

# Free research paper on islam

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



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## **Its central beliefs and the Five Pillars**

Islam is a monotheistic religion which considers Allah to be the one and incomparable God and the Holy Quran to be the verbatim of Allah. It is next to Christianity in terms of popularity and has more than 1.6 billion followers (Kettani, 2010). It is one of the fastest growing religions in the world (Foreign Policy, 2007). This essay deals with illuminating the central beliefs of Islam and its Five Pillars. Also, it discusses that which of the Five Pillars is easiest to follow and which one is the most demanding.

Monotheism is one of the central beliefs of Islam. Allah is expressed in a chapter of Quran in the following words: He is God, the One and Only; God, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him (Quran 112: 1-4). The Quran says that Allah sent numerous prophets like Adam, Noah, Moses, Jesus and others. The prophet-hood began with the very first man Adam who was created by Allah from clay without parents and ended with the last prophet Muhammad which means that Muhammad was the final prophet to convey the divine message to the whole world ('Islam', 2012).

Among these holy men sent by God, four prophets are mentioned as being the deliverers of His guidance: Prophet Dawood (known as David to Jews and Christians); Prophet Musa (known as Moses to Jews and Christians); Prophet Isa (known as Jesus to Christians) and finally, Prophet Muhammad. It is the utmost duty of a Muslim (adherent to Islam) to serve God and lead a moral life. The Five Pillars are obligatory for every Muslim and in addition to these, the Islamic Laws are also an essential part of life (" Shari'ah", 2012)

## **The Five Pillars of Islam**

As mentioned in Quran, the Five Pillars of Islam are the basic acts or duties of a Muslim as a sign of their commitment to the faith (McInerney, 2003).

The first pillar is known as Shahadah or Testimony. The first pillar is the Shahadah. The Muslims testify that they accept Muhammad to be the messenger of God through a specific statement- ' ašhadu 'al-lā ilāha illā-llāhu wa 'ašhadu 'anna muḥammadan rasūlu-llāh'(Nasr, 2003). The recitation and repetition of this creed is important for every Muslim. The second pillar is Prayer or Salah. The prayers or namaaz is performed five times a day with piety (McInerney, 2003). Collective prayer is done at mosques.

The third pillar is Fasting or Sawm. In the month of Ramadan, Muslims fast from food, drink and even sexual relations from dawn to dusk (McInerney, 2003). It is believed to keep the followers close to God and lets them express their gratitude to the Supreme One. It teaches not only patience and humanity but also gives an opportunity to recompense for their sins. The fourth pillar is known as Alms giving or Zakat. A proportion of one's wealth which is after all because of God's blessing should be given to the needy and

for spread of Islam. It is obligatory for every Muslim (McInerney, 2003). One can also give more than the fixed proportion as per will to lend a helping hand to those who are deficient. The final pillar is Pilgrimage or Hajj. At least once in a lifetime, every Muslim has to accomplish the Holy pilgrimage to Mecca (McInerney, 2003) and the rituals pertaining to it.

In my personal view, all of these Five Pillars of Islam are very significant and aimed only to improve life. Devotion to one's belief, helping the needy and visiting the Holy city of Mecca- every Pillar promotes love for God, understanding humanity and leading a moral life. Out of the five basic requirements, I feel that Alms giving or Zakat is the easiest as well as the divinest. Whatever a person accomplishes in his life is owed to God. So, donating a fraction of the income or wealth in the name of God and more importantly, to help the poor and needy is one of the best deeds. Without publicising the donation, one should definitely render a fraction of the total income for those who require it much more than us. It is one of the best features of Islam. As for the Pillar which is the most challenging to accomplish is Fasting or Sawm. Though fasting at times is very beneficial for detoxifying the body and letting the system relax but still, not everyone can feel completely comfortable to be starving or thirsty from dawn to dusk. It is also aimed at being close to God and to learn life better but it is onerous for everyone to follow. And that is why Islam allows flexibility in this rule.

Islam is a wonderful religion which promotes love for God. Sadly, several followers have changed its basic beliefs and often associate Islam to violence and maltreatment of women. It is not true that Quran asks to kill those who

are not Muslims. The rudimentary preachers of such hostile thoughts must be condemned for this, not Islam. Every religion was formed to bring people close to God and inspire them to lead a simple yet beautiful life. So was Islam. And these Five Pillars bear testimony to the fact that Islam aims to preach love and dedication to God with a moral life.

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