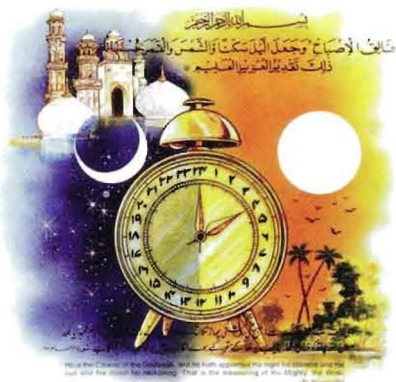


Divine Majesty and Glory, and Power in a manner which is not approached by any other religious book. The Holy Qur'an has challenged everyone, who has a doubt in its revelation from God, to produce one chapter like any chapter of this Holy Book. No one has been able to do it.

Does Islam recognize Science and Technology?

Islam recognizes and encourages the use of science and the scientific methods. According to the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, acquisition of knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim man and woman. In Islam, science and technology should be used for moral ends and serve all legitimate needs of mankind. Moreover, both are viewed as yet another means to understand and see the power and glory of God.



*Read! Your Lord is the Most Gracious,
Who taught by the Pen, taught man what
he knew not.* Al-Qur'an 96:3-5

*Soon shall We show them Our signs in
the universe and in their own souls, until
it becomes clear to them that this Qur'an*

*is indeed the Truth. Is it not enough that
your Lord is a witness over everything?*

Al-Qur'an 41:53

Based on the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, and the teachings of the Qur'an, Muslims of the early period of the Islamic era became pioneers in medicine, chemistry, physics, arts, astronomy, geography, navigation, poetry, mathematics, logarithms, calculus, architecture, literature, and history.



Islamic Architect: Taj Mahal – Agra in India

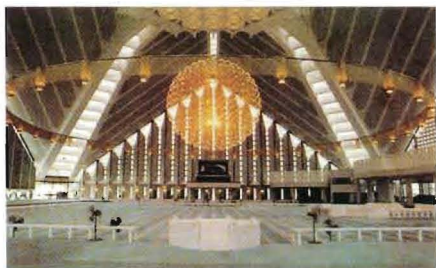
Arabic numerals, the concept of zero (which is vital to the advancement of mathematics) and algebra were developed and transmitted from Islamic states to Europe, which contributed to the Renaissance of Europe and world civilization. Muslims also developed sophisticated instruments like the astrolabe, the quadrant and good navigational maps.

What is Worship in Islam?

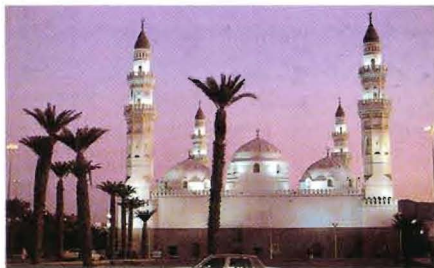
In Islam each and every action which is done in accordance with God's commandment is worship. Therefore, doing a job, raising a family, interaction with community are all acts of worship if done in accordance with God's

commandments as acted upon and directed by the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. Islam requires the individual to submit himself completely to Allah:

"Say, surely my prayer, my sacrifice, my life and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of the worlds, He has no partners; thus I am commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims." A-Qur'an 6:162-163



*Inside of King Faisal Masjid
Islamabad in Pakistan*



*Masjid Quba
First Mosque of the Prophet in Madinah,
Saudi Arabia*

The natural result of this submission is that one's actions should conform to the instructions of the One to Whom the person is submitting. Islam requires that its followers model their lives according to its teachings in every respect.

Islam does not teach ritualism. It places great emphasis on intention and action. To worship God is to love Him and to act upon His commands in every aspect of life, to enjoin goodness and

forbid wrongdoing and oppression, to practice charity and justice and to serve Him by serving mankind. The Qur'an presents this sublime concept in the following words:

"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East or the West, but righteous is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Book and the Prophets; and gives his wealth for love of Him to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask, and sets slaves free; and observes proper worship and pays the Zakah. And those who keep their treaty when they make one, and they are patient in tribulation, adversity and time of stress; such are those who are sincere. Such are the God-fearing." Al-Qur'an 2:177

What are the Five Pillars of Islam?

