

Acts of Worship

The Arabic term used for Acts of worship is Ibaadah. This does not mean worship. It means service. To serve God in the manner in which He has commanded his creatures to serve Him is Ibaadah. The term would include all acts of piety as well as the mandatory acts of worship.

The mandatory acts of worship accepted by both the Sunnis and the Shi'as are:

1. Salaah (The Daily Prayers)

Every Muslim, from the time he or she attains puberty must perform the salaah. Except for a woman in menstruation, no person is excused from this act of worship.

Before a person begins his salaah he must perform the ritual ablution in the prescribed form. The object is symbolic preparation for the salaah and not, as often believed cleanliness. A person has to be clean to perform the ablution (wudhu). Then he stands facing Mecca and declares his intention to pray for gaining proximity to Allah. With this declaration he enters the formal state of salaah in which he remains until the completion of his prayers.

A Salaah consists of a number of units called rakaahs. Each unit (rakaah) consists of:

1. Recitation of the opening chapter and one other chapter of the Qur'an while in the standing position.
2. The bowing down (ruku) and glorifying God in that position and
3. Two Prostrations each called a Sajda in which again God is glorified. Then the second rakaah would commence.

The morning prayers, to be performed between the dawn and sunrise, have two rakaahs, the mid-day prayers four rakaahs, the sunset three and the evening four.

The prayers are ended by affirmation that Allah is one and has no partners and that Muhammad (saws)

is His servant and messenger. Salutations are offered to the Prophet, all the righteous souls and all who are engaged in prayers.

Salaah is regarded as not only a ritual act of worship but a communion with the Maker. It is the most important form of Ibaadah and sickness (other than insanity), age or infirmity is no excuse for not performing prayers.

Lapsed prayers constitute a debt to God and are a first charge on a Muslim's time and conscience. In the event of a person having died without having said any of his lapsed prayers, the eldest son, or if the deceased is not survived by a son, his heir must say or pay someone to say the lapsed prayers of the deceased.

Seyyid Hossein Nasr writes in his Ideals and Realities of Islam:

“In the canonical prayers man stands before God as the representative of all creatures. He prays for and in the name of all beings.”

Amongst the many sayings of the Prophet on the subject are:

“Salaah is the spiritual ascension of the faithful where he communes with Allah.”

“The good deeds wipe out the evil deeds of a man. The salaah and patience (sabr) are the best of deeds.”

Salaah is a spiritual activity where the person performing it is totally immersed, mentally and physically, in the remembrance of God.

اتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ۚ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۚ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
مَا تَصْنَعُونَ

Recite that which has been revealed to you of the Book and keep up prayer; surely prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil, and certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest, and Allah knows what you do. (29:45)

لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِيذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ ۚ فَإِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ فَلَهُ أَسْلِمُوا ۚ وَبَشِّرِ
الْمُخْبِتِينَ

And to every nation We appointed acts of devotion that they may mention the name of Allah on what He has given them of the cattle quadrupeds; so your god is One God, therefore to Him should you submit, and give good news to the humble,(22:34)

الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَهُمْ وَالْمُقِيمِي الصَّلَاةِ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

(To) those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned, and those who are patient under that which afflicts them, and those who keep up prayer, and spend (benevolently) out of what We have given them. (22:35)

طس ﴿٥﴾ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ

Ta Sin! These are the verses of the Quran and the Book that makes (things) clear (27:1)

هُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

A guidance and good news for the believers, (27:2)

الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

Who keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and of the hereafter, they are sure. (27:3)

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحْتَ الثَّرَىٰ

His is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth and what is between them two and what is beneath the ground. (20:6)

وَإِنْ تَجَهَّرَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَىٰ

And if you utter the saying aloud, then surely He knows the secret, and what is yet more hidden. (20:7)

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

Surely I am Allah, there is no god but I, therefore serve me and keep up prayer for my remembrance (20: 14)

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ﴿٥﴾ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ﴿٦﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ ﴿٧﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

