

Let's Worship God

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This text explains the basics of Islam in a simple and easily understandable manner; it can make a good reading as a short introductory text on the basics of religious fundamental beliefs and ritual practices for new Muslims and youths.

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Let's Worship God

Preface

أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَحْرُثُونَ . أَأَنْتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الزَّارِعُونَ . لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَاهُ حُطَامًا فَظَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُونَ . إِنَّا لَمُعْرِضُونَ . بَلْ نَحْنُ مُحْرِمُونَ . أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ الْمَاءَ الَّذِي تَشْرَبُونَ . أَأَنْتُمْ أَنْزَلْتُمُوهُ مِنَ الْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنْزِلُونَ . لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَاهُ أُجَاجًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُونَ . أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ النَّارَ الَّتِي تُورُونَ . أَأَنْتُمْ أَنْشَأْتُمْ شَجَرَتَهَا أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنْشِئُونَ . نَحْنُ جَعَلْنَاهَا تَذْكَرَةً وَمَتَاعًا لِلْمُقْوِينَ . فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ .

In the Name of Allah

"Have you considered what you sow?"

Is it you that cause it to grow, or are we the causers of growth?

If We pleased, We would make it broken down into pieces, and you would bitterly lament.

Have you considered the water you drink?

Did you send it down from the clouds, or did We send it?

If We pleased, We would make it salty; so why are you not thankful?

Then magnify the Name of thy Lord, the All-mighty. (56:63-74)

Oh, consentient companion, isn't it true that the creator of everything is also its owner?

And isn't it true that the owner of a thing should define how to use and behave toward it?

Isn't it true that while using one thing, its owner's consent should be observed? This is why man should be like what his Creator and God has wanted, in using himself, his behavior, and his relations with others.

That's why man should live in a manner that is prescribed by his Owner and Worshipped; that is, the man is a worshipper, who should praise His Lord and Creator. He should live for God and in the way the Lord has told him; that is, he should be His servant and praise Him.

So, man perceives that, he needs someone:

1. To teach him how to live to gain his Lord's satisfaction.
2. And as he lives in similar style, he shows man practically, whatever he invites him. Thus, he is the example of good living for man.
3. When man is unable to traverse the path of his Lord's satisfaction, he helps man achieve his Lord's satisfaction and assists him in his duties.

These people, having such divine wisdom and capability, are prophets and their legitimate successors, who have their knowledge and capability from Him.

The continuous chain of divine prophets was finished by the last and the best of them; that is, Muhammad-ibn-Abdollah (may God send greetings to him and his descendants) and the legitimate succession of the prophet – after his death was continued by Ali-ibn-Abu Taleb, the chief of the faithful (may God send greeting to him) and is finished by the twelfth one; that is, Hojjat-ibn-Al Hassan, Imam Mahdi (Peace be upon him). Imam Mahdi (PBUH) was born in 255 Lunar Hijri year, and he lived in a semi-hidden situation from 255 Lunar Hijri (the time when his honorable father, Imam Hassan Askari PBUH, died), to 329 LH (minor occultation).

That is, during this period only some special Shiites who were appointed by himself, could see him and meet this honorable person.

These men, who were called "special deputies" could ask him questions on behalf of the people and give

them the answers to people.

After the death of the fourth special deputy, he didn't appoint any other special deputy, and informed that the people should refer to people who know the sayings of God's selected ones (Imams) in order to find answers to their questions which they face during their life.

These people who know God's religion and understand its commands well, are caned "fully (qualified jurisprudent" or "source of imitation (religious authority)."

Therefore, during the period when people are deprived of the blessing of the impeccable Imam's presence, they should seek a "jurisprudent's" (authority's) advice and obey him (imitation) and adopt him as their supervisor for their life in the community (jurisprudent's guardianship), and consider him as the judge for their debates.

The most important divine commands which are identified by a religious authority are those cases collected in a book called "The book of practical laws".

We have tried to write an abstract of these commands which we have found necessary to know, in this book. We wish you step into the servitude of the Great and Merciful God.

This is the servitude' which is the only duty of man and the only way for his education and evolution.

God–Willing

Salaat (Prayer)

فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

“Perform the prayer for My remembrance.” (20: 14)

Prayer is the basis of religion and the foundation of Islam.

It is the most important and superior act after knowing the Lord and His selected ones. Prayer is the connection between servant and the Lord, ascension of the faithful praying before Our Merciful God.

Prayer causes the growth and education of the one who prays, so that he avoids bad and evil things.