Every action done with the awareness that it fulfills the Will of God is considered an act of worship in Islam. But five specific acts of worship termed as the Pillars of Islam provide the framework of Muslim's spiritual life. These are: declaration of Faith, Prayers, Alms giving, Fasting and Pilgrimage to Makkah for those who can afford to do so physically and financially.

1. The Declaration of Faith:

To say:



La Ilaha Illallahu Muhammad-ur-Rasoolallah

"There is none worthy of worship except One God (Allah), and that Muhammad is His messenger."

It is called *Shahadah* (to bear witness). This is to affirm that God is One and that Muhammad, peace be upon him, is one of His Prophets. In other words, to make a commitment that one shall follow God's commandments and the exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, in each and every respect.

2. Prayers (*Salat*) are prescribed five times a day as a duty towards God. *Salat* is the direct link between the worshipper and God. *Salat* and *Zakat* (2nd and 3rd pillar of Islam) have been mandatory in the Shari'ah (laws) of all prior prophets. The Holy Qur'an states the address of Jesus, peace be upon him, to his people at his birth:

Whereupon the baby (Jesus) spoke out: "I am indeed a servant of Allah. He has given me the Book (Gospel) and made me a Prophet. He has made me blessed wherever I may be. He has commanded me to establish Salah (prayer) and give Zakah (obligatory charity) as long as I live.

Al-Qur'an 19: 30-31

Salat (Prayer) is commanded for spiritual elevation of the individuals. It purifies the heart and controls temptation, wrongdoing, and evil. There is no priesthood in Islam, so the collective prayers are led by a learned person who knows the Qur'an, and is chosen by the congregation.

Prayers are offered the way the Prophet offered his prayers. Prayers are said in Arabic which include: praise to God, a few verses from the Holy Qur'an, salutation to the Prophet and supplication for oneself, one's

parents, children, and the rest of the world.



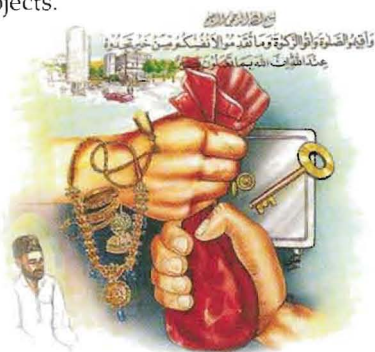
Kuala Kangsar Mosque - Malaysia

Prayers are offered at dawn, afternoon, before sunset, after sunset and nightfall. Although it is preferable to offer the prayers in congregation in a mosque, a Muslim can pray at home or anywhere, such as in offices, factories and parks when it is the time to offer the prayer.

3. Almsgiving (*Zakat*) means 'purification' and it also means growth. Wealth is purified through setting aside a specified portion of one's wealth for the poor, needy, those who suffer losses from incidents beyond their control and the general welfare to establish economic balance and social justice in the society. Muslims are encouraged to spend in charity as much as they can beyond the mandatory requirement of *Zakat* which is called *Sadaqah* (voluntary charity).

It is important to note that *Zakat* is on savings held for one full year and is not on the money in circulation. In other words Islam encourages the Muslims to put their money in circulation so that everyone in the community can benefit from it. Those who hold capital from circulation are hurting the poor and the community's welfare projects. Therefore, The Prophet Muhammad

(peace be upon him) ordered such persons to pay a minimum of one fortieth (two and a half percent) for the poor, needy and community welfare projects.

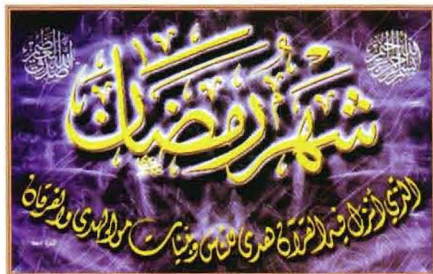


Zakat is an act of worship for the wealth of a believer and plays an important role in providing financial stability to the community. The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said: "Zakah is the treasure of Islam." One of the main reasons for poverty in the Muslim countries is neglecting this pillar of Islam.

4. Fasting (Sawm) during the month of Ramadan: This means abstention from food, beverages, and sex from dawn to sunset, and curbing evil intentions, desires and actions. Those who are sick, on a journey, too old, and women who are in menstruation, pregnant or nursing are not required to observe the fasting but are required to make up the missed days later in the year. All those who are physically unable to keep the fast, they must feed a poor or needy person (minimum of two meals that they would eat themselves) for every day missed. It inculcates sympathy for those who go hungry, and increases love, sincerity, devotion and obedience to God's commandments.

