

وهو الاستسلام له بالتوحيد، والانقياد له بالطاعة، والبراءة من الشرك وأهله

And it is to submit to Him with *tawbeed* and to yield to Him with obedience and to free oneself from *shirk* and its people.²⁸

[28]:

Al-Islaam is derived from, “*aslama lish-shay*”, meaning he submitted to it. As it is said in the language, “*aslama nafsahu lilqat*”, (he submitted himself to being killed)”, meaning that he submitted to being killed. So a person did *islaam* of himself, means that he submitted to that thing.

So therefore Islaam is submitting one's face and one's purpose and resolve and one's intention to Him, he the Mighty and Majestic.

﴿ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ﴾

النساء: ١٢٥

And who is better in religion than one who submits his face to Allaah and he is the doer of the good which Allaah legislated and he follows the religious way of Ibraaheem, upright and upon his way, turning away from shirk [4:125]

﴿ بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ ﴾ البقرة: ١١٢

Rather whoever submits his face to Allaah [2:112]

Meaning: he makes his deeds purely and sincerely for Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, and he yields to Allaah obediently and by choice and with desire and out of love.

“Submitting to Allaah with *tawbeed*”: and it is to single out Allaah the majestic and most high with worship, and this is the meaning of *tawbeed*. So whoever worships Allaah alone without attributing a partner to Him, then he has indeed submitted to Him.

His saying, “And yielding to Him, He the Perfect with obedience”: regarding whatever He has commanded you with and whatever He has forbidden you from. So whatever He commanded you with then you do it and whatever He forbids you from then you avoid it, in obedience to Allaah the Perfect and Most High.

His saying, "and freeing oneself from *shirk* and its people": freeing oneself means cutting off from and separating from and being far removed from *shirk* and from the people of *shirk*, such that you believe the falsity of *shirk* and keep away from it. And you believe in the obligation of having enmity towards the people of *shirk* because they are enemies to Allaah, the mighty and majestic, so therefore you do not take them as beloved friends and allies, rather you take them as enemies because they are enemies to Allaah and to his Messenger and to His religion so therefore you do not have love for them and you do

not have love and alliance with them rather you cut off from them with regard to the religion and you distance yourself from them and you believe in the falseness of what they are upon so therefore you do not love them with your heart and you do not aid them with your sayings and your actions, because they are enemies to your Lord, and enemies to your religion so how can you have love and alliance with them when they are enemies of Islaam?

It is not sufficient that you submit to Allaah and yield to him with obedience but do not free yourself from *shirk* and nor from the people of *shirk*, this will not suffice, you will not be counted as being a Muslim until you have these characteristics:

Firstly: submitting to Allaah with *tawh^heed*.

Secondly: yielding to him with obedience

Thirdly: freeing oneself from that which opposes *tawh^heed* and that which opposes obedience and it is *shirk*.

Fourthly: freeing oneself from the people of *shirk*.

By actualising these characteristics you will be a Muslim, as for if you miss out on a single characteristic from them then you will not be a Muslim. So in these three words the Shaikh summarised the definition of Islaam and how many a person does not know the meaning of Islaam because he has not learned this thing, and if it were said to him, "What is Islaam?", he will not give you a correct response.

The Levels of the Religion

The First Level is Islaam

وهو ثلاثُ مراتبَ: الإسلامُ، والإيمانُ، والإحسانُ

And it is of three levels: *Al-Islaam*,²⁹ *Al-Eemaan* and *Al-Ihsaan*³⁰

[29]:

The meaning of levels is ascending levels because we have said Islaam is of three levels, some of them being higher than others. The first level from the levels of the religion is Islaam, then after it comes *eemaan*, then after it comes *ihsaan*. So therefore Islaam is broader, and *eemaan* is something more restricted than Islaam, and *ihsaan* is more restricted than *eemaan*.

So the sphere of Islaam is wide, the hypocrites, they enter within it if they outwardly comply with Islaam and they outwardly display it and they outwardly adhere to it. If they pray along with the Muslims and they give the *zakaat* and they do the outward actions, then they are called Muslims and the rulings of the Muslims apply upon them in this world, so they have whatever the Muslims have and upon them will be whatever is upon the Muslims. However in the Hereafter they will be in the lowest depths of the fire because they do not have *eemaan* rather they just have outward apparent Islaam only.