It is because of the approach of the servant to the One he worships during prayer that, it is said about the Holy Prophet (may God send greetings to him and his descendants) and other impeccable (peace be upon them) that these honorable people had a change of state during ablution which is the prelude to prayer, and their glorified faces became pale and they became breathless.

And they were not aware of what happened to them or around them during prayer.

How to say the prayer?

It is obligatory for every Muslim to say prayer five times a day:

1. Morning Prayer
2. Noon Prayer
3. Afternoon Prayer
4. Evening Prayer
5. Night Prayer

Morning Prayer

The time for saying the Morning Prayer is from the morning call to prayer (dawn) to the sunrise and it is two units which are said as follows:

We stand upright facing the Qibla (the prayer direction – Ka'ba) with the intention of saying the Morning Prayer and obeying the divine command.

We hold up our hands at our ears level and say:

الله أكبر

"God is the Greatest."

After saying Takbir (God is the Greatest) we read the Chapter Hamd:

. بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ . الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ . مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ . إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ . اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ .. صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, The Beneficent, the Merciful, The Master of the Day of judgment, You (Alone) we worship and You (Alone) we ask for help, Guide us to the straight path, The path of those whom You have favored, not [the path] of those who incur Your wrath, nor [of] those who go astray (1:1-7)

Then we read another chapter from the Holy Quran, like chapter Tawhid (Ikhlas):

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ . اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ . لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ . وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

Say: He is Allah, the One. Allah is free from want, and eternally besought of all. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him. (112: 1-4)

Then we bow down touching the knees with our hands (ru'ku) and say three times:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ

(Allah is free from any imperfection)

We lift our head from this position and stand upright.

Then we prostrate (Sajdah); that is, place the tips of the big toes of both feet, the knees, the palms on the ground, and the forehead on a muhr (a piece of stone or wood) and say three times:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ

(Allah is free from any imperfection)

We then raise our head from the ground and sit upright at ease, prostrate again and say the same words and sit upright again. Then we stand up and proceed with the second Ra'kh. We recite Chapters Hamd and Tawhid, like the first Rak'ah.

Then we take our hands up in front of our face and pray to God, we read any prayer we want, like:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَ عَجِّلْ فَرَجَهُمْ

(May God send greetings to Muhammad and his descendants and make their coming soon).

Then we perform ru'ku and sujud (two sajdah's) like the first rak'at and sit down.

We read tashahhud; that is, we say:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ

(I bear witness that there is no god but Allah; He is Alone, and to Him there is no partner)

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

(I bear witness that Muhammad (S.A is His servant and His Messenger)

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

(O Allah, bless Muhammad (S.A.) and his Descendants)

Then we recite salam by saying:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

(Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you, O Prophet)

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَ عَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ

(Peace be upon us and all Allah's righteous servants)

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

(Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you all)

Now the Morning Prayer has finished. We wish the Merciful God accepts the prayers of you, us, and all Muslims.

Noon Prayer

The time for noon and afternoon prayers is from midday (after the noon Adhan) to sunset, and each of them is four rak'ahs, which are performed as follows:

We stand up facing the Qibla with tile intention of carry out God's command.

We perform the first and second rak'ahs like Morning Prayer, but we don't recite salam after tashahhud.

After reciting tashahhud, we stand up for the third rak'ah, and instead of reading Hamd and Tawhid chapters, we say three times:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

(Allah is Transcendent and devoid of any imperfection; all praise is due to Allah; there is no god but Allah; and Allah is the Greatest).

Then we perform ru'ku and sujud, stand up again and perform the fourth rak'ah like the third one.

After the fourth rak'ah, we perform ru'ku and two sajdahs, raise our head from this position and sit upright and recite tashahhud and salam successively.

Afternoon Prayer

It is performed the same as the noon prayer. The only difference is the intention for performing afternoon prayer to carry out God's command.

Evening Prayer

The time for performing this prayer and night prayer is from sunset (Adhan Maghrib) to the lawful midnight. This prayer has three rak'ahs, which are performed as follows:

We stand upright and face the Qibla by intention to carry out God's command.

The three rak'ahs are performed like the noon prayer. In the third rak'ah and after two sajdahs, we sit upright and recite tashahhud and salam.

Night Prayer

This prayer is performed the same as the noon prayer. The only difference is the intention for performing night prayer to carry out God's command.

Important Note

The four rak'ah prayers will become two rak'ahs during travel. That is, noon, afternoon and night prayers each become two rak'ahs and after the second rak'ah we recite tashahhud and salam.

Conditions of the praying one

1. He should face the Qibla. Our Qibla is Ka'ba; which is called the House of God and is located in Mecca.

2. His clothes and body should be clean and free from any pollution, uncleanness, or filthiness.
3. His clothes and the place of praying should not be usurped. So, if the place and the clothes are not ours, we should get the owner's consent.
4. He should have performed ablution.

