

The Six Fundamentals of Faith

A Muslim goes through life, with all that it involves of trials and conflicts. He is like a vehicle that climbs up mountains and travels across deserts, or a boat that sails across seas and oceans, facing storm winds and earthquakes. It continues along its clear path aiming to reach its well defined destination. It cannot reach it without a powerful engine and propellers that ensure that it goes along its way, without deviation.

These propellers are the six fundamentals of faith: all six are necessary to ensure that the vehicle of faith travels towards its destination, which is heaven.

The Six Fundamentals of Faith

1. To believe in God means:

- That He exists: this is the necessary and natural conclusion arrived at by sound human nature and correct reasoning.
- That He is the Lord of the universe and He conducts all its affairs.
- That He is the One who deserves to be worshipped, glorified, loved and feared. No one else is given any share in any of these.
- To believe in His fine names and attributes which He or Prophet Muhammad has confirmed as belonging to Him.

When you believe in God, you know that you worship an ever-merciful and all-knowing Lord who is the Creator of all and controls all. He has commanded you, and all creation, to worship Him alone. To Him belongs all fine names and high attributes that make Him worthy of all love and glorification.

2. To believe in the angels:

The angels are a great type of creation. God created them out of light and they worship God all the time, doing His bidding in all situations. He keeps them close to Him and they live in heaven. He has given them the power to do whatever He bids them. A believer should believe:

- That they exist. God says: "Those that are with Him are never too proud to worship Him and never grow weary of that. They extol His limitless glory by night and day, tirelessly." (21: 19-20)
- In those of them whose names have been mentioned, such as Gabriel, Michael and Israfeel.
- Their qualities and characteristics God has mentioned.
- Their deeds which God has assigned to them and told us about these.

This belief makes you appreciate God's limitless ability, which will enhance your feeling of awe of Him and desire to obey Him. You will develop a sense of shame that angels should see you in a situation that does not please God.

3. To believe in the Divine books:

This is a firm belief that God revealed to His prophets books and scriptures defining the truth and providing guidance for mankind. This is an act of His grace. These books provide admonition for mankind and explain all things to them. Ultimately, they are used as evidence for or against them.

A believer believes:

- That God has certainly revealed such books.
- In the books God has named, such as the Qur'an, the Gospel, the Torah and Psalms. We also believe generally in God's other revelations.
- We believe as true whatever is correctly reported in these books. Thus we believe all that is mentioned in the Qur'an and whatever is consistent with it in earlier scriptures.
- We implement the rulings God has stated in the Qur'an, which supersedes all previous books and scriptures.

Thus a believer realises God's wisdom in giving each community a book that suited their status and conditions. Believers also realise that God has been very caring as He did not leave His creation to their own devices, but provided them with detailed guidance and a way of life.

4. To believe in God's prophets and messengers.

This is a firm belief that God has chosen from among mankind certain people to whom He gave revelations and sent them as bearers of good news and warnings. He charged them with delivering His messages to His creation, requiring them to worship Him alone and refrain from worshipping false deities. Sending them such prophets and messengers is an act of His grace. All prophets and messengers were ordinary human beings, having none of the characteristics of Lordship.

We believe:

- That the messages preached by them are true. Whoever disbelieves in any of them disbelieves in all of them.
- We believe in those God mentioned to us by name, such as Muhammad, Moses, Jesus, Abraham, Solomon, etc. We also believe generally in those whom God has not mentioned by name.
- We believe in what is confirmed to have happened to them.
- We implement the last message, which was delivered by Muhammad (peace be upon him). God says: "But no, by your Lord! They do not really believe unless they make you judge in all disputes between them, and then find in their hearts no bar to an acceptance of your decisions and give themselves up in total submission." (4: 65)

That God has sent human messengers to show His servants the way to Him is an act of great mercy, as these messengers served as guides and role models for mankind.

5. Belief in the Last Day:

This is a firm belief that God will resurrect all people on a day He has determined when He will hold them to account. He will reward those who do good by admitting them into heaven and punish others in hell.

Belief in the Last Day includes:

- Belief in the resurrection. God says: “Then, you shall be restored to life on the Day of Resurrection”. (23: 16)
- Belief in the reckoning. Every human being will be recompensed for every deed: a good deed will earn its reward by God’s grace and a bad deed will be recompensed by God’s justice.
- Belief in heaven and hell and that they are the ultimate destinations for all creation.

Thus, a believer will always be keen to do what is good and steer away from what is evil. Believers always remember that they shall stand in front of their Lord on that hard day.

6. Belief in the Divine decree, good or bad as it may be:

This is a firm belief that in His absolute and perfect knowledge, God has decreed what happens to all creatures. He recorded all these in the Imperishable Tablet and allowed them to run by His will.

This belief includes:

- That God knows everything in total and detail.
- That He has recorded all this in the Imperishable Tablet.
- That everything occurs by God’s will. God has decreed what happens in people’s lives, withholding this from them. He has outlined for them His orders and prohibitions, giving them what they need to fulfil His bidding and refrain from what He has forbidden. He gives them exemptions when they cannot fulfil any of His commandments. Thus, no one has any excuse for doing what is forbidden or omitting a duty. God says: “Say: The truth has now come from your Lord. Let him who wills, believe in it, and let him who wills, reject it”. (18: 29)

Belief in the Divine decree is clearly instrumental in giving a believer reassurance and acceptance of God’s will. Thus a believer will continue to do what is of benefit, feeling contented and happy.

These are the six fundamental beliefs that make you a believer. Everyone should learn and implement them.