

## Similarity in the Philosophy of Worship in Torah and Quran

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### Abstract

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The concepts of individual and collective worship are common in the Torah and Quran. They are not empty rituals but a source of social reformation. The examination and analysis of how rituals of worship lead to the formation of a healthy society is the purpose of this article. The article also attempts to highlight the similarities inherent in the Law of Moses and Islamic Law. The basic fundamentals of religion and preaching of all messengers, from Adam to Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H), are essentially similar in nature. Though many different Sharia's were revealed and many declared redundant and changed, religion did not change. Hence, though the religious beliefs of all messengers were identical, the Sharia (revealed law) and mode of worship varied. Yet, all prophets were Muslims because the religion of all is one, and this Oneness is reflected in the similarities in the teachings present in all revealed books.

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### Introduction

Man's obedience to Allah in itself is not the purpose because obedience from Mankind is of no benefit to Allah. Neither does Man's disobedience result in any loss or harm to Allah.

In fact, obedience to Allah is a way to train and educate Man and its gains and losses are evident in man's individual and collective life.

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Therefore, the purpose of obedience to Allah is for Mankind's benefit, the development of this Earth, promotion of good actions and good life, the recognition of the true Creator, peace and prosperity, and the protection of each and every one's life on the principles of justice / betterment for everyone.

Religious law and obedience determine the limits of Man's outer and inner life. A firm faith requires that Man conquers his inner self and follows the Shariah of Allah. This is because Allah's every injunction has some benefit for Man which, Man, with his limited intelligence, cannot fathom. For example, Salah (namaz) in which man's body and soul is steeped in worship, is a form of worship which deepens and increases man's contact with Allah. Besides, the greatest benefit of Salah is that it continuously reiterates the fact in man's mind that he is a creation of Allah and has to live his life the way Allah has prescribed. Similarly, fasting not only inculcates the spirit of sacrifice but also ensures that Man remains within the limits and boundaries of Shariah. This keeps Man away from sin since the most effective way to control inner self and to keep the soul alive is to practice patience and control. This patience generates "taqwa" or piety, which is the crux of fasting.

Likewise, where the purpose of spending in the way of Allah is to help humanity at large, it also leads to sympathy and mutual help for each other. The wisdom behind this is that when Man spends in the name and way of Allah, his heart will also be with Allah. This is why Jesus has said: and where thieves do not break "Do not store up for yourselves on earth. Where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But treasures store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust destroy in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Methew, 6:19-21).

The reason behind Hajj is to keep alive the practice/ Sunnah of our ancestors as well as to keep alive the past of Bani Israel. Likewise, during Hajj, the ritual of circumambulation around the Holy Ka'aba and sacrifice, are meant to remember and revere the practice of Hazrat Hajra and Hazrat Ibrahim. Hence the philosophy of hajj is to reinforce man's link with the past, to generate a spirit of worship in man, and reverence for sacred places, and develop a sense of unity.

The purpose of sacrifice in Islam and Judaism is obedience to God and a source of purification of the inner self.

No doubt, Allah employed several methods to train mankind and ensured that through all these methods, the purpose and philosophy of life were conveyed. Hence, in this respect, revealed law stresses on worship of God and the temporary nature of this world. In fact, worship of Allah has been stated as the reason behind the creation of Man and Jinn. In the Holy Quran, Allah (SWT) states:

I created the jinn and humankind only that they might worship me (Al Quran, 51:56).

### **Literature Review**

Many scholars have debated, written and still continue to write about the wisdom and philosophy of worship. Maulana Maududi, in his book "Islami Ibadat per tehqeeqi nazar" (2000, p.11) has stated that the purpose of worship is to dedicate one's entire life to Allah's Will and whatever one does, should be in accordance with Sharia. Shibli Naumani in "Ibada'at" (1982, p.141) declares worship as the most efficient way for the betterment of human morality since through worship man's inner self is constantly kept conscious and receptive to good morals and deeds. Azizuddin bin Abdussalam declares the purpose of worship to be individual prosperity and welfare in his book, "quaid-ul-ahkam" (1934, 2/70). This is because Allah is beyond the need of anyone's worship; nobody's obedience gains Allah anything just as nobody's disobedience make Him suffer from any loss. Rather, the sole benefactor of worship is Man himself. Wahbah-ul -Zaheeli in "Nazriya zarorat al Sharia" (1991, p.37) has also defined the philosophy of worship in similar terms.

