

The Five Doctrines of Islamic Faith (إيمان *Īmān*)

["The Messenger of Allāh (may the blessings and peace of Allāh be upon him) said: ... "*Īmān*¹] is that you should believe in Allāh, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day, and that you should believe in divine destiny, both the good and the evil thereof."

1. Faith (in the absolute unity [*tawhīd*] of God—no Jesus as God's Son, no Trinity. Idolatry, that is, "associating" anyone [like Jesus] with God is the one unforgivable sin and is called *shirk*, "associating").
2. Belief in Angels.
"Muslims are supposed to believe that angels exist and that they are used by God to perform His will. One of their duties is to watch over individual human beings and keep a record of all their actions. The most famous angel is Gabriel, who served as an intermediary between God and Muḥammad in the revelation of the Qur'ān. Another important figure is Iblis, who used to be the chief of all angels but was punished for disobeying God by being cast out of heaven. After that he was turned into Satan and now not only rules Hell but also tries to tempt human beings from the path of goodness."²
3. Prophets and Their Scriptures.
Islam sees itself in continuity with the great spiritual leaders of the past (such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus). Muslims believe that, just as God gave the Qur'ān to Prophet Muḥammad, God earlier gave books to other prophets. Moses (Mūsa) was given the *Tawrāt* (Torah), David (Dāwūd) was given the *Zabūr* (the Psalms), and Jesus (ʿĪsā) was given the *Injīl* ("Evangel," "Gospel"). But the Jews and Christians have corrupted their Scriptures [*tahrīf*, "corruption"] (altering them, omitting things from them, adding things to them), so that the Jewish and Christian Scriptures as they now exist cannot be trusted. The Qur'ān, in contrast, is completely uncorrupted, so that every word in it is exactly what God revealed long ago to Prophet Muḥammad.
4. Final Judgment (that there will be a Judgment Day when all people will be rewarded or punished for their actions).
5. Divine Decree and Predestination (*al-qadā wa 'l-qadar* القضاء والقدر).
Basically, this refers to the belief that God controls what happens (including who goes to heaven and who goes to hell), but at the same time there is (limited) free will and individual moral responsibility.

¹*Īmān* is generally rendered as "religious belief" or "faith."

²J. J. Elias, *Islam* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1999) 64.