And (as for) the believing men and the believing women, they are guardians of each other; they enjoin good and forbid evil and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and obey Allah and His Messenger; (as for) these, Allah will show mercy to them; surely Allah is Mighty, Wise. (9:71)

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ

Every soul is held in pledge for what it earns, (74:38)

إِلَّا أَصْحَابَ الْيَمِينِ

Except the people of the right hand (74:39)

فِي جَنَّاتٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ

In gardens, they shall ask each other (74:40)

عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

About the guilty: (74:41)

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ

What has brought you into hell? (74:42)

قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ

They shall say: We were not of those who prayed; (74:43)

وَلَمْ نَكُ نَطْعِمُ الْمِسْكِينَ

And we used not to feed the poor; (74:44)

وَكُنَّا نَخُوضُ مَعَ الْخَائِضِينَ

And we used to enter into vain discourse with those who entered into vain discourses. (74:45)

وَكُنَّا نَكْذِبُ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ

And we used to call the Day of Judgment a lie; (74:46)

حَتَّىٰ أَتَانَا الْيَقِينُ

Till death overtook us. (74:47)

فَمَا تَنْفَعُهُمْ شَفَاعَةُ الشَّافِعِينَ

So the intercession of intercessors shall not avail them. (74:48)

قُلْ أَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُنَا وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا وَنُرَدُّ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ كَالَّذِي اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ فِي الْأَرْضِ حَيْرَانًا لَهُ أَصْحَابٌ يَدْعُونَهُ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ انْتِنَا ۚ قُلْ إِنْ هَدَىٰ اللَّهُ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ ۚ وَأَمْرًا لِنُسَلِّمَ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Say: Shall we call on that besides Allah, which does not benefit us nor harm us, and shall we be returned back on our heels after Allah has guided us, like him whom the Shaitans have made to fall down perplexed in the earth? He has companions who call him to the right way, (saying): Come to us. Say: Surely the guidance of Allah, that is the (true) guidance, and we are commanded that we should submit to the Lord of the worlds. (6:71)

وَأَنْ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّقُوهُ ۚ وَهُوَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ (6:72)

And that you should keep up prayer and be careful of (your duty to) Him; and He it is to whom you shall be gathered. (6:72)

فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُنْ مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ

Therefore celebrate the praise of your Lord, and be of those who make obeisance. (15:98)

وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ

And serve your Lord until there comes to you that which is certain. (15:99)

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ ۚ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ۚ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِلذَّاكِرِينَ

And keep up prayer in the two parts of the day and in the first hours of the night; surely good deeds take away evil deeds this is a reminder to the mindful. (11:114)

2. Sawm (Fasting)

The second act of worship is fasting in the month of Ramadhan, the 9th month of the Islamic calendar. This is obligatory upon every mature Muslim except the sick, the traveller, a woman during her menstruation period and those infirm by age.

Fasting involves refraining from eating, drinking and sexual activity from the beginning of the nautical dawn to sunset. But these are not the sole objectives. Fasting is a conscious obedience of Allah's command. It is the human being's struggle to dedicate a whole month to activities which please his Maker. "It is the means", says Nasr, "by which man pulls the reins of his animal desires and realizes that he is more than an animal."

Fasting also begins with a declaration of intent to fast for the attainment of proximity to Allah.

أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۚ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۚ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ ۚ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

For a certain number of days; but whoever among you is sick or on a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days; and those who are not able to do it may effect a redemption by feeding a poor man; so whoever does good spontaneously it is better for him; and that you fast is better for you if you know. (2:184)

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۚ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۚ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُم وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

The month of Ramazan is that in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction; therefore whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein, and whoever is sick or upon a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days; Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty, and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for His having guided you and that you may give thanks. (2:185)

أَجَلَ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفْتُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ ۚ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ ۗ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۚ فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُمْ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ۚ ثُمَّ أَتَمُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ۚ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا ۚ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