The Arab author, Yousaf Qarzawi (2004, p.222) provides a detailed explanation of worship's need and importance in his book Urdu translation done by Khuda Bakhsh Kalyar titled "Islam me Ibadat ka haqeeqi mafhoom". According to this book, Qarzawi believes worship functions to create awareness and advises Man lest he forgets his Creator and the Day of Judgment.

Abdul Hamid Badayuni (ND, p. 43) in "Falsafa ibadat e islami" adds that taming and civilizing man's inner self (nafs) is the basic aim of worship. Moreover, it is a way of getting closer to Allah.

Regarding the purpose and philosophy of worship, Fosdick in "Meanings of Prayers" explains that only through worship our lives gain guidance and direction and through it the sense of Allah's presence and existence strengthens and deepens. This contact with Allah in turn is possible only through constant worship. Encyclopaedia Judaica, (1971,16/458) which describes the purpose of worship from the perspective of the Torah, states that worship is in order to gain Heaven, and this can only be achieved by gaining favour with Allah through constant worship. Similarly, Geoffrey Parrinder (ND,p. 176) in "Worship in the World's Religions" writes that Sharia demands lifelong worship from a Jew as worship leads to winning favour and proximity with our Lord who created us.

### **Meaning and Definition of Salat (Prayer)**

Imam Raghīb Isfahani (1454,p. 185)states: "Prayer (Salat) is the name of specific worship. Its basis comprises prayer. ... Every revealed law enjoins upon prayer. The way to perform prayer varies in different sharias. The place of worship is also known as Salat." The holy Qru'an States:

"Those who have been driven from their homes unjustly only because they said: Our Lord is Allah--For had it not been for Allah's repelling some men by means of others, cloisters and churches and oratories and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft mentioned, would assuredly have been pulled down. Verily Allah helpeth one who helpeth Him. Lo! Allah is Strong, Almighty." (Al Qru'an, 22:40)

### **The Concept and Philosophy of Salat in Moses' law**

According to the Holy Quran, there is no messenger who was sent on earth who did not teach prayer to his people. In Islamic time too, some Jews and Christians observed the practice prayer. The Holy Quran says:

"They are not all alike. Of the People of the Scripture there is a staunch community who recite the revelations of Allah in the night season, falling prostrate (before Him)." (Al Qru'an, 3:113)

In the Torah and the Gospel, terms such as "taking name of God", "pray" and "to prostrate" are used for prayer. In the Book of Genesis:

Isaac built an altar there and called on the name of the Lord.” (Genesis, 25:26) “

“To prostrate” is mentioned in connection with prayer in the Torah as well:

Then David said to the whole assembly, “Praise the Lord, the God.” So they all “praised the Lord, the God of their fathers: they bowed low and fell prostrate before the Lord and the king.” (Chronicles, 20:29)

The Standard Jewish Encyclopaedia (1959,p. 1535) explains prayers as an imploration, a request, a way of expressing gratitude. In fact in Moses’ Law, three prayers in sequence have been mentioned. The Morning Prayer, afternoon prayer, and evening prayer. The Standard Jewish Encyclopaedia states “It is man’s appeal to God, whether as a request or in the thanks-giving.... and it is recited three times a day morning ,afternoon and evening .Max Weber (1967,p. 244) believes prayer to be an expression of God’s Oneness and declared God Almighty as the sole deity worthy of worship.

“‘Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord’ is the opening sentence of the present Jewish morning prayer and stands at the head of exhortation.”

According to Baron and Blau (1954,p. 211)Prayers in the Jewish tradition go back to immemorial antiquity. Even at the time when the main emphasis of congregational services was laid on sacrificial worship, individuals turned to God with personal supplication or words of thanks-giving.”

In Collier’s Encyclopaedia,(1963,v.13,p.658) the purpose of prayer in Moses’ Law is to ask forgiveness of sins and for success in the life hereafter. “If a man sins by omission or commission, the way is open for forgiveness through reflection, Prayers, study of Torah and above all, good works.”

