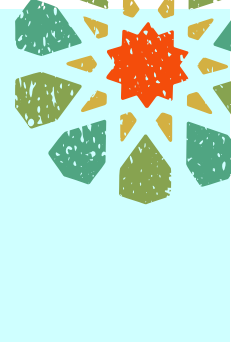





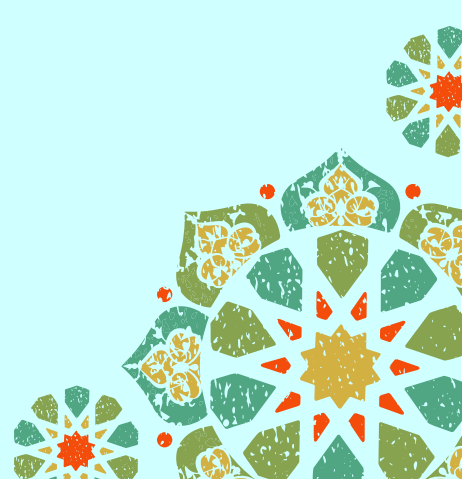
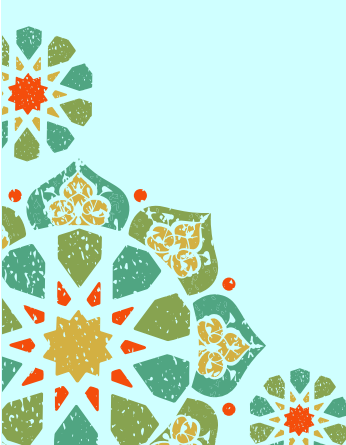
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# Living the “Shahadah,” Statement of Faith



“I testify that there is no deity except for the One True God, Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.” The statement of faith by which a person enters Islam is the declaration of worshipping God exclusively and believing in the Messenger Muhammad as the model and example in devotion to God. This testimony is not a cliché, rather it is a code by which a Muslim should live and conduct themselves.

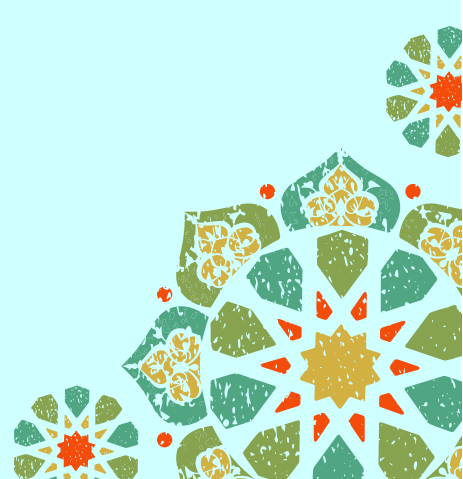
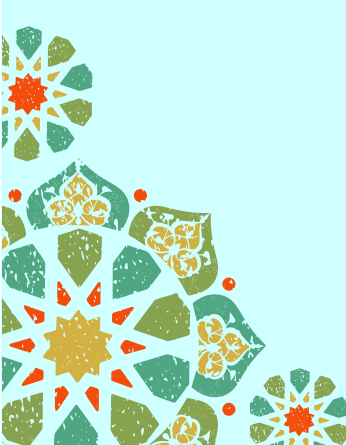




## **The Power of the Statement of Faith**

This testimony is what separates a believer from a non-believer. It is upon this basis that God will ultimately judge people and decide who gains His reward or punishment. In making this statement, we acknowledge God's power, supremacy and perfection. We attest that He alone is the Creator, Provider and Sustainer of the universe, and thus, He alone is worthy of worship and devotion. We further acknowledge that we were created for the purpose of His worship and obedience.

In order to achieve this purpose of worshipping God alone and to do so in the manner He ordained, God sent to us a Messenger as a guide, and gave him the scripture that contains all we need to fulfil this testimony. God sent every people a Messenger as a guide and sent some of them scriptures. The last of these guides was the Messenger Muhammad. In the statement of faith, we accept him as God's final messenger, we believe in him and what he brought, and we follow his teachings and example in order to gain God's reward and favor.

