**Crucial Questions in the Life of a Muslim**

 From where does a Muslim take his creed and faith?

 The Muslim takes his creed and faith from the Book of Allah [the Qur’an] and the authentic Sunnah of His Prophet (sal-lal-laahu alaihi wa sal-lam), who does not speak of his own desire, rather [as Allah says]: “It is only revelation revealed.” [53:4]. These two sources should be understood according to the understanding of the companions (Sÿahÿaabah), and the righteous predecessors.

 What should Muslims refer to in case they differ?

 Muslims must refer back to the Islamic law, since this is what was mentioned in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (sal-lal-laahu alaihi wa sal-lam). Allah ( subhanahu wa ta‘ala ) said: “…then if you differ in any matter, refer it to Allah and the Messenger...” [4:59] The Prophet (sal-lal-laahu alaihi wa sal-lam) said: “I have left two things among you which if you adhere to, you will never go astray: the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet.” (Ahmad)

 Which of the sects will be the one that will be saved on the Day of Resurrection?

The Prophet (sal-lal-laahu alaihi wa sal-lam) said : “My Ummah (nation) will split into seventy three sects, all of which will go to Hellfire, except for one.” His companions asked: “Which one is that O Messenger of Allah?” He replied: “The one that will be upon the way of me and my companions.” (at-Tirmidhi) Thus the truth and the correct path is the way of the Prophet (sal-lal-laahu alaihi wa sal-lam) and his companions (radiyaAllahu anhum ). Therefore, if one wishes to be saved on the Day of Judgment and desires that one’s deeds be accepted by Allah, one must adhere strictly to the way of the Prophet (sal-lal-laahu alaihi wa sal-lam) and his companions (radiyaAllahu anhum ) and avoid all innovations in religious matters.

 What are the conditions for righteous deeds to be accepted?

The conditions for righteous deeds to be accepted are as follows:

1) Correct belief in Allah and maintaining Tawheed, as Allah does not accept any deed from one who commits shirk.

 2) Purity of intention, by doing good deeds for the sake of Allah alone . 3)Following the example of the Prophet (sal-lal-laahu alaihi wa sal-lam).

The person should perform the deed in the exact manner explained by the Prophet (sal-lal-laahu alaihi wa sal-lam). One should only worship Allah through those things specifically legislated in the religion. If one of these three conditions is missing, then the deed is unacceptable. Allah ( subhanahu wa ta‘ala) ) said: “And We shall turn to whatever deeds they did (in this life), and We shall make such deeds as floating dust scattered about.” [25:23]

 How many levels are there in the religion of Islam?

There are three levels in the religion of Islam. Islam, Iman and Ihsan.

 What is ‘Islam’, and how many pillars does it have?

‘Islam’ is: Submission to Allah, by believing in Tawheed, Compliance to his orders, by obeying Him, Avoiding and absolving oneself from all forms of polytheism and idolatry, as well as those who commit them. The pillars of Islam are five, as mentioned in the narration of the Prophet (sal-lal-laahu alaihi wa sal-lam): “Islam is built on five [pillars]: To testify that none is rightfully worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (Laa Ilaaha Ill-Allah, Muhammad-ur-RasoolAllah), to establish the Salah (prayers), to offer the Zakaah (obligatory charity), to perform Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) and to fast the month of Ramadan.” (al-Bukhari and Muslim).

 What is ‘Iman’, and how many pillars does it have?

 ‘Iman’ is: Belief and conviction in the heart, speech of the tongue and action of the limbs. Iman increases by performing good deeds and decreases by committing sins.

Allah ( subhanahu wa ta‘ala ) said : “Verily, We have sent you (O Muhammad) as a witness, as a bearer of glad tidings, and as a warner.” [48:8] The Prophet (sal-lal-laahu alaihi wa sal-lam): said: “Iman is seventy odd branches: the highest is to say that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah (Laa Ilaaha Ill-Allah), the lowest is to remove harm from the path; and modesty is a branch of Iman.” (Muslim) What supports this fact is the enthusiasm which a Muslim feels in seasons of good deeds [such as Ramadan and Hajj] and the slackening a Muslim feels upon committing sins. Allah ( subhanahu wa ta‘la) says : “Indeed good deeds do away with the evil ones.” [11:114] Iman has six pillars, as mentioned in the hadith of the Prophet (sal-lal-laahu alaihi wa sal-lam) : “Iman is to believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Day of Judgment, and Qadar (Divine Measure) and what it brings of good or evil.” (al-Bukhari).