In Encyclopaedia Judaica (ND,v.16,458)it is mentioned that Jewish scholars have claimed “Service of Heart” to be the philosophy of prayer, i.e. thanking God wholeheartedly for His blessings and favours and to staunchly believe in His Lordship. “The ancient rabbies deduce the duty of daily prayer from the more general Biblical injunction ‘to serve Him with all thine heart.’ ‘Which is the service of heart?’ they asked, and replied this is prayer.”

In both the Sharias of Islam and Moses, many reasons have been explained for offering prayer, and attaining spirituality, social stability and congregational gatherings are important reasons. "It is intended that his prayers be ethical and not opposed to the interests of others, and that his praying be marked by a sense of inwardness. Prayers at the synagogue is encouraged because here is added strength in praying as a community." (Collier's Encyclopaedia, 1963, v. 13, p. 657)

### **Concept and Philosophy of Prayer in Islamic Sharia**

In the Holy Quran there are several instances where offering prayers and its significance is mentioned. Allah says:

"And be constant in prayer, and spend in charity, and bow down in prayer with all who thus bow down." (Al Qru'an, 2:43)

In this regard, Shah Waliullah (1985, v. 1, p. 153) states: "Prayer has many secrets and wisdoms of which foremost is achievement of a purposeful life and knowledge of Allah. Prayer is a complete package of reflexivity. Through it, attention is drawn towards Allah. In fact many prayers are incorporated in prayer which clearly state the act of prayer to be one that is for Allah alone and the direction while praying is towards Allah too. Any sort of help is to be asked from Allah to. Everyone can benefit from it according to their level of understanding."

Prayer is an important way of reminding Man about the purpose of life. In this respect, Professor Khursheed Ahmed (2001, p. 308) writes: "The first requirement to convert Man's entire life into worship is a mind always conscious of the fact that he is a creation of God and that he has to live his life in a certain manner. This is the most important benefit of prayer."

Prayer has many moral, cultural, and social purposes which Dr. Mohammad Iqbal (2005, pp. 74-75) expresses thus: "The choice of one particular direction in Islamic worship is meant to secure the unity of feeling in the congregation, and its form in general creates and fosters the sense of social equality which destroy the feelings of rank or race. What a tremendous spiritual revolution will take place, practically in no time, if the proud aristocratic Brahmin of South India daily stands shoulder to shoulder with the untouchable! From the unity of all-inclusive ego who creates and sustains all egos follows the essential of all mankind."

Shibli Naumani (1982,p.126) declares prayer to be the means of consciousness of the inner self and of moral reformation. The Quran highlights non-observance of prayer as one of the main reasons of why the people of the book went astray. Allah says:

“Yet they were succeeded by generations [of people] who lost all [thought of] prayer and followed [but] their own lusts; and these will, in time, meet with utter disillusion” (Al Qur’an,19: 59).

At another place, the Quran says:

“Recite that which hath been inspired in thee of the Scripture, and establish worship. Lo! worship preserveth from lewdness and iniquity, but verily remembrance of Allah is more important. And Allah knoweth what ye do” (Al Qru’an, 29:45).

Mufti Mohammad Shahfi (1997,v.6,pp.696-697) writes: “Prayer in itself is a very significant form of worship and religion’s ---. Alongside, there is wisdom in it, namely that prayers stopsone who establishes prayer from lewdness and immorality/ disobedience, i.e. God inspires him to do good and pious acts as well as for abstinence from sin. Hence in both the Judaic and Islamic Sharia, prayer expresses one’s humanity, the imploration for God’s forgiveness and blessings, spiritual purity and to attain proximity with God.

## **Fasting**

Murtaza Al Zaidi says: (ND,v.9,p.255), “the literal meaning of fasting is to stop or leave something. Its meaning in Sharia is the abstinence from food and drink from dawn to dusk by an adult, to make his inner self receptive to piety.”Saeed Ghulam Rasool (2005,v.7,p.345) “Fasting is practiced by people from all religions and regions across the world. Indeed the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and Hindus, all used to fast.”

