

IN THIS ISSUE

ISLAM IS BUILT ON FIVE

SPRING REGISTRATION IS OPEN

DR SALAH AL-SAWY: TAFSEER SURAH AL IMRAN

ISLAM IS BUILT ON FIVE

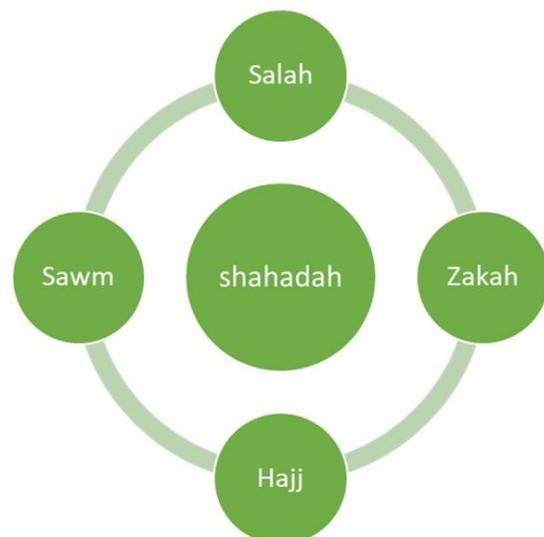
This is the third hadith in our monthly series by our dear student Dr Neelofer Sohail on the 40 Hadith of Imam Nawawi. These short reflections are written under the guidance of our instructor Dr Muhammad Al-Rahawan. Dr Neelofer is in her second year at Mishkah, and is geriatric physician, a wife and a mother of 3 beautiful children.

HADITH 3: "ISLAM IS BUILT ON FIVE"

A strong foundation is the support that maintains the integrity of any structure. Similarly, this hadith teaches us the importance of the **five obligatory arkaan or foundations upon which Islam is built**. The most important part of any foundation is the first stone that is laid down or in this case the central theme around which everything revolves. In Islam, it is the shahada. But haven't we all said the shahadah, and aren't we all Muslims? So what is the big deal? How come atheism is becoming so popular in the Muslim world? These are all valid questions and the answer is that either we were born Muslims and a family member said the shahada at birth, or if we reverted, it was verbalized to enter into the fold of Islam. But the inability to understand and assimilate this comprehensive statement, has led to doubt and deficiency in our faith. Then what follows is the collapse of the rest of the pillars, which are practical implications of that central pillar.

The shahada is the "key to paradise" but a key cannot open a door without ridges. These ridges are the conditions of shahada which are seven to nine in number. **Al-ilm or knowledge** is the first condition, which means to understand the significance and negation of this statement in our heart and mind. It negates the taking of anything in worship with Allah, be it prophets, saints, duas, money, family, or fame etc. It also means that we believe that Prophet Muhammed (saw) has brought us the complete deen without any deficiency. Surah Al Hujurat, verse 15, states, *"The true believers are only those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and afterwards doubt not."*

The second condition is the **certainty of the heart**. This certainty should be without any doubt about the meaning of the statement. This doubt is a disease of the heart that can lead us astray. The practice of tazkiyah or purification of our heart and soul can help us develop this certainty. One way to gain tazkiyah



