

Equality in Islam

There is also no institutional hierarchy in Islam. There is also no division of people into the classes of clergy and laymen. The relationship between the human being and God is direct, devoid of the need for any institutional or individual intermediaries. There are no holy symbols to wear and no holy dress in Islam. The individual is known and respected for his or her knowledge and obedience to God.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab and a non-Arab has no superiority over an Arab; a white person has no superiority over a black person, nor does a black person have superiority over a white person – except by piety and good action."

Islamic scholarship is a right for everyone, man or woman, old or young and is an obligation on the community as a whole. Thus, Islam has no conflict between religious and public life, no tolerance for creating a hierarchy of worshippers and no class or person to act as mediators between the human being and his Master, God.

The Islamic concept of worship is simple and practical for the human being. It satisfies the instinct to worship and provides direction in all affairs. It is a simple kind of worship the world is in need of today.



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Worship in Islam

INFORMATION GUIDE



Worship is the relationship between the human being and God and it has two aspects.

Aspects of Islam

One aspect is the sanctification through specific acts of worship, such as prayer. The other is the adherence to God's laws in life's affairs, such as being truthful, ensuring the rights of others are upheld, respecting one's parents and so on. Worship, understood as sanctification and obedience, was the theme of all the Prophets sent to mankind, from Adam to Muhammad, though the specific rules revealed to each prophet and his followers varied.

The actions of worship sanctify the human being and are the means by which we satisfy the instinct of worship.

The message of Islam establishes worship on five basic obligations

- 1 › The utterance of the testimony that there is no deity worthy of worship but God and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God. This is the basis of Islam in its entirety.
- 2 › The establishment of the prayer by both the individual and the community.
- 3 › The payment of an annual charity, a financial obligation owed by Muslims, above a wealth threshold, on specific capital or wealth they possess.
- 4 › Fasting during the month of Ramadan.
- 5 › The pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj) once in a lifetime for those with the means to do so.

Through these actions, the human being worships the Creator and makes the earning of God's pleasure our supreme goal. One places God as their Master and recognises oneself as the servant of God, liberating oneself from the bondage to anything else. An intention with sincerity is what transforms these actions from merely superficial rituals into acts of worship, devotion and gratitude to the Creator.

Therefore, the intention must be to worship God for His sake and no-one else's. These acts of worship are fixed and not subject to change because they were revealed in the last message to humanity, Islam.

Islam and other religions

Unlike other religions, Islam does not accept the notion that there is a conflict between matter and spirit in the human being. Spirituality in Islam is to make the commands and prohibitions of God the basis for one's actions.

Thus, earning wealth, getting married and wearing nice clothes are done in accordance with divine law, again, for the sake of God. Since there is no conflict between material and spirit, Islam does not create a conflict within the human being by compelling him to neglect the needs and instincts that should be satisfied. Rather, Islam directs the person to satisfy them, not suppress them, in a lawful manner based on the commandments of God.

Islam looks to the human being as having been born free of sin. In fact, a person is not accountable until reaching the age of puberty and is of sound mind. This Islamic perspective directly contrasts the Christian concept of original sin, which describes man as being inherently sinful, carrying the 'sin' of Adam from generation to generation.

From the Islamic viewpoint, every human being is responsible for his or her own actions and no soul will bear the burden of another. God is Just, Merciful and Forgiving and commands only repentance from His Creation in order to be forgiven, without the need for the atoning sacrifice of anyone else.