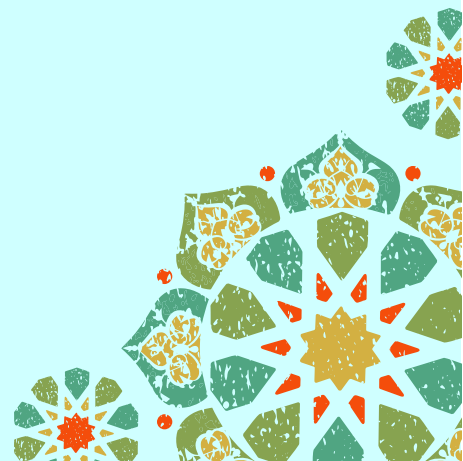
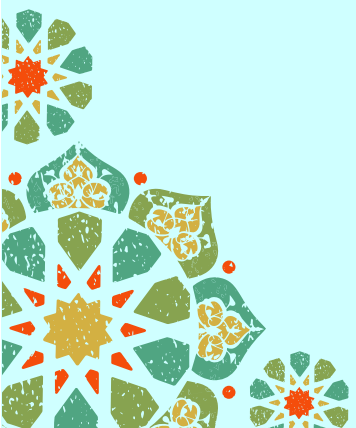






## **What Happens after the “Shahadah”?**

Once the declaration of the statement of faith is made, we become Muslims. The power of the testimony of faith is that we now have clarity as to what it is that we need to do in this life. We know what God has allowed and disallowed and therefore what gains His pleasure or anger. Islam means to submit to God’s commands, so we live our lives in accordance with God’s laws and teachings. We should work, strive and sacrifice to do this, because in this way, God will bless us in this life and the next. God has promised those who do so His ultimate reward of Paradise in which there is eternal bliss.

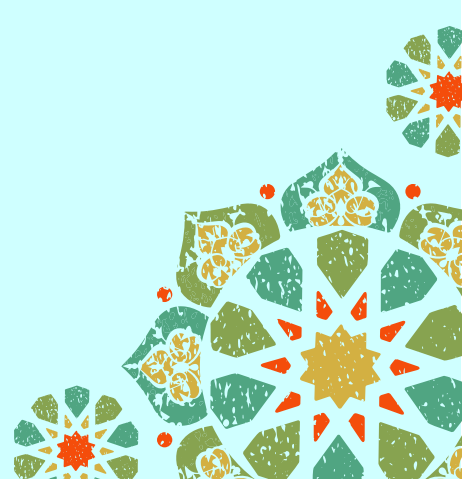
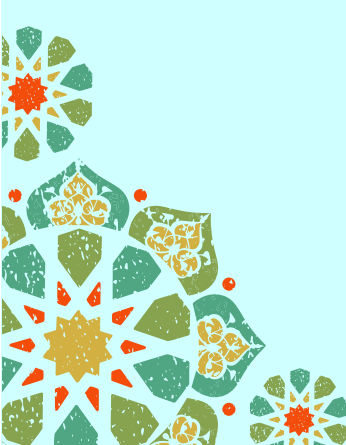




## **Practicing Islam with Purpose**

Islam is not just a theory or a set of private ideals that one keeps in their heart. Rather, the roots of Islam begin in the heart then should manifest in our speech and actions. Islam is a combination of proper belief and righteous deeds as God mentions numerous times in the Quran. God has obligated upon us certain actions and prohibited us from others. Our first and main goal in life is to please God, and therefore we should give priority to God's teachings before our own desires and wants.

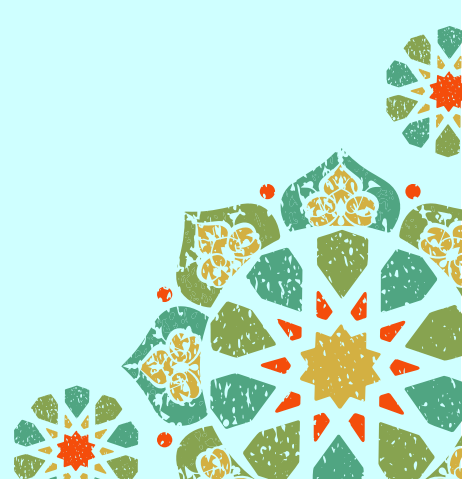
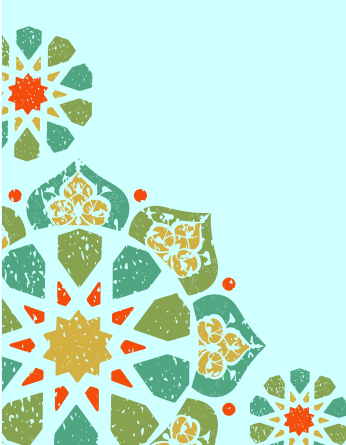
Islam is made up of both beliefs and actions. A Muslim should offer the five daily prescribed ritual devotions, give charity on their savings annually, fast the month of Ramadan and make the pilgrimage to Mecca once in a lifetime if they are able to physically and financially. A Muslim should respect elders, have compassion for youngsters, be good to others, and have good character. A Muslim should refrain from harming others and oppressing them. A Muslim should not lie, cheat, backbite or steal. A Muslim should respect the rights of others just as they expect their rights to be respected.





