Revealing Of The Five Pillars In Islam

The house of Islamic practice stands on the five pillars in the words of Prophet Muhammad. The first pillar, Shahadah, is to utter the creed of Islam and in this action decare the belief in the onesness of God and on Muhammad as His final prophet. The second pillar, Salat, is the daily prescribed prayers and it is obligatory for Muslims to perform the prayers five times each day. The third pillar, Zakat, is paying alms as charity and is a treated in Islam as a religious obligation or tax. The fourth pillar, Sawm, is fasting in the duration of Ramadan from dawn until dusk. The fifth pillar, Hajj, is the pilgrimage to Mecca, and is a journey that every sane adult Muslim must undertake at least once in their lives if they can afford it and are physically able.

Through the shahadah, adherents distance themselves from all false gods, images, forces and power sources that require submission by instilling fear or offering an incentive. When an adherent says ‘laa ilaha’ (there is no god) - rejection of all these false deities of devotion and the adherent gains freedom. This detachment makes a person agnostic to all false gods and equidistant to everything that is trying to control them. By stating ‘laa ilaha’, one rids him or herself from the fears and the pretence of life and starts to see the reality that there is only one true god (belief in the oneness of God). With this realisation the adherent states ‘illallah’ (except the God). Therefore the first pillar, Shahadah is significant for Muslim believers as it connects them to one of the major key beliefs of Islam (the oneness of God).

In Salat, the human being, as a servant of God, being aware of his or her limitations, weakness and poverty, prostrates themselves in love and wonderment before the perfection of God’s Lordship, Majesty and Compassion. The essence of worship is to glorify, exalt and praise God with the heart, tongue and body. The Salat detaches a worshipper from the daily affairs that would make one forget God. It is also a detachment from the pride of ego as Salat humbles a person before God. Hence, the fundamental benefit of Salat for the worshipper is that it enables a person to have an intimate relationship with God that no other single act can. Salat also highlights the belief and requirement of submission, which is key to the islamic faith.

In the third pillar, Sawm, fasting is an act of worship commanded by God in the Qur’an in order to attain taqwa (state of piety and righteousness), a state that God loves to see in humans. There are three results of fasting for the adherents of Islam according to verses 2:183 and 2:185. These results are Taqwa (learning self-restraint), Takbir (exalting God through display of devotion), and Shukr (being grateful and thankful). There are two worship aspects of fasting which recognises God and how God has blessed humans. The first is acknowledging the existence, and ownership by God, of thousands of blessings on earth, and the second is the demonstration of true thanksgiving. The price of sustenance received from God is to express our gratitude and thankfulness. Fasting detaches the worshipper from the physical desires and emotional impulses. Therefore, the fundamental spiritual benefit of fasting is to exercise the will-power and attain self-control. Therefore, the third pillar, Sawm, is significant to adherents as it highlights the key belief of commitment and submission to God.

The spectrum of charity starts with the giving of a small rate of obligatory alms (Zakat) to help the poor and needy, and extends to any act of giving including kindness towards animals or helping someone do their chores. In the words of Prophet Muhammad, even smiling at

someone is an act of charity. Zakat is spending what has been bestowed by God, in the amount and places designated by Him, for the sole purpose of physical and spiritual purification. If Zakat is not separated from one's wealth, it corrupts one's wealth. Zakat's significance for worship rests on the nature of poverty and richness. God Almighty is the only true provider and sustainer of life, yet God does not directly hand out sustenance into the hands of creatures. The driving motive behind all animal and human activity is the need to earn one's living. By accepting to pay Zakat by the command of God in the Qur'an, a Muslim acknowledges that God is the true owner of the wealth. A Muslim also acknowledges that ther is enough sustenance on earth to meet the needs of all living things and sees zakat as a means to distribute that sustenance more evenly. This is also a means of test for rich and poor - will rich show compassion and help less fortunate and will poor be thankful and patient regardless of circumstances. Zakat detaches the worshipper from wealth sets and frees the spiritual attention of on towards eternity and Eternal God. Detachment from wealth can only occur if one believes what is in possession is in reality owned by God and gives a portion of that to other less fortunate people. The result is a spiritual transformation where the worshipper learns not to be selfish and becomes compassionate towards other fellow human beings, especially when combined with fasting. Therefore, the fourth pillar, Zakat, is significant to adherents as it promotes them to display characteristics of God, such as compassion to the poor.

In the duration of Hajj, or Pilgrimage, Muslims exalt God by showing up in mass, as though saying 'You are greater than myself and are above the whole of humanity; here we are ready to worship You in mass'. Pilgrims glorify God by going around the Ka'bah, as though saying 'just as we are circling the one and only Ka'bah', the oldest place of worship on earth, we only obey You the Absolute One worthy of worship'. Pilgrims praise God through the collective (du'a) and remembrance of God in the plains of Mt Arafat. The pilgrimage is more than just a matter of connecting with the historical legacy of Islam, it is a form of collective worship. It is a way of establishing a connection with the monotheism and its human legacy symbolised by Prophet Abraham and the first human and first prophet, Adam, respectively. Believers also obey the call of God by turning up in their millions at the time of pilgrimage. The central aims of worship; exalting, glorifying and praising God occur individually and collectively. Hajj enables a Muslim to realise the university of Islam as one sees Muslims from all over the world from all nationalities and races. A pilgrim develops an acute sense of equality of human beings in practice rather than just theory. Therefore, the fifth pillar, Hajj, is significant to adherents as it allows adherents to unify and address the key islamic beliefs of commitment to God, submission to God, Peace, and surrendering him/herself to God.

The five pillars are significant for Muslims as they create the foundation for Islam by highlighting the paradigm beliefs, and providing ethical routines, practices and rituals. All of these five pillars work collaboratively to allow the adherents to achieve the primary goal of complete submission physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually to God.