It is made lawful to you to go into your wives on the night of the fast; they are an apparel for you and you are an apparel for them; Allah knew that you acted unfaithfully to yourselves, so He has turned to you (mercifully) and removed from you (this burden); so now be in contact with them and seek what Allah has ordained for you, and eat and drink until the whiteness of the day becomes distinct from the blackness of the night at dawn, then complete the fast till night, and have not contact with them while you keep to the mosques; these are the limits of Allah, so do not go near them. Thus does Allah make clear His communications for men that they may guard (against evil). (2: 187)

It is incumbent upon a Muslim to know why he prays and why he fasts. Imam ‘Ali (as) says, “One who knows not why he prays or why he fasts, his prayers and fasts are little more than meaningless physical exertions, hunger and thirst.”

3. Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca)

Every Muslim who has attained puberty and has sufficient means not only to undertake a journey to Mecca but also for the subsistence of his dependants during his absence, must once in his life time perform pilgrimage.

Kaaba is the edifice which was presented to God as a gift by His Prophets Abraham and Ismail.

The rites for the pilgrimage begin on the 8th of the eleventh month and culminate into the Idd of Sacrifice on the 10th.

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا ۚ وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ

Surely the Safa and the Marwa are among the signs appointed by Allah; so whoever makes a pilgrimage to the House or pays a visit (to it), there is no blame on him if he goes round them both; and whoever does good spontaneously, then surely Allah is Grateful, Knowing. (2: 158)

ۚ وَأَتَمُوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ ۚ فَإِنْ أُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ وَلَا تَحْلِقُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحَلَّهُ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ أَذًى مِنْ رَأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِنْ صِيَامٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامًا ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةً إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ۚ تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ۚ ذَلِكَ

لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

And accomplish the pilgrimage and the visit for Allah, but if, you are prevented, (send) whatever offering is easy to obtain, and do not shave your heads until the offering reaches its destination; but whoever among you is sick or has an ailment of the head, he (should effect) a compensation by fasting or alms or sacrificing, then when you are secure, whoever profits by combining the visit with the pilgrimage (should take) what offering is easy to obtain; but he who cannot find (any offering) should fast for three days during the pilgrimage and for seven days when you return; these (make) ten (days) complete; this is for him whose family is not present in the Sacred Mosque, and be careful (of your duty) to Allah, and know that Allah is severe in requiting (evil). (2:196)

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَعْدُودَاتٍ ۖ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ لِمَنْ تَقَى ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

And laud Allah during the numbered days; then whoever hastens off in two days, there is no blame on him, and whoever remains behind, there is no blame on him, (this is) for him who guards (against evil), and be careful (of your duty) to Allah, and know that you shall be gathered together to Him. (2:203)

فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۖ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا ۚ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۚ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

In it are clear signs, the standing place of Ibrahim, and whoever enters it shall be secure, and pilgrimage to the House is incumbent upon men for the sake of Allah, (upon) everyone who is able to undertake the journey to it; and whoever disbelieves, then surely Allah is Self-sufficient, above any need of the worlds. (3:97)

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالِدَمُّ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبْعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَامِ ۚ ذَلِكُمْ فِسْقٌ ۚ الْيَوْمَ يَنْسَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ ۚ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ۚ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرَ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمٍ ۚ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Forbidden to you is that which dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that on which any other name than that of Allah has been invoked, and the strangled (animal) and that beaten to death, and that killed by a fall and that killed by being smitten with the horn, and that which wild beasts have eaten, except what you slaughter, and what is sacrificed on stones set up (for idols)

and that you divide by the arrows; that is a transgression.

This day have those who disbelieve despaired of your religion, so fear them not, and fear me. This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion; but whoever is compelled by hunger, not inclining willfully to sin, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (5:3)

وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ لِلنَّاظِرِينَ

And he drew forth his hand, and lo! it appeared white to the onlookers. (26:33)

A Muslim's journey to the House of God, and there seeking his Maker's forgiveness through expression of repentance and the performance of all the rituals attending pilgrimage, is a spiritual experience so overwhelming that the pilgrim's very soul appears to undergo a purification.

