

Arab Republic of Egypt

Ministry of Awqaf

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Islamic Obligatory Acts of Worship: Goals and Objectives

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, Who says in His Ever Glorious Book, **“People, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, so that you may be mindful [of Him].”** I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger. May Allah’s Peace and Blessings be upon him, his Household, Companions and upon those who follow their path to the Day of Judgment.

There is no doubt that the obligatory acts of worship in Islam entail sublime values and lofty morals. This is because Islam has linked all these acts to sublime morals. In this context, our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stated that the higher objective of his mission is to complete the virtuous morals as he said, **"I was sent to uphold and complement ethical values"**.

There is no single act of worship enacted by Islam except it has an effect on elevating the moral behavior of individual in case it is performed in its due manner. Yet, this effect transcends the individual to the community and has great impact on it. Regarding prayers, for example, the Glorious Qur'an states that its end is to instill virtues, correct behaviors and

purify souls as Allah, the Almighty, says, **“keep up the prayer: prayer restrains outrageous and unacceptable behaviour.”** The divine revelation explains that establishing prayers in their due times has a great impact on boosting timeliness as the Almighty Allah says, **"Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours"**. Moreover, the honorable Shari'ah has promised those who do not realize the essence of prayers, and withhold goodness from people with grave torment as He (Glory be to Him) said, **“So woe unto those performers of prayer, Who delay their Praayer from their stated fixed times; those who do good deeds only to be seen, and refuse common kindnesses.”**

As for Zakat, one of its great purposes is to underline the values of solidarity, being merciful to one another and purifying souls from greedness and bad traits as He, Glory be to Him, says, **"Take Sadaqah (alms) from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it, and invoke Allah for them. Verily! Your invocations are a source of security for them, and Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower"**. Islam warned the one who pays zakat or charity against being showing off and reminding others of your generosity and considered these ill traits reasons for invalidating the acts of worship as He, Glory be to Him, **"O you who believe! Do not render in vain your Sadaqah (charity) by reminders of your generosity or by injury, like him who spends his wealth to be seen of men, and he does not believe in Allah, nor in the Last Day. His likeness is the likeness of a smooth rock on which is a little dust; on it**

falls heavy rain which leaves it bare. They are not able to do anything with what they have earned. And Allah does not guide the disbelieving people".

In the same vein, the main objective of fasting is to really achieve *taqwa* (piety) and be watchful towards Allah in both secrecy and in public as the Almighty Allah says, **"O you who believe! Observing Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become mindful (of Allah)".** In addition, it helps one to always observe patience and lofty morals as Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says, "Fasting is a protection for you, so when you are fasting, do not behave obscenely or foolishly, and if any one argues with you or abuses you, say, 'I am fasting. I am fasting.'" The one who does not know the real meaning of fasting and does not achieve its real objective, then he will not have a reward for fasting as our Prophet (PBUH) says, "If one does not eschew lies and false conduct, Allah has no need that he should abstain from his food and his drink." And He (PBUH) says, "A fasting person may receive nothing from his fasting except hunger and thirst."

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds; may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), his companions and followers.

There is no doubt that *hajj* instills good virtues and lofty morals in souls. *Hajj* does not bring about its fruit and is not considered accepted in a way that the one who performs it gets all his sins forgiven except when one abstains from sexual intercourse with one's wife, committing sins and disputing unjustly during the Hajj as the Almighty Allah says, "**The Hajj (pilgrimage) is (in) the well-known (lunar year) months. So whosoever intends to perform Hajj therein by assuming Ihram, then he should not have sexual relations (with his wife), nor commit sin, nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj. And whatever good you do, (be sure) Allah knows it. And take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best provision is At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness, etc.). So fear Me, O men of understanding!**" and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says, "Whoever performs Hajj (pilgrimage) and does not have sexual relations (with his wife), nor commits sin, nor disputes unjustly (during Hajj), then he returns from Hajj as pure and free from sins as on the day on which his mother gave birth to him."

Yet, we underline that fact that Islam is not concerned with practices that have no purpose or not related to reality. When these acts of worship are not related to their purposes, the one would perform prayers and also cheats, monopolizes, hurts one's neighbors, belie, betray or does not fulfill one's promise. Likewise, one would perform *hajj*, but when he returns he would return again to his previous state of negligence and non-observance of acts of worship. Our Prophet (PBUH) tells us about the real bankrupt in

the Day of Judgement saying, "Do you know who is the bankrupt?" They said: "The bankrupt among us is one who has neither money with him nor any property". He said, "The real bankrupt of my Ummah would be he who would come on the Day of Resurrection with Salat, Saum and Sadaqah (charity), (but he will find himself bankrupt on that day as he will have exhausted the good deeds) because he reviled others, brought calumny against others, unlawfully devoured the wealth of others, shed the blood of others and beat others; so his good deeds would be credited to the account of those (who suffered at his hand). If his good deeds fall short to clear the account, their sins would be entered in his account and he would be thrown in the (Hell) Fire". In another occasion Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was told about a woman who is very famous for her prayers, fasting and many charities, but is rude to her neighbours. He (PBUH) said, "she will go to the Hellfire," He (PBUH) was told about another woman woman who does not do much supregatory prayers or fasting and gives little charity, but does not harm her neighbours, and is kind to them. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "she will go to Paradise."

O Allah! Guide us to the best morals as none can guide us to them except You. O Allah! Protect our country Egypt and all other countries of the worlds!