Things that make prayer invalid

1. If during the prayer he finds that one of the conditions for prayer has been forgotten for example, his clothes are usurped, his prayer becomes invalid.
2. If he says a word or laughs aloud intentionally, his prayer becomes invalid.
3. If the method of praying is changed, for example the praying one stands with his back to the Qibla, his prayer becomes invalid.

Ablution

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ

"O believers, when you stand up to pray wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your heads, and your feet up to the ankles." (5:6)

In order to pray we should perform our ablution and keep up the ablution till the end of the prayer.

The Merciful God has commanded His servants to perform ablution to become clean and pure, and then worship Him. Get rid of drowsiness and laxity after sleep and say prayer in supplication.

How to perform ablution?

1. With the intention to carry out God's command, wash the face from the forehead (where hair grows) downward to the chin (at the most two times).
2. Wash the right arm from the elbow to the fingers (at the most two times). 3– Wash the left arm like the right one.
3. Draw the wet right hand from the top of the head up to the forehead (wiping the head).
4. Draw the wet right hand on the right foot from the toe– tips to the upper part of the foot (wiping the foot).

5. Draw the wet left hand on the left foot like the right foot.

Ablution Injunctions

In order to have a valid ablution, some matters should be observed:

1. The order of tasks should be observed.
2. The tasks should be performed in succession and without any delay. For example, it is not allowed to wash the face, then wash the hands after a while, when the face is not wet.
3. The water for ablution should not be unclean.
4. The water for ablution should not be usurped. Therefore, it is not allowed to perform ablution using water, while its owner doesn't consent.
5. The limbs of ablution should be clean.
6. Using water should not be harmful to limbs.
7. While performing wiping of the foot, the foot should be stable and without any movement, and the hand should be drawn on foot.

Things that make ablution invalid

1. Urination, defecation, flatulence (passing gas).
2. Falling asleep, such that the eyes see nothing, and ears hear nothing.

Purity (Cleanliness)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

"Truly, God loves those who repent, and He loves those who cleanse themselves." (2:222)

Purity and cleanliness are highly recommended in the religion of the Merciful God and all Muslims are asked to observe them and worship God with clean clothes and body. In this regard, the clothes and body of those praying should be free of unclean lines and filthiness.

Some of the ceremonially unclean (filthy) things are:

1. Urine and excrement of man and some animals like cat, dog and mouse.
2. Blood.

3. Dogs and pigs which live on the land. Even their hair and body damp are unclean.

Injunctions of Uncleaness

1. If the body, clothes or another thing touches one of the unclean things and their wetness permeate them, they become ceremonially unclean.

2. If the Holy Quran or a mosque becomes unclean, it should immediately be rinsed.

Water

وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً طَهُورًا

"We sent down from heaven pure water." (25:48)

One of the great blessings of the Merciful God is water, which is used by all creatures on the Earth. Water is clean and is a cleanser. We can make unclean things clean by water.

Water has several types:

1. Qalil (less than a kur) water: like water in a glass, a bowl or an ewer.
2. Piped water which is connected to the city water.
3. River or spring water. If qalil water touches ceremonially unclean things, it becomes unclean itself, even if the uncleanliness is very little.

Other water doesn't become unclean by touching filthiness, unless its color, smell or taste changes by uncleanliness, for example if it takes on the color of blood.

Injunctions for cleansing by water

1. If we want to cleanse an unclean thing by water (purification), we should pour water on it, after removing the filthiness.
2. If we want to clean a thing defiled by urine, we should pour water on it once to remove the urine and pour water once more to clean it.
3. Clothes, carpets and similar things should be pressed after each time of pouring water, to let water exit, then they will be clean.
4. Ceremonially unclean vessels should be washed with qalil water three times but using other water – like river or piped water washing once is sufficient.

5. A vessel from which a dog has drunk water or another liquid, or has licked it, should be first cleaned by soil (clay), then be washed twice by qalil water, or once by other water, then it will be clean.

6. Unclean vessels could be cleaned by qalil water in two ways:

One way is to fill and empty it three times. The other way is to pour water in it three times, so that water reaches all over it each time.

Fast

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

"O Believers, prescribed for you is the fast, even as it was prescribed for those that were before you – haply you will be god-fearing." (2: 183)

Another command of the Merciful God is fasting. When the holy month of Ramadan arrives, fasting becomes obligatory on the Muslims.

Muslims help the poor and weak people during this month, they caress and show kindness to their parents and relatives, keep their tongue from saying unpleasant words, and spend more time worshipping God.