The pilgrimage has another philosophical aspect.

In the Qur'an, like in the Old Testament, there is the story of Abraham having been commanded to sacrifice his son. The Qur'an, however, states that the son was Ismail.

The father communicates the message to the young lad who had just attained puberty. The lad exhorts the father to comply with the divine command adding, "God willing, you shall find me amongst the patient ones."

Unbeknown to the mother, the father and the son travel to the planes of Arafaa, a short distance from Mecca. There they spend the night in prayers. The following afternoon they travel to the town of Meena where the sacrifice was to take place. They spend the night on the outskirts of the town. The following morning they enter Meena.

On the way to the appointed place, the Satan tries thrice to lure them into abandoning the enterprise, but each time the father and the son chase him away by throwing pebbles at him.

When they get to the place of sacrifice, the father blindfolds his son saying that he did not wish the lad to see the anguish on the father's face. He then blindfolds himself for, as he reasoned, how could any father watch his son die?

God saves Ismail by substituting a ram and sends His salutations to Abraham for his act of obedience. God also promises Abraham to immortalize the event.

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنَا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلِّينَ ۖ وَعَهَدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنَّ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ

And when we made the House a pilgrimage for men and a (place of) security, and: Appoint for yourselves a place of prayer on the standing-place of Ibrahim. And we enjoined Ibrahim and Ismail saying: Purify My House for those who visit (it) and those who abide (in it) for devotion and those who bow down (and) those who prostrate themselves. (2: 125)

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ

And when Ibrahim said: My Lord, make it a secure town and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in Allah and the last day. He said: And whoever disbelieves, I will grant him enjoyment for a short while, then I will drive him to the chastisement of the fire; and it is an evil destination. (2: 126)

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا ﴿٤٧﴾ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

And when Ibrahim and Ismail raised the foundations of the House: Our Lord! Accept from us; surely Thou art the Hearing, the Knowing (2: 127)

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي لَبَّيْ بِكَهَّ مَبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

Most surely the first house appointed for men is the one at Bekka, blessed and a guidance for the nations. (3:96)

فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا ﴿٤٩﴾ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٥٠﴾ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

In it are clear signs, the standing place of Ibrahim, and whoever enters it shall be secure, and pilgrimage to the House is incumbent upon men for the sake of Allah, (upon) everyone who is able to undertake the journey to it; and whoever disbelieves, then surely Allah is Self-sufficient, above any need of the worlds. (3:97)

فَبَشِّرْنَاهُ بِغُلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ

So we gave him the good news of a boy, possessing forbearance. (37: 101)

﴿٥١﴾ فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَرَىٰ فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَىٰ ﴿٥٢﴾ قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ

سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ

مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ

And when he attained to working with him, he said: O my son! Surely I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice you; consider then what you see. He said: O my father! Do what you are commanded; if Allah please, you will find me of the patient ones. . (37: 102)

فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُ لِلْجَبِينِ

So when they both submitted and he threw him down upon his forehead, (37: 103)

وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَن يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ

And we called out to him saying: O Ibrahim! (37: 104)

قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ الرُّؤْيَا ؕ إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

You have indeed shown the truth of the vision; surely thus do we reward the doers of good. (37: 105)

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْبَلَاءُ الْمُبِينُ

Most surely this is a manifest trial. . (37: 106)

وَفَدَيْنَاهُ بِذَبْحٍ عَظِيمٍ

And we ransomed him with a Feat sacrifice. . (37: 107)

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْآخِرِينَ

And we perpetuated (praise) to him among the later generations. . (37: 108)

سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

Peace be on Ibrahim. . (37: 109)

كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Thus do we reward the doers of good. (37: 110)

إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Surely he was one of our believing servants. . (37: 111)

The mother, on learning what had happened, screams and falls unconscious at the thought of what might have happened had Allah not intervened to save her beloved son. Shortly afterwards she dies and is buried close to Kaaba. Her burial place is treated as being included in the hallowed ground around which the pilgrim circumambulates.