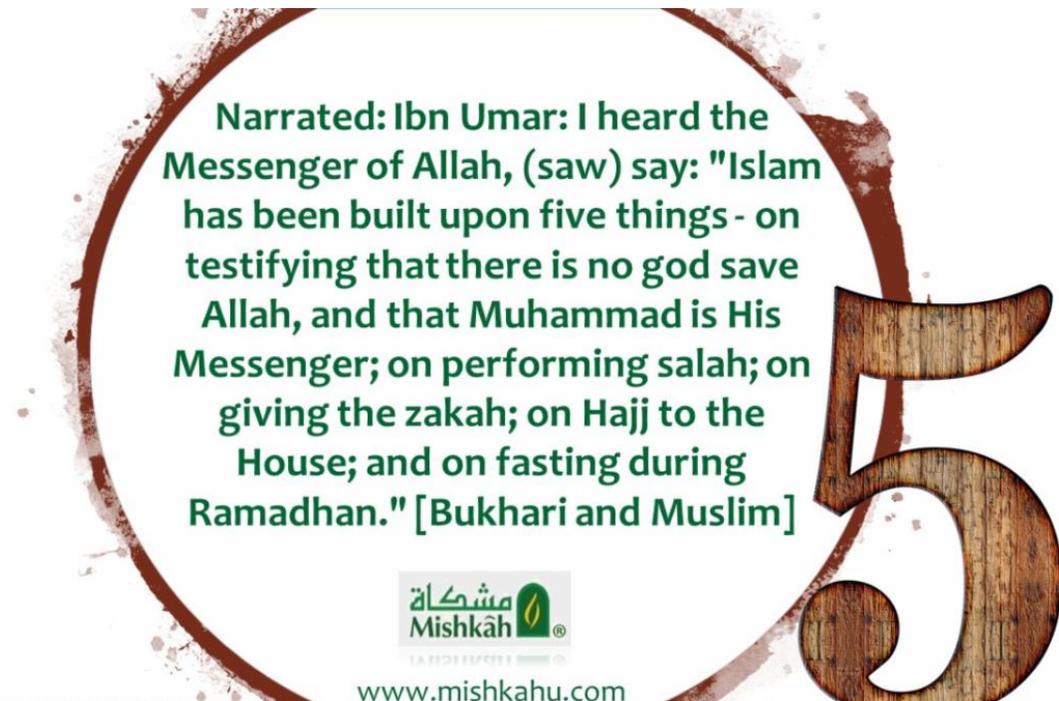
is to practice the art of mindfulness in the nature around us and contemplate on its significance.

The next condition is, acceptance or **qabool** by the heart and tongue. This is that level of iman that can be challenging to most of us, as this requires the control of our nafs and desires, in submissiveness to the will and command of Allah and His Messenger. This leads us into the next stage of **submission or inqiyad** which is what Islam means in its truest sense. The hypocrites of Madinah also said the shahada but did it guarantee them paradise? One has to be truthful in uttering this statement with the intention of seeking only Allah's pleasure.

All the above conditions cannot be met if one is not sincere or **have ikhlas**, since all actions are based on intention. The love or mahabba of Allah and His Messenger should not equate with the love of anything or anyone. It is a love that transcends everything.

Another condition that is already stated in the statement is **denying taghut (false idols)**. Currently many people believe in the power of amulets, charms, saints and magic, which though seemingly innocent is akin to giving partnership to Allah, which is shirk. Surah Ale-Imran: 102, states, "O Believers, observe your duty to Allah with right observance, and die not save as Muslims."

Let us adhere to the shahada and renew it in this time of religious crisis with purity, sincerity and understanding until death.



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DR SALAH AS-SAWY: TAFSEER SERIES SURAH AL-IMRAN 153

If you are an Arabic speaker, we hope that you have been benefiting from **Dr Salah Al-Sawy's** lectures which are shared almost daily on our Facebook page. These short lectures touch on various topics, and also include question and answer sessions highlighting important issues facing Muslims today.

Dr Salah has been continuing his tafseer series and his latest lecture was on **Surah Al-Imran ayat 153**. Related to the Battle of Uhud, Allah, Most High, tells us in this ayat, *"Recall when you were fleeing without casting even a side glance at anyone, and the Messenger was calling out to you from the rear. Then Allah requited you by inflicting grief after grief upon you so as to instruct you neither to grieve for the losses you might suffer nor for the afflictions that might befall you. Allah knows all that you do."*

You can watch the video by clicking on the image below inshaAllah. Please be sure to visit our Facebook page to watch many other lessons from our dear Sheikh.



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