In the light of a verse from the Quran, fasting is the most ancient way form of worship to train the inner self:

"O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, even as it was prescribed for those before you, that ye may ward off (evil);" (Al Qur'an, 2:183)

The Encyclopedia Americana (1962,v.12,p.52) states fasting "has been an almost universal practice of the human race from early times"

### **The Concept and Philosophy of Fasting in Mosaic Law**

Fasting was made compulsory by God in Moses' Law. Moses fasted for forty days on Mount Sinai and wrote down the Ten Commandments.

"Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights without eating bread and drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenants---the Ten Commandments" (Exodus, 34:28)

Therefore Jews fast for forty days in honor of Moses but observing fast on the fortieth day is compulsory. This is why the Torah stresses on observing fast on the tenth day of the seventh month and compares fasting to giving pain to oneself. Apart from this, in the Jewish scroll there is mention of observing fasting."So you go to the house of the Lord's on a day of fasting and read to the people from the scroll the words of the Lord that you wrote as I dictated. Read them to all the people of Judah who come in from their towns."(Jeremiah, 36:6)

The Encyclopedia of Religion (1987,v.5,pp.287-288) states: "Within the Judaic tradition only one day of fasting was imposed by Mosaic law, 'Yom kippur' the Day of Atonement and Moses fasted forty days on Sinai. Judaism allowed for individual voluntary fasts and there is evidence that Mondays and Thursdays were set aside by some Jewish communities as special days of fasting." However, children below puberty age, pregnant women, and the sick were exempted from fasting.

In Mosaic Law, as in Islamic law, purification is the purpose of fasting. It is practiced for spiritual ends, as a sign of repentance or mourning or to request divine assistance. <sup>i</sup> It is considered an exercise for spiritual purposes to plead for God's blessings and help. The Jewish book of law, the Talmud states "Just as no work means to sit and do nothing, that if one is sitting in the sun, and is hot he must not change his place and sit down in the shade, or if he is sitting in the shade and it is cold he must not sit down in the sun" (Leo Aurbech, Talmud, p.122).



This means that one should put himself through hardship to inculcate patience and tolerance. This in turn disciplines one to bow down before God. In the Judaic law, the purpose of fasting hence is to attain a life free from sins, to beg for mercy for those committed, purification of inner self, and a to do good deeds. Abraham writes, "Sin is evil life, atonement is the better life, and the better life was attained by fasting, prayers, charity, by a purification of heart and a cleanliness of the hands" (Israel Abrahams, 1907, p.45). This is why many Jews used to fast on individual voluntary basis to purify themselves from sins and to beg forgiveness and attain God's favour (The standard Jewish Encyclopedia, 1959, p. 668).

Shibli Naumani (1982, p.209) writes: "Fasting has been a technique to discipline the inner self since the earliest of revealed law. This is why in the Quran Allah (S.W.T) says:

All of its benefits have been described in one word: 'taqwa' or piety and since fasting was common in all religions, Quran refers to all religions when it mentions fasting." In short, in Mosaic Law, attaining piety, disciplining the inner self, approval of God, living a good and virtuous life are the prime purpose of fasting.

### **Islam's Philosophy of Fasting**

The importance of fasting is mentioned at several places in the Quran. Allah says, "'O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, even as it was prescribed for those before you, that ye may ward off (evil);" (Al Qur'an 2:183).

At another place, the Quran states "and eat and drink until the white thread becometh distinct to you from the black thread of the dawn. Then strictly observe the fast till nightfall" (Al Qur'an, 2:187).

Fasting is the best way for purifying the inner self. Imam ibnul Qayyim (ND, p.78) writes " it is the true way to purify the inner self and within it is contained the true secret of the life hereafter. This is a condition in which one feels the hunger and thirst of another." Similarly, Shah Waliullah (1985, v.1, p.156) while describing the importance of fasting writes, "Fasting is a good deed of the highest kind of virtue, it increases the spirituality and decreases the sexual desire, It is the best way to make our souls purely shine".

In Maulana Mohammad Idrees Kandhalwi's (1982,v.1,p.277) words, "Patience is the best way to kill the inner self and to keep the soul alive and the best way to inculcate patience is to fast for a few days." Shibli Naumani (1982,p.32) believes, "The Quran explains the truth of fasting as piety because it is a quiet form of worship which is free of exhibitionism and this is the root of all worship and morality."

