

The Five Pillars of Islam

The foundation of a Muslim's life — a simple guide for students

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said that Islam is built upon five pillars. Every Muslim, young or old, should know them, understand them, and live by them. This guide is part of our "Fundamentals of Islam" course.

1. Shahadah — The Declaration of Faith

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

Ash-hadu an la ilaha illallah, wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan rasoolullah

I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

The Shahadah is the door of Islam. By believing it in the heart and saying it with the tongue, a person becomes a Muslim. It means we worship Allah alone and follow the guidance of His final Messenger ﷺ.

2. Salah — The Five Daily Prayers

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا

Innas-salata kanat 'alal-mu'mineena kitabam-mawqoota (Quran 4:103)

Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers at fixed times.

Salah is offered five times a day: Fajr (dawn), Zuhr (noon), Asr (afternoon), Maghrib (sunset) and Isha (night). It is a direct connection between the servant and Allah. In our Namaz course, students learn wudu, the method of prayer, and all its recitations.

3. Zakat — Obligatory Charity

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ

Wa aqeeemus-salata wa atuz-zakah (Quran 2:43)

And establish prayer and give zakat.

Zakat purifies wealth. A Muslim who owns wealth above a fixed limit (nisab) for one year gives 2.5% of it to the poor and needy. It teaches generosity and cares for the weak members of society.

4. Sawm — Fasting in Ramadan

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ

Ya ayyuhal-lazeena amanu kutiba 'alaikumus-siyam (Quran 2:183)

O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed upon you.

In the blessed month of Ramadan, Muslims fast from dawn (Fajr) to sunset (Maghrib) — leaving food, drink and bad habits. Fasting builds taqwa (God-consciousness), patience and sympathy for the poor.

5. Hajj — Pilgrimage to Makkah

وَلِلّٰهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ اِلَيْهِ سَبِيْلًا

Wa lillahi 'alan-nasi hijjul-baiti manis-tata'a ilaihi sabeela (Quran 3:97)

And pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to Allah by people who are able to undertake it.

Hajj is performed once in a lifetime by every Muslim who is physically and financially able. Millions of Muslims gather in Makkah in the month of Zul-Hijjah, all equal before Allah, remembering the legacy of Prophet Ibrahim ■■■■ ■■■■■■.

The Six Articles of Faith (Iman-e-Mufassal)

Along with the five pillars of action, a Muslim believes in six articles of faith: (1) Belief in Allah, (2) His Angels, (3) His Books, (4) His Messengers, (5) the Last Day, and (6) Divine Decree — that good and bad destiny is from Allah.

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