Injunctions for Fasting

1. Fasting is to avoid drinking, eating, and some other things from the morning Adhan to sunset, with the intention to carry out the Great God's command.
2. Ill persons and one to whom fasting is harmful, should not fast. 3– Traveler should not fast.

Pilgrimage (Hajj)

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ

"And proclaim among men the pilgrimage." (22:27)

Pilgrimage (Hajj) is a worship which has a particular time and place: during the month of Dhulhijjah (the twelfth month of the Arabic Lunar Calendar) and besides the Ka'ba (God's House).

Muslims get familiar with each other during performing these tasks and try to solve their problems.

Hajj is the symbol of the grandeur and unity of Muslims. They show the servitude and obedience to God

during this grand circle and show that there is no difference between the people of the world; white or black; rich or poor; etc., but all are the servants of God.

People who have financial and physical capability are obliged to perform Hajj at least once during their life time.

One-Fifth Levy (Khums)

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ

"Know that, whatever booty you take, the fifth of it is God's and the Messenger's and the near kinsman's and the orphans', and for the needy, and the traveler." (8:41)

It is doubtless that each religion and school of thought should have sufficient facilities and equipment to reach its objectives. Financial support is one of these facilities. In this regard and in order to supply a part of the Islamic society and Muslims expenses, Islam has set some financial regulations, like the one-fifth levy and Zakat (religious taxes) to meet the needs of the orphans, the poor, the lost travelers, etc.

The one-fifth levy is a financial regulation according to which, every Muslim should pay 1/5 of his annual income after deducting common expenses of his own life.

Therefore, if the income of a Muslim is equal to his common expenses, he is not obliged to pay this levy.

The one-fifth levy should be paid to a fully qualified jurisprudent or be (used) in cases which are determined by him.

Religious Tax (Zakat)

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ

"Perform the prayer and pay the alms." (2:43)

Zakat (religious tax) in Arabic means "growth"; and in religious law, it means to purify the wealth (property) from others' right. According to Islamic regulation, there is a right for others in someone's property, because some circumstances gather to let us gain wealth and utilize it.

Some of these circumstances are: talents granted by God, social facilities, location situation, etc.

Therefore, we should not think that all of the wealth brought to us is ours, but we should spend a part of it in cases ordered by God.

Zakat is a divine command, which is obligatory on 9 items having particular conditions. Muslims should pay Zakat to be used for the well-being of the Islamic community.

These 9 items are:

1-3- Sheep, cattle (cow), and camel

4-7- Wheat, barley, date, and raisin

8-9- Gold and silver coins.

Jihad (Struggle in the way of God)

وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

"And struggle in God's way with your possessions and yourselves" (9:41)

Whenever an enemy attacks the Islamic community and tries to ruin Islam or the Muslims, the Muslims should defend their property, life and religion.

They should attempt to keep themselves and keep the religion alive among the people and prevent the Islamic injunctions from fading away from their society and life.

These efforts – which should be carried out by the orders of God, the prophet, and their successors – are called "Jihad" (fighting in the way of God – crusade).

According to Islam, Jihad is not only limited to war operations, but Muslims can fight the enemies of Islam and Muslims by their words, wealth, writings, etc.

God loves all combatants and crusaders and grants them great rewards.

Enjoining the Good & Forbidding Evil

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

"And the believers, the men and the women, and friends one of the other, they bid to honor, and forbid dishonor." (9:71)

In order to have a life suitable to his creation, man has to live in a community with other human beings. In social life, a part of everyone's destiny is entangled with others' destiny. Thus, having a healthy society requires having healthy members.

The Merciful God has commanded the rule of enjoining the good and forbidding evil, for the sake of the

community's health and prosperity.

Muslims invite each other to do good acts and avoid bad and unworthy deeds, by "enjoining to good and forbidding evil."

This worship, of course, has some conditions, which must be met before it becomes obligatory.

Therefore, Islam teaches us not to be indifferent toward evil-doers and sinners, but we should prevent them from their evil-doings and guide them through to well-doing and the right path, by our good behavior.

If we carry out this divine law, we will be able to take significant steps towards the servitude of God and in reforming of the society.

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- [2] <https://www.al-islam.org/organization/naba-organization>
- [3] <https://www.al-islam.org/printpdf/book/export/html/67494>
- [4] <https://www.al-islam.org/printepub/book/export/html/67494>
- [5] <https://www.al-islam.org/printmobi/book/export/html/67494>
- [6] <https://www.al-islam.org/person/babak-salehian>
- [7] <https://www.al-islam.org/tags/god>
- [8] <https://www.al-islam.org/tags/discovering-islam>
- [9] <https://www.al-islam.org/tags/islamic-law>