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See also: APPORTIONMENT; DIVINE DECREE; FRIENDS OF ALLAH; HEREAFTER; JUDGMENT; PROPHETS; RESURRECTION.

GIBRIL FOUAD HADDAD

BELIEF

ĪMĀN

This article comprises the following sections: i. Definitions and Usage; ii. The Six Pillars of Belief; iii. Meaning of the Six Pillars; iv. Integrality of Each and Every Pillar; v. Categories and Levels of Belief; vi. The Difference between *Islām*, *Īmān* and *Iḥsān*; vii. Does Belief

Increase and Decrease?; viii. Is Belief Created?; ix. Meaning of the Branches of Faith; x. Interpretation of Texts that Negate the Belief of Certain People; xi. Bibliography.

Definitions and Usage

The word *īmān* is an infinitive noun (*maṣdar*) whose agential noun (*ism al-fā'il*) is *mu'min(a)*. Allah Most High said, *It is not for any believer, man or woman (mu'min/immīna), when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter, to have choice in the affair* (Q 33:36). Its root ²-m-n denotes two meanings that are germane, trustfulness and confirmation (*taṣdīq*) (Ibn Fāris, 1:133, sub ²-m-n): Allah Most High said, *And among the People of the Book there is he who, if you entrust him (ta'manhu) with a hundredweight, will return it to you; and among them there is he who, if you entrust him with a single coin, will not return it to you unless you constantly demand it of him* (Q 3:75); and He said, as spoken by the brothers of Yūsuf when they addressed their father Ya'qūb, upon both of them peace, *but you will not believe (bi-mu'min) us* (Q 12:17). What is meant by belief (*īmān*) in this article, however, is the second meaning, following the definition adopted by the vast majority of Ash'arīs and Māturīdīs (al-Bājūrī, *Sharḥ Jawharat al-tawḥīd*, sub v. 18) as well as "Textualists" (Atharīs) (Saffārīnī, *Lawāmi'*, 1:57, 1:403; *Lawā'ih*, 2:277, 2:288), i.e. the majority of Muslims. The Qur'ān uses both meanings for *īmān* 45 times and 536 times as verbal forms, out of a total of 811 times in which the cognates of ²-m-n occur, the rest being forms of the noun *mu'min*, "Believer" (*q.v.*).

Īmān can also refer to the physical enactment of what belief makes incumbent. As the major jurist and legal theorist of Egypt and Syria 'Izz al-Dīn 'Abd al-'Azīz b. 'Abd al-Salām al-Sulamī (577-660/1181-1262) said: "The Arabs transfer the name of the cause of fruition to its fruit, where the cause of fruition is belief and the fruit is deeds, so the name of belief is applied to deeds metaphorically" (*Ma'nā al-īmān wal-islām* p. 9). The Qur'ān has applied this transference and used the word *īmān* to refer to prayer in the verse, *and never would Allah let your faith go to waste* (Q 2:143) as well as to acts of obedience by the heart, the tongue, the limbs, and the body: *Those only are believers (mu'minūn) whose hearts quake when Allah is mentioned, and when His signs are recited to them it increases them in faith (īmānan), and who put their trust in their Lord; who establish the prayer and spend of what We have bestowed on them* (Q 8:2-3). Here, He describes acts of the heart (quaking and reliance) as well as of the limbs