Hence in both Islam and Judaism, emphasis is placed on numerous advantages and benefits of fasting. In both, there is a similar philosophy behind fasting, namely attainment of piety, cleanliness of inner self, atonement of sins and gaining God's favour.

## **Zakat**

Zakat is also one such form of worship that has been prescribed in all the revealed books. Like prayer that has always been a pillar and a necessary part of all religions, Zakat too has always been a crucial component of every religion (Shibli Naumani 1982,p.141).

## **Meaning and Definition**

Lexicographers have given two meanings for the term 'Zakat': to make clean and pure or purity; to nourish and grow, etc(Asfahani,1454).

While elaborating on the meaning of Zakat, Sheikh Mahmood (1947,p.87) Ahmed explains "Zakat literally means purification; technically it is a tax on the wealth to provide social justice." In the Quran it is said, " "Take alms of their wealth, wherewith thou mayst purify them and mayst make them grow, and pray for them. Lo! thy prayer is an assuagement for them. Allah is Hearer, Knower" (Al Qur'an, 9:103).

## **Concept of Zakat in Mosaic Law**

Moses' law contains clear instructions about Zakat. Prayer and Zakat were both included in the covenant taken by God from the Bani Israel. The holy Quran says: "Establish worship, pay the poor-due, and bow your heads with those who bow (in worship)" (AlQur'an, 2:43).

While mentioning Hazrat Ismaeel, the Quran says, "And make mention in the Scripture of Ishmael. Lo! he was a keeper of his promise, and he was a messenger (of Allah) a Prophet. He enjoined upon his people worship and almsgiving, and was acceptable in the sight of his Lord." (Al Qru'an 19:54,55)

The Qurans furthers says with regards to the law bought by all the messengers of God: "And We made them chiefs who guide by Our command, and We inspired in them the doing of good deeds and the right establishment of worship and the giving of alms and they were worshippers of Us (alone)" (Al Qru'an, 21:73).

Similar injunctions as these are found in the Torah, such as in the Bible:

"When you reap the harvest of your land does not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the Lord your God" ( Leviticus,19:9-10).

In this connection, Max Weber (1967,p.47) states: "Land and vineyard are intentionally not to be completely harvested in order that something be left for the gerim and the poor of the ends of the fields." Hence, land and vineyard were not fully harvested intentionally because in Judaism it is binding to keep a share of travelers, needy and orphans. One-tenth of the produce of the land and the fruits of the trees were to be given in the way of God. The bible says:

"A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees. Belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord. If a man redeems any of his tithes he must add a fifth of the value to it." (Leviticus,27:30-31)

It was compulsory to give some part from flocks of animals too. The book of bible instructs:

"The entire tithe of the herd and flock-every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd's rod- will be holy to the Lord. He must not pick out the good from the bad or make any substitution if he does make a substitution; both the animal and its substitute become holy and cannot be redeemed." (**Leviticus,27:32-33**)

The produce from the margins of the fields was reserved for the poor and needy. This is called "Peah" in Judaic law.

The Talmud comprehensively explains the purpose and philosophy of "Peah" in Judaism as follows: "The following have no prescribed measure Peah (Corner of the field, the portion of the crop that must be left by the owner to the poor). First fruit, festival-offerings, deeds of kindness, and study of the law. And the following are the things the fruit of which a man enjoys in this world but the capital fund of which remains for him in the world to come. One should not leave Peah less than one-sixth of the field. And although there is no prescribed measure it should be fixed according to the size of the field, the number of the poor and the need"(Leo Aurbech,Talmud,p.49).Hence according to the Talmud, the philosophy behind "Peah" is that while Man derives benefits from the produce of the land in this world, "Peah" is for the benefit and deliverance in the Life Hereafter. Apart from deliverance in the Hereafter, "Peah", i.e. Zakat, is also a means of purifying and increasing wealth. The Talmud mentions that the secret of the rich is that they reserve one-tenth of their wealth for the poor and needy."(H.Polano, ND, The Talmud)According to the Talmud, "Peah" is to be given "of the trees, sumach, carob, nut trees, the almond, vines, the pomegranate, the olive, and date palm are all subject to peah"(Leo Aurbech,Talmud,p.50). Hence "Peah" is to be given for trees too, in addition to animals and fields.