Every pilgrim takes the same route which Abraham and Ismail had taken. He too spends the first night, as they did, in Arafaa and the second night outside Meena. He too symbolically stones the satan at the three places in Meena.

While of-course the visit to the House of Allah has its own great spirituality, the pilgrim also must reflect upon the rituals which appear to enshrine family values, parents' love for their off-spring, the vanquishing of the satan, the one within man's heart, by symbolically stoning him and above all the willingness to make sacrifices for the pleasure of God.

4. Zakaat (The Wealth Tax)

Zakaat, which literally means purity or purification, is a wealth tax of a small percentage (usually 2.5%) for the benefit of the needy in the society. It is regarded as a debt to God and must be distributed for the pleasure of Allah to the less fortunate amongst one's relatives, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarers, and the beggars, and for the freeing of slaves.

ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ ۚ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

This Book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who guard (against evil). (2:2)

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

Those who believe in the unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what we have given them.

(2:3)

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ (2:43)

And keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and bow down with those who bow down. (2:43)

لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُولُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ
وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ
وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا ۖ وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا
وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah and the last day and the angels and the Book and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflicts-- these are they who are true (to themselves) and these are they who guard (against evil). (2: 177)

فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ ۗ وَنُفِصِلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ

But if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, they are your brethren in faith; and we make the communications clear for a people who know. (9: 11)

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۗ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ
الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

And (as for) the believing men and the believing women, they are guardians of each other; they enjoin good and forbid evil and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and obey Allah and His Messenger; (as for) these, Allah will show mercy to them; surely Allah is Mighty, Wise. (9:71)

الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ

Those who, should We establish them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and enjoin good and forbid evil; and Allah's is the end of affairs. (22:41)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ مِلءُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوْ افْتَدَىٰ بِهِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ

Surely, those who disbelieve and die while they are unbelievers, the earth full of gold shall not be accepted from one of them, though he should offer to ransom himself with it, these it is who shall have a painful chastisement, and they shall have no helpers. (3:91)

وَلَا يَأْتَلِ أُولُو الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ أَنْ يُؤْتُوا أُولِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَلْيُعْفُوا وَلَا يَصْفَحُوا ۚ وَلَا تَحِبُّوا أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

And let not those of you who possess grace and abundance swear against giving to the near of kin and the poor and those who have fled in Allah's way, and they should pardon and turn away. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (24:22)

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ

And most surely your Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful. (26:9)

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ آمِنًا وَاجْنُبْنِي وَبَنِيَّ أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَصْنَامَ

And when Ibrahim said: My Lord! Make this city secure, and save me and my sons from worshipping idols (14:35)

رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ أَضَلُّنَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ ۚ فَمَنْ تَبِعَنِي فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي ۚ وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَإِنَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

My Lord! Surely they have led many men astray; then whoever follows me, he is surely of me, and whoever disobeys me, Thou surely art Forgiving, Merciful (14:36)

رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ دُرِّيَّتِي بُوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ فَاجْعَلْ أَفئِدَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِمْ

وَارزُقْهُمْ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ

O our Lord! Surely I have settled a part of my offspring in a valley unproductive of fruit near Thy Sacred House, our Lord! That they may keep up prayer; therefore make the hearts of some

people yearn towards them and provide them with fruits; haply they may be grateful (14:37)

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا ۗ سُبْحَانَہٗ ۗ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ

And when we assigned to Ibrahim the place of the House, saying: Do not associate with me aught, and purify My House for those who make the circuit and stand to pray and bow and prostrate themselves. (22:26)

There are innumerable traditions of the Prophet insisting upon zakaat being paid by every Muslim. Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) said that the one who does not give zakaat cannot expect his salaah to be accepted by Allah.

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