True God, the Creator.

5. Belief in the Last Day, the Day of Judgment and Accountability. On that Day, all humankind will be judged by Allah according to their faith in Him and their actions.

After this judgment by God, those who believed in Allah and did good deeds; they will be admitted to a happy, eternal life in Paradise. On the other hand, those who disbelieved in Allah, did not do good deeds, and disobeyed God's commandments; they will be thrown into Hellfire. (May God save us from the Hellfire and grant us eternal life in Paradise).



The Six Articles of Faith in Islam (cont.)

6. Belief in the destiny decreed by Allah and in His ultimate knowledge of all things.

Since the believers trust in Allah, they are satisfied, content, and confident with whatever Allah decrees for them, whether they perceive it as good or bad. They try not to despair or to become depressed, hopeless, or despondent when crises or difficulties strike. Instead, they do all that they can to improve their situation but ultimately turn to Allah for help, support, and reward.

This beautiful faith in Allah and His decree brings Muslims peace of mind and contentment in spite of all the calamities and inflictions that befall them; or the aggression, invasions, occupations, and exploitation of their land, oil, and wealth that are taking place in the world today, and in spite of the injustice, bias, discrimination, and defamation they face or suffer from.





The Five Pillars of Islam

Islam teaches us to put faith into practice. And in addition to doing good deeds in general, Muslims and those who would like to embrace Islam; must practice these five basic pillars:

1. *Shahadah* (the testimony of faith):

Saying: ***"I testify that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."***

It reads like this in Arabic:

ASH-HADU ALLA ILAHA ILLA ALLAH, WA ASH-HADU ANNA MUHAMMADAN RASOOLU ALLAH.

This simple testimony is the gateway to Islam.





2. *Salat* (Prayer):

Performing the five daily, mandatory prayers. These ritual prayers include standing, bowing, and prostrating; reciting parts of the Qur'an; praising and remembering Allah; and asking for His mercy, forgiveness, and Paradise.

The beauty and power of the prayers bring us spiritual growth, psychological comfort, and support, as well as relief, tranquility, and contentment for our souls, minds, and hearts. The way the prayers are spread across the day and night means we are always reminded of Allah (God).

What adds to the beauty of the prayer is the fact that God's Prophets – including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad – also prayed and prostrated to the same One True God, Allah. In other words, Muslims are following in the footsteps of those Prophets and Messengers of God.

Furthermore, many other beautiful concepts, such as love of God, submission and surrender to Him, supplication, unity, equality, sincerity, patience, humility, and meekness are manifested in and learned from prayer.

Indeed, sincere prayer, *thikr* (remembrance of Allah), istighfar (seeking forgiveness), and dua (supplication) – to Allah alone – are profound and wonderful keys to peace of mind, tranquility, and blessings.



The Five Pillars of Islam (cont.)

3. *Zakat* (Almsgiving):

The mandatory giving of a certain amount of one's wealth to the poor and needy. *Zakat* purifies our properties and money, while at the same time purifying us from greed and miserliness.

Zakat or almsgiving teaches caring and sharing, which build strong bridges of mutual love and respect between the rich and the poor. Indeed, it fosters support, help, cooperation, and solidarity across society as a whole.





4. *Sawm* (Fasting):

Sawm means refraining from all food and drink, and from marital relations, from dawn until sunset throughout the Islamic month of Ramadan. Some of the beautiful benefits and lessons of fasting include:

- **Spiritual benefits:** We develop taqwa (piety) and sincerity. The fasting month of Ramadan offers an excellent opportunity for us to attain God's mercy and forgiveness, be saved from the Hellfire, and obtain eternal life in Paradise.
- **Moral and emotional benefits:** In the school of Ramadan, we acknowledge and experience the hunger that millions of people in different parts of the world experience involuntarily. This inspires us to share, to empathize, and to be humble, generous, and kind.
- **Educational benefits:** Fasting teaches us many lessons; for example, we see that it is possible to change or to quit bad habits such as excessive eating. Fasting disciplines our behavior and trains us to be patient and self-restrained. Also, it reminds us that God's Prophets, like Muhammad, Moses, and Jesus, used to fast, too.
- **Health benefits:** Through the process of fasting, the body gets rid of toxins and extra fats. Doctors and nutritionists often recommend fasting, describing it as a 'rubbish-burner' and 'curative therapy', and it is endorsed as a remedy for various diseases.


Nanirah Mosque
Mosquée De Namira
Namira Moscati

5. *Hajj* (Pilgrimage):

Hajj is the pilgrimage to Makkah that every Muslim must perform once in his or her lifetime, provided he or she is physically, mentally, and financially able to do so.

As with the other pillars and tenets of Islam, the beauties, lessons, and benefits of Hajj are many. Millions of believers of all colors and races, from all over the world, answer the call of Prophet Abraham, who (with his wife Hagar and son Ishmael) is associated with many of the rites of Hajj. Wonderful principles and concepts can be seen in action during Hajj, including: submission and obedience to Allah, brotherhood and sisterhood in Islam, unity, patience, sacrifice, prayer, charity, and fasting. The annual Hajj witnesses and features the largest and most unique religious gathering of its kind in the world.

During this remarkable convergence of all races and colors, all serving only one God and following only one message, Malcolm X and others have discovered the beauty of true faith, Islamic brotherhood and sisterhood, and equality.

Malcolm X reported: ***"My pilgrimage broadened my scope. It blessed me with a new insight. In two weeks in the Holy Land, I saw what I never had seen in thirty-nine years here in America. I saw all races, all colors – blue-eyed blonds to black-skinned Africans – in true brotherhood! In unity! Living as one! Worshiping as one!"*** (The Autobiography of Malcolm X)

Definitions of Major Names in Islam

Allah: The Arabic name of the One True God, the Creator of everything. Islam teaches that Allah is the God of all humankind. Arabic-speaking Jews and Christians also use the name Allah to refer to God, and it is the word used for God in Arabic-language Bibles.

Muhammad ﷺ (may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him): The final Prophet and Messenger of Allah, sent to all humankind to convey His final message.

The Glorious Qur'an: The final revelation and Word of Allah, revealed to Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him) as guidance for all people.

Islam: Submission to the will of Allah, the One True God..

Muslim: A person who submits to Allah, the One True God, and worships Him alone.

Mosque (Masjid): A clean place of worship where Muslims gather mainly to pray and worship Allah.



Allah in Arabic



Muhammad in Arabic



A Muslim supplicating to Allah (the true God)



The Glorious Qur'an

“I testify that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.”

In Arabic:



Ash-hadu an lā ilāha illā Allāh, wa ash-hadu anna Muḥammadan Rasūlu Allāh.

This declaration of faith is known as the Shahādah (Testimony of Faith). It is the first and most fundamental pillar of Islam. Whoever sincerely believes these words and declares them embraces Islam.

The Shahādah beautifully summarizes the essence of Islam: belief in Allah alone as the One True God, who alone is worthy of worship, and belief that Muhammad is His final Messenger. It reflects the truth, beauty, clarity, and simplicity of the Islamic faith.



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