Apart from "Peah", the concept of "Gleaning" is also found in Judaic law for the help of the needy and destitute. Its purpose and philosophy is similar to that of "Peah". It refers to that part of the harvest that falls on the ground while harvesting crops. The Talmud explains "Gleaning" thus: "If one cut a handful, or pulled up a handful, and a thorn pricked him and it fell from his hands to the ground, it belongs to the owner. If it fell on the inside of the hand or the inside of the sickle, it belongs to the poor."(Leo Aurbech,Talmud,p.51). Hence according to this law, "gleaning" depends on how the grain falls from the hand during harvesting. If it falls directly on the floor, it belongs to the owner; if it falls inside the hand, it belongs to the poor. Likewise, that part of the harvest blown away by the wind and the part of the harvest bales that touch the ground also belongs to the poor. The Talmud stresses on the rights of the poor to such an extent that it declares upholding their rights as a source of increasing and protecting the wealth and considers it as important as salt for the preservation of meat. Hence, it is to the benefit of an individual's wealth to be mindful of the rights of the poor and needy"(H.Polano, ND,The Talmud,p.244).

In the light of the above citations, it is clear that in Judaic law, the philosophy of "Peah" or "Gleaning" is to gain benefits in the life hereafter, increase in wealth, social benefits and betterment and help to the poor, needy, orphans, widows and the deserving.

### **Concept and Philosophy of Zakat in Islam**

In Islam, after prayer, the form of worship that is considered imperative for getting close to God is Zakat. The Quran mentions the importance, significance and purpose of Zakat. At one place the Quran says

"Lo! those who believe and do good works and establish worship and pay the poor due, their reward is with their Lord and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve." (Al Qur'an, 2:277)

Zakat is obligatory on every Muslim male and female, who has wealth and it is the right of the poor and the needy. The Quran says:

"And in their wealth the beggar the outcast had due share. " (AL-Qru'an, 51:19)

In this respect, Mohammad Aslam (1947) states "In the religious sense this term is applied to the share given by the wealthy to the beggar, and by doing so they increase their wealth and seek blessing."

"The term "Zakat" means to nourish or to prosper. According to Sharia, it means to make someone the rightful owner of specific possessions (usu. wealth) under certain terms and conditions. This means that those with wealth should give a portion of it with to the poor and needy" (Jazairi, v.1, p.590).

"Zakat is the name of sympathy and mutual help amongst each other. Its motive is to establish a disciplined community and to ensure the benefits of wealth are mutually shared" (Naumani, 1982, p.141). "This indicates that the zakat aims to abolish the class differences prevalent in the society by making the wealth of the rich reach to the poor." (Ahmed, 2001, p.460) This is reiterated by the hadith:

You should take wealth from rich and return it to the poor.

The central, basic aim of Zakat is contained in the meaning of the word itself. "Zakat" means to purify and to clean, i.e. to be cleansed of all moral and spiritual sins. The Quran uses the word "Zakat" in this very sense repeatedly. For instance, it says in Surah Al-Shams:

He is indeed successful who causeth it to grow, (Al Qur'an91:9)

This is why the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) enjoined his followers to pray and give Zakat. Zakat is given purely to seek God's pleasure and the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) declared pleasure of God and attainment of heaven as the purpose behind giving Zakat (Al Bukhari, 1981, v.2, p.102). Regarding Zakat, Ashraf Ali Thanawi (1989, p.99) writes: "When someone spends the wealth on which depend his livelihood and which is earned through toil and tribulations, in the way of God, then he is cleansed from within of the dirt of stinginess; simultaneously, his faith strengthens and intensifies. His relationship with God improves because giving wealth in the name of God is difficult for the inner self to bear. This is why by bearing this pain, one's relation with God improves." Abdul Hamid Badayouni (ND, p.43) writes' "Indeed Zakat is the best remedy for affluence and poverty. If today, we establish a proper system of collection and disbursement Zakat and charity/alms, then we can easily solve all our complex problems."

## Hajj

There is no nation in the world that does not have any sacred place(s) or where its believers gather for some special religious purpose. There are certain rules and etiquette for visiting such sacred places; these rules are extremely honorable and sacred in the eyes of each religion. Shah Waliullah (1985, v.1, p.158) points out that the basic tenants of Hajj are present in every religion and nation. Pilgrimage is the intention, visit or a long journey to a shrine or other sacred place or person.

