

The First Pillar

Muslim Profession of Faith (*Shahada*)

The *Shahada* is the Muslim profession of faith and the first of the ‘Five Pillars’ of Islam. The word *shahada* in Arabic means ‘testimony.’ The *shahada* is to testify to two things:

- (a) Nothing deserves worship except God (Allah).
- (b) Muhammad is the Messenger of God (Allah).

A Muslim is simply one who bears witness and testifies that “nothing deserves worship except Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.” One becomes a Muslim by making this simple declaration.

It must be recited by every Muslim at least once in a lifetime with a full understanding of its meaning and with an assent of the heart.

- (a) Nothing deserves worship except God (Allah).

The first part of this testimony states that God has the exclusive right to be worshipped inwardly and outwardly, by one’s heart and limbs. In Islamic doctrine, not only can no one be worshipped *apart* from Him, absolutely no one else can be worshipped *along with* Him. He has no partners or associates in worship. Worship, in its comprehensive sense and all its aspects, is for Him alone. God’s right to be worshipped is the essential meaning of Islam’s testimony of faith: *Lā ‘ilāha ‘illā llāh*. A person becomes Muslim by testifying to the divine right to worship. It is the crux of Islamic belief in God, even all of Islam.

‘*And your God is One God: there is no god but He.*’ (Quran 2:163), “Worship God! You have no other god but Him.” (Quran 7:59, 7:73; 11:50, 11:84; 23:32)

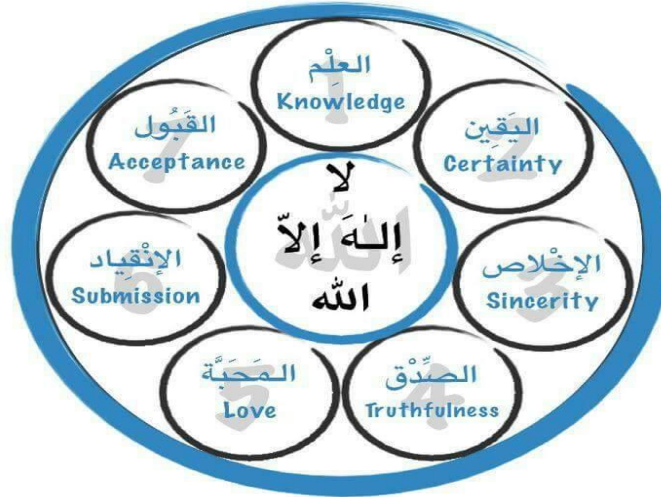
But to become a complete Muslim one has to fully carry out in practice the instruction given by Prophet Muhammad as ordained by God. This brings us to the second part of the testimony.

- (b) Muhammad is the Messenger of God (Allah).

The second part of the confession of faith asserts that he is not only a prophet but also a messenger of God, a higher role also played like all prophets before him. He was a human being, but chosen by God to convey His message to all humanity rather than one tribe or nation from among the many that exist. For Muslims, Muhammad brought the last and final revelation. In accepting Muhammad as the “last of the prophets,” they believe that his prophecy confirms and completes all of the revealed messages, beginning with that of Adam. In addition, Muhammad serves as

the preeminent role model through his life example. The believer's effort to follow Muhammad's example reflects the emphasis of Islam on practice and action.

7 Conditions of



Ablution (Wudhu)

Allah, the Exalted, says: “O you who believe! When you perform Salah wash your faces and your arms to the elbows, wipe your heads, and wash your feet up to the ankles” (5:96)

Wudhu is a condition for the validity of prayers. The Prophet ﷺ said: “No prayer is accepted without purification” (Muslim)

The Prophet ﷺ also said: “Whoever performs *Wudhu* as he is ordered (in *Shari'ah*) and performs prayer as he is ordered, his past sins will be effaced” (Bukhari)

Preconditions of Wudhu

The preconditions of Wudhu are:

1. Islam. *Wudhu* is not valid from a non-Muslim.
2. Intellect (sanity). *Wudhu* is not valid from an insane person.
3. Age of discretion. *Wudhu* is not valid from a young child who has not reached the age of discretion, or cannot intend an action independently.
4. The water should be pure. Water that is impure is not lawful to use for purification.
5. Substances that prevent the water from reaching the parts of *Wudhu* should be removed. A person must remove dirt, mud, dough and wax so that water can reach the part directly.