## **Seeking Knowledge in Islam**

God gave us the Quran and the teachings of the Messenger Muhammad. These sources contain what we need to know to have a proper relationship with God. They tell us who God is and what He expects from His servants. Learning Islam answers how to worship God and what pleases Him. It is not up to each Muslim to make things up as they go along, or guess what they should do. Rather, God clarified all of this through His Messenger Muhammad so that there can be no confusion or doubt. This is why Islam stresses the importance of seeking knowledge and attaches many rewards to it. Indeed, the first words revealed of the Quran was a command to recite, read and learn.

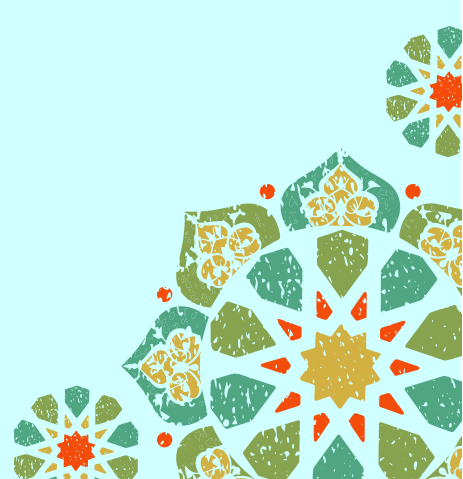
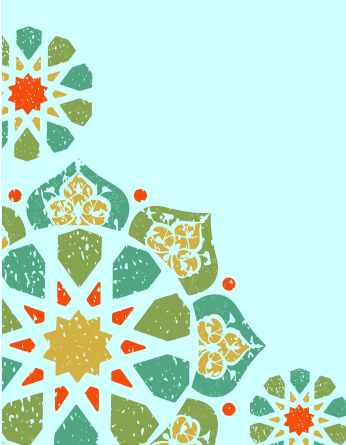




## **Facing Challenges with Resilience**

God tells us in the Quran that life in general and the path to His pleasure in specific is one that has challenges. Satan is our avowed enemy and is there to try to misguide us. This world is full of temptations that can distract us from our true purpose. So, we have to be strong and resilient. We have to persevere and show determination. God tells us many stories in the Quran of the endurance and resilience of those before us so that we can learn from their example.

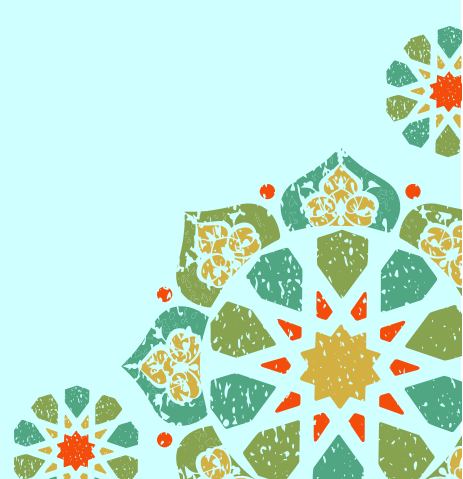
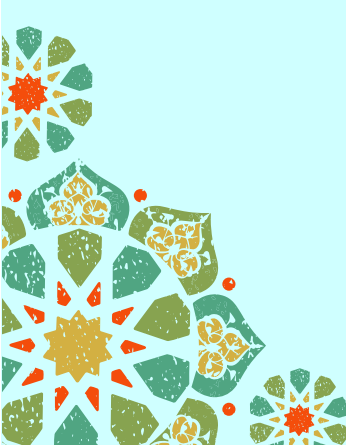
We have to remember and constantly remind ourselves of our purpose. Life is short and the true life for the believer starts after death, the Hereafter, an eternal life. In the event that we forget and fall in sin, by disobeying God, we must remember His mercy and kindness, and rush back to Him with repentance and seeking forgiveness. We must do as many acts of righteousness as possible in the time we have in this life.





## **The Pure Intention Spectrum**

Having a pure intention is one of the greatest and most virtuous deeds. It is to do all acts of worship only to seek God's pleasure, and not for anyone or anything else. People vary greatly when it comes to purity of intention as intentions can often be overlooked, mixed or corrupted. Remember that God not only sees our apparent actions, but also knows what we hide and conceal in our hearts. Before any action, take a moment to remember God and ensure that in your heart, the action is only to attain His reward and pleasure and not for any other purpose.





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