## Philosophy of Hajj in Judaic Law

The tradition of Hajj is an ancient one in Judaism. This is why the old remains of Jerusalem and its surroundings are still popular sacred places visited frequently by the Jewish community.

The Talmud states that the tribe of "Bani Israel was instructed to visit Jerusalem on three specific occasions." (H.Polano, ND,The Talmud,p.323).The Exodus mentions the word "Eid"(Exodus,23:41) Encyclopedia Judaica states(1971,v.16,p.154)"In Hebrew the term aliyah (light 'going up') has been used since ancient time for pilgrimages to Jerusalem on the three festivals known as Shalosh regalim. The Torah prescribes that all males must go up to Jerusalem 'three times a year' on the three festivals Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot". The Encyclopedia of Religion(1987,v.8,p.43) defines three Jewish festivals Passover as "the season of our freedom," Shavuot as "the season of our Torah" and on Sukkoth "to the season of our rejoicing." "Passover" is a festival to celebrate freedom when the tribe of Bani Israel was liberated from the Pharaoh in Egypt. "Shavuot" is the celebration of conferment of the Torah to Moses and "Sukkoth" is a festival of rejoicing and being happy. The festival of "Sukkoth" is known as "Tabernacles" too. According to some Jews this is a nine day festival while some say it is an eight day festival. In this connection,(The Standard Jewish Encyclopedia(1959,p.1508) explains that "They had to offer up a special burnt offering on the occasion." The Talmud states that "The Lord said.....and sacrifices peace-offering there on."(Polano, ND,The Talmud,p.362).It is necessary for the Jews to visit Jerusalem on the "Feast of Tabernacles"(Encyclopedia Biblica, 1899,v.4,p.4862)"Feast of Tabernacles begins on the fifteenth of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar (October). On this Eid, the Jews are instructed to stay in tents for seven days in order to remind them of how their ancestors made and lived in tents for forty years after the exodus from Egypt. Hence the purpose of this festival is to keep alive the practice of their ancestors and to remember their past. This is similar to how Muslims per the injunctions of God circumambulate (tawaf) around the Holy Ka'aba and offer sacrifice in memory of Hagar and Abraham.

"The Jews hold Jerusalem so sacred that even after the destruction of the temple there, they still continue to celebrate and observe the festivals"(The Standard Jewish Encyclopedia(1959,p.1508).Thus it can be seen that in the Jewish tradition, the practice of Hajj is in order to keep a connection with the past, to develop a sense of obedience and worship, love for sacred places and to keep the spirit of unity alive in the Jewish community.

## Concept and Philosophy of Hajj in Islam

According to religious law, "Hajj" refers to that substantial form of worship in which Muslims gather at the Holy Ka'aba to perform certain rites and worship as in Hajj Muslims make the intention of visiting the Holy Ka'aba. This is why this is called Hajj( Islahi, 1966,p.149).Whosoever has attained greatness is by humbling himself before the Almighty. And the Holy Ka'aba is one such place of showing humility. The Holy Quran says:

"And when We made the House (at Mecca) a resort for mankind and a sanctuary, (saying): Take as your place of worship the place where Abraham stood (to pray). And We imposed a duty upon Abraham and Ishmael, (saying): Purify My house for those who go around and those who meditate therein and those who bow down and prostrate themselves (in worship)" (AlQur'an, 2:125).and again said,

ﷻ "And pilgrimage to the House is a duty unto Allah for mankind, for him who can find a way thither." (Al Qur'an, 3: 97)

Hajj such a form of worship in which each and every rite expresses the deep level of love that the pilgrim has for his Creator. It reflects the pilgrim's belief in Tauheed or Oneness of God and proves his/her love for God. Sadruddin Islahai (1966) while explaining the wisdom behind Hajj, writes: "Since the Holy Ka'aba was built on the foundation of Oneness of God, therefore, Hajj preaches Tauheed. As soon as the pilgrim sees the Holy Ka'aba, thoughts of Oneness of God flood in his heart and soul. Apart from this, the constant recitation of 'O God I am present, kissing the Black Stone, Saiy, sacrifice, hence