Fasting requires the Muslims to live by the moral code of Islam. Without

following this moral code during Ramadan, fasting is reduced to simple starvation without bringing any reward or spiritual benefit. Fasting develops patience, piety, self-restraint, God consciousness, and willpower to bear hardships. Its objective is to develop a community of God-conscious people.



It is the month of Ramadan in which the Qur'an is revealed, the Guidance for mankind, clear proofs and the criterion of Right and Wrong



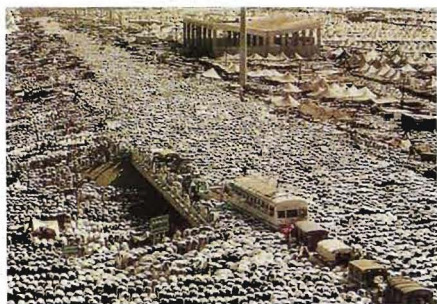
Surely, the noblest of you in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous

The close of the month of Fasting is marked by a festival called Eid-al-Fitr which is celebrated through giving charity to poor people in the community and congregational prayers.

5. Pilgrimage (Hajj) to Makkah, once in a lifetime. It is an obligation only on those who are physically and financially able to undertake the journey.

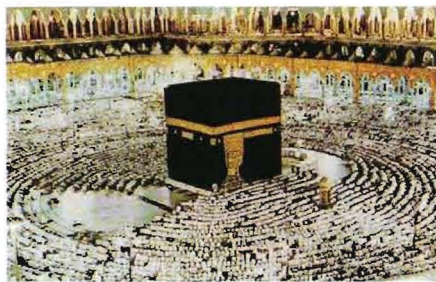
Over two million people go to Makkah each year from almost all the countries of the world. In fact it is a peace

conference at the world level. It is meant to provide a meeting place for Muslims from the various parts of the world to exchange the progress of Islam in their respective countries and to suggest to each other working solutions of their mutual problems.



Over three million pilgrims in prayer during Hajj in the valley of Arafat near Makkah

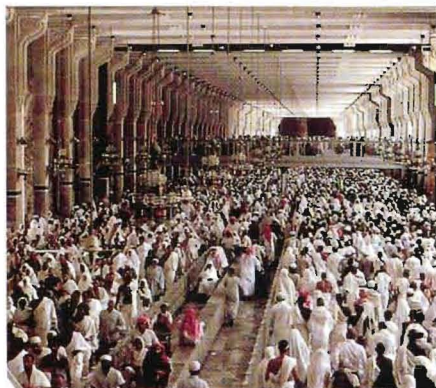
Pilgrims are required to wear special dress to strip away the distinctions of class and culture. It provides practical training to know that the whole of mankind is a single brotherhood, and that no one has superiority over the other based on language, color, race and ethnic background, except through piety and righteousness.



Pilgrims during prayer around the Ka'bah

Hajj is performed on the 9th day of the 12th month of Islamic Calendar called Zul-Hijjah. The rites of Hajj include circling around the Ka'bah seven times counter clockwise, walking and running between the two hills called Safa and Marwa as did Hagar, the

wife of the Prophet Abraham, peace be upon him, in search of water for her baby Ishmael.



Walking between the hills of Safa and Marwa during pilgrimage – a tradition of woman (wife of the Prophet Abraham, peace be upon him)

The pilgrims stand in prayer together in the wide valley of Arafat near the 'Mount of Mercy' where Adam, peace be upon him, stood to repent for his sin of disobeying God as a result of which he was expelled from paradise. God forgave his sin and now the children of Adam stand in the same place to seek forgiveness for their sins.

The close of Hajj is marked by commemorating the tradition of the Prophet Abraham, peace be upon him, when he offered his son Ishmael, peace be upon him, in sacrifice to God and God replaced his son with a lamb and accepted that great sacrifice. God mandated the followers of Abraham, peace be upon him, to sacrifice an animal on that day (10th of Zul-Hijjah, which is called Eid-al-Adha (Festival of Feast)). It is celebrated with congregational prayers, sacrificing an animal (lamb, goat, cow or camel) and the exchange of gifts in the family and Muslim communities all over the world.