

ACTS OF WORSHIP OBLIGATORY FOR A MUSLIM

There are five pillars of Islam. One cannot become a true Muslim unless one adheres to all of them. They are: The testimony that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) is His messenger; the maintenance of *salat*; the payment of *zakat*; fasting during the month of Ramadan; and pilgrimage to Ka'ba (Al-Bukhari & Muslim). A believer shall be entitled to enter Paradise if he performs these acts of worship well, solemnly and consistently.

It is narrated through Hadrat Anas Bin Malik (*Radhi Allahu Anhu*) that once an A'rabi [villager] visited the Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and had the following conversation with him:

A'rabi: O Muhammad (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) your emissary came to us and told us that God has sent you as His messenger?

The Messenger of Allah: Our emissary told you the truth.

A'rabi: Tell me who has created this heaven?

The Messenger of Allah: Allah has created it.

A'rabi: And who made this earth?

The Messenger of Allah: Allah has made it.

A'rabi: And who has erected these mountains and created what is in them?

The Messenger of Allah: All this has been created by Allah.

A'rabi: By the entity that made this heaven and earth and erected these mountains, has Allah sent you as His messenger?

The Messenger of Allah: Yes.

A'rabi: Your emissary says that Allah has made performance of *salat* five times in the day and night obligatory for us?

The Messenger of Allah: He has told you the truth.

A'rabi: By God who has sent you as His messenger tell me if He has commanded you to do this.

The Messenger of Allah: Yes.

A'rabi: your emissary also tells us that payment of zakat on our property has also been made obligatory?

The Messenger of Allah: He has told the truth.

A'rabi: By God who has made you His messenger tell me whether He has commanded you to do it.

The Messenger of Allah: Yes.

A'rabi: Your emissary also tells us that fasting during the month of Ramadan every year has been made obligatory for us.

The Messenger of Allah: He has told the truth.

A'rabi: By God who has made you His messenger tell me if He has commanded you to do it.

The Messenger of Allah: Yes.

A'rabi: Your emissary also tells us that pilgrimage to Ka'ba is also obligatory for those who have means to undertake it.

The Messenger of Allah: He has told you the truth.

The narrator says that the person then moved away saying: By the entity that has sent you with truth I shall do neither more nor less than that. The Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) observed that if this man is true he shall surely enter Paradise (Muslim).

The acts of worship are not limited to the above-mentioned obligatory and mandatory *ibadaat*. Besides, there are innumerable occasions and means of performing worship optionally to seek nearness to Allah. If one does so his heart is filled with the love of Allah. As inspired by Allah, the Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) pronounced on behalf of Allah the Almighty: He who has enmity against my pious servant I declare war against him; when a bondman of mine adopts any one of the things which I have made obligatory for him to come near me (and my bondman tries to come near me by performing optional worship) then I keep him dear. And when I love him I become a means of hearing with which he hears; I become his sight with which he sees; I become his hands with which he gasps; I become his feet with which

he walks; if he begs anything of me I grant him that; if he seeks refuge in me I grant him my refuge; I have no hesitation in any matter other than extracting his soul (because it is disliked by him for being painful for him); I hate what is disliked by him. But ultimately he has to face death (Al-Bukhari).

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