

## The First Pillar: Shahada

The first Pillar of Islam is called *shahada*. It is a brief prayer proclaiming the oneness of God and faith in Islam. Children memorize the shahada, an action which introduces them into the Islamic community. The shahada simply states:

“There is no God but Allah,  
and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.”

الله الله محمد رسول الله

Here is the shahada written in Arabic. (Like Hebrew, Arabic is written from right to left.)

Arabic was Muhammad’s native tongue, the language in which he claimed to have received the *Koran*. Many devout Muslims from outside Arabic-speaking countries will learn the language in order to read the *Koran* in its original form. In fact, some Muslims consider any translation of the scripture totally unacceptable. Here is a map of Arabic-speaking countries.