[30]:

His saying, "*Al-Eemaan*": this is the second level, and the people who have *eemaan* they vary in their levels so from them are *Al-Muqarraboona* (those who draw especially close through good deeds), and from them are *Al-Abraar* (the righteous ones). *Al-Muqarraboona* - they are the people of the highest of the levels, and *Al-Abraar* are lesser than them, and from them there are those who are the person who is one who wronged himself, and he is the one who commits major sins which are less than *shirk*. Then he is a sinful believer or he is a believer who is deficient in *eemaan*. He the Most High said:

﴿ ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ، وَمِنْهُمْ مُقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ يُأْتِنُ اللَّهَ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ ﴾ فاطر: ٣٢

Then we gave the Scripture as inheritance to those whom we chose from our servants so from them are those who wrong themselves and from them are those who take a middle course and from them are those who are foremost upon good deeds by the permission of Allaah, and that is the great bounty [35:32]

His saying, "*Al-Ihsaan*": this is the third level and it is *Al-Ihsaan*, and it is that the servant does well with regards to what is between him and Allaah, he does well in the worship of

Allaah the Mighty and Majestic. And the Prophet *sallaahu'alaibimasallam* mentioned *Al-Ihsaan*:

الإحسان أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه ، فإن لم تكن تراه فإنه يراك

“Al-Ihsaan is that you worship Allaah as if you are seeing him and even though you do not see him then he certainly sees you”³⁷

Meaning: you have certain knowledge that Allaah sees you wherever you may be.

³⁷ A part of the long hadeeth reported by al-Bukhaaree (50) and by Muslim (9 and 10) from a hadeeth of Aboo Hurayrah *radhiyallaahu'anh*

وكلُّ مرتبةٍ لها أركانٌ.

And every level has pillars.³¹

[31]:

His saying, "and every level has pillars": pillars is the plural of a pillar, and it is that which something stands upon.

So the pillars of something are its aspects which it stands upon, and it cannot stand without them, and they are within the thing itself, contrary to conditions, for they are outside the thing. For example the conditions of the prayer then they are outside the prayer and come before it. And as for the pillars of the prayer, then they are inside it such as the initial *takebeer* of the prayer and the recitation of al-Faatiḥah, so if anything from them is missing, then the prayer will not be correct, just as if there was something missing from the pillars which hold up a building then it will not stand and will not be supported.

The pillars of Islaam

The testification that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allaah. Its meaning and its proof.

فَأركانُ الإسلامِ خمسةٌ: شهادةُ أن لا إلهَ إلا اللهُ، وأنَّ محمدًا رسولُ اللهِ، وإقامُ الصلاةِ، وإيتاءُ الزكاةِ،
وصومُ رمضانَ، وحجُّ بيتِ اللهِ الحرامِ.

So the pillars of Islaam are five, the testification that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allaah, and establishing the prayer, and giving the zakaat and fasting Ramaḍaan and performing Hajj to Allaah's sacred house

[32]:

Islaam will not stand except with these pillars, if they are missing than Islaam will not be upright and the rest of the acts of obedience are matters of completion for these pillars. All the actions of obedience and all good deeds are all actions of completion of these pillars and therefore when Jibreel *'alaibissalaam* asked Allaah's Messenger *sallaahu'alaibivasallam* in the presence of the Companions saying:

أخبرني عن الإسلام ، قال : الإسلام أن تشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمدا رسول الله ، وتقيم الصلاة ، وتؤتي الزكاة ، وتصوم رمضان ، وتحج البيت إن استطعت إليه سبيلا

“Inform me about Islaam. He replied: Islaam is that you bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allaah, and that you establish the prayer and that you give the *zakaat* and that you fast Ramaḍaan and that you perform Hajj to the house if you are able to make your way to it”³⁸

So he explained Islaam to be these five pillars, however the hadeeth of Ibn ‘Umar makes it clear that these five are the foundations of Islaam so he *sallaahu'alaibivasallam* said:

بني الإسلام على خمس

"Islaam is built upon five"³⁹

Meaning: that these five are not the whole of Islaam rather they are its pillars and its foundations which it rests upon and the rest of the legislated matters are things which perfect and complete these pillars.

³⁸ The reference for this has preceeded.

³⁹ Reported by al-Bukhaaree (8) and by Muslim (16) from a hadeeth of Ibn ‘Umar *radhiyallaahu'ambu*