

Difference between Momin and Muslim | Dr Muhammad Salah

- ❖ Fahim from Sweden: he inquired about the difference between a Mumin and a Muslim.

We find in [Ayat Number 14 of Sura Al-Hujurat](#), Allah (SwT.) addresses the **Bedouins** who lived in the dessert and they apparently accepted Islam but Iman or faith and belief had not settled in their hearts. It said:

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا ۗ قُل لَّهِ تَوَكَّلُوا وَلَكِن قَوْلُوا اسْلَمْنَا وَلَهَا يَنْزِلُ الْإِيمَانُ
فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ وَإِن تُطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَا يَلِتْكُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْئًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

-Some of the Bedouins say, "We believe." Say, O Prophet, "You have not believed. But say, 'We have submitted,' for faith has not yet entered your hearts. But if you obey Allah and His Messenger wholeheartedly; He will not discount anything from the reward of your deeds. Allah is truly All-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

The Bedouins said, "We believe", so Allah corrected them by saying **rather say we just accepted Islam**. And you become believers or settles in your faith. So, **Al-Iman represents the inner part of the Deen and Al-Islam represents the outer part of the Deen**.

In the Hadith of Jibrael (As.) while he asks Prophet (Sm.) tell me about Islam, Iman and Ihsan. He said, "To worship Allah Alone and none else, to offer prayers perfectly to pay the compulsory charity (Zakat) and to observe fasts during the month of Ramadan."

The five pillars of the Deen. These are all outer Ibadat, the outer part. Whenever you do them, you'll be seen. He's praying then he's a Muslim, he's fasting during the Ramadan he's a Muslim, you can only go to Hajj if you're a Muslim, a woman is wearing a hijab then she's a Muslimah.

But a person may do that and he's not indeed a Muslim, maybe he's a Munafiq. **Like this FBI Agent, informant, who pretended to be a Muslim in California and he was planted in the community in Orange County for three years. And finally, he broke up and he confessed everything. So, he was praying "Ashhadu an la ilaha illallah, wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan Rasulullah" only by the tongue. But the Iman did not even touch his heart, did not cross his mind.** So, he prayed, he fasted, as a part of his job, in order to entrap some Muslim youth, which he did. He had to fast; he had to enter the Masjid.

Abd Allāh ibn 'Ubayy ibn Salūl, for almost whole decade, used to pray behind the Prophet (Sm.) and used to listen to his beautiful recitation. Can you imagine? **But he was the head of the Munafiqun.**

So, there is a very important equation we need to keep in mind. Whenever Iman is mentioned separately, then it means Iman and Islam. And it refers to Islam as well, to the Deen.

يَأْتِيهَا الدِّينَ ءَامِنُونَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

-O believers! Be mindful of Allah in the way He deserves, and do not die except in a state of full submission to Him.

And whenever Islam is mentioned independently, then it refers Islam and Iman altogether.

“Verily the only religion accepted to Allah is Islam”

So, **Islam here is a big umbrella that covers Islam, Iman and Ihsan.** And whenever Iman and Islam are mentioned altogether then each one has its own independent meaning. So, Islam would refer to the outer part of the Ibadat and Iman would refer to the inner part of the Ibadat.

Very interesting hadith: **When prophet (sm.), about Abu Bakr (Ra.), when he was speaking about his virtues: the best man in this ummah after Prophet (Sm.) was Abu Bakr (Ra.)**

(Imam Ahmad in his Musnad, 839)

Abu Bakr (Ra.) was not ahead of any as far as Iman and faith because of extra praying or extra fasting rather it was something settled in his heart. **The level of Iman in Abu Bakr's**

heart was higher the level of Iman in anybody else's heart. And that's why he was superior to the rest of the ummah. So, this is the meaning of a Mumin and a Muslim.

Al Iman is an out course of faith: to believe in Allah, His Books, His Angels, Messengers, Last Day, Pre-Ordainments as stated in the Hadith when Jibrael (As.) came and asked him (Prophet (Sm.)) **the 2nd question** (What is Iman?):

فَأْتَاهُ جِبْرِيلُ فَقَالَ مَا الْإِيمَانُ قَالَ " الْإِيمَانُ أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَبِلِقَائِهِ
وَرُسُلِهِ، وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْبَعْثِ " .

-(The angel) Gabriel came and asked, "What is faith?". Allah's Messenger (Sm.) replied, 'Faith is to believe in Allah, His angels, (the) meeting with Him, His Apostles, and to believe in Resurrection.'

(Sahih al-Bukhari 50, Book 2, Hadith 43)