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1. Ritual System

The essential aim of a religion is to introduce mankind to their Creator and to teach them to worship Him, the One Who has no partner.

Islam legislated a series of rituals which explain how to worship and obey the Creator such as: prayer, supplication (Du'a), commemoration, dedication, fasting, pilgrimage (Hajj), one-fifth levy as a yearly tax (Khums), charity to the poor (poor-rates (zakat)), enjoining what is good and forbidding what is bad, calling to Islam (Da'wah), Holy Struggle (Jihad) in the way of Allah, reciting the Holy Qur'an and other ritual actions which bring man near to Allah, the Almighty.

Islam made it clear that these rituals keep man from deviating from his worship of Allah, and no one has the right to worship anything or anyone other than the One True God.

Worship includes some conditions such as true intention and full sincerity to Allah alone so that an act or deed is far from being sanctimonious and hypocritical, which would nullify the deed and its reward.

Islam also prevents Muslims from devoting themselves entirely to worship and not working for life's necessities in this world.

The Almighty Allah says:

"...and seek by means of what Allah has given you the future abode, and do not neglect your portion of this world, and do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you..." Holy Qur'an (28:77)

Islam creates balance between the life of this world and the Hereafter. A Muslim should strive for both this life and the life after death. He should grow crops, build, manufacture, seek knowledge, entertain with the good and lawful things of this world, and perform his obligatory duties as well as work for his life in the Hereafter.

Worship in Islam, besides being an obedience to Allah, has various social, psychological and sanitary benefits. It encourages man to avoid arrogance and vanity. When a Muslim prostrates himself before

Allah during prayer, he really wants to make himself submissive to the Great Lord. As prayer needs cleanliness which in itself preserves man's health and beauty, so does fasting give man the strength of determination and fills him with sympathy for the sufferings of the poor. Fasting also preserves the health of the body.

Congregational prayer instructs Muslims on how to cooperate and acquaint themselves with each other. Giving charity and financial offerings help to solve economic and social problems. Man is naturally impatient, Hajj teaches him endurance and acquaints him with other Muslims from different nationalities so that he can cooperate with them regarding the affairs which benefit Islam and all Muslims.

In reciting supplication (Du'a), man feels he is in need of Allah, the Most High, so he liberates (purifies) himself from pride and vanity and asks goodness for himself, his parents and the believers. He purifies himself from selfishness and learns the love of good to all people due to his calling for goodness for them. In this way, the best morals are created in him who desires good for all.

These virtues educate man perfectly, socially and ethically. They encourage him to participate in the progress of the society and its reformation, in addition to being obedient and involved in the worship of Allah alone.

Summary:

1. Rituals are limited deeds. It is unlawful to omit any part of them or add anything to them.

2. The aim of worshipping is to obey Allah and approach Him.

3. Muslims are ordered, by Allah, to achieve a balance between the life of this world and the Hereafter. In this life we do everything which benefits us and causes our progress and to perform our ritual obligations.

4. Truthful intention and sincerity are the main basis of worship.

5. Rituals have reformatory and educational interests which have a great effect on the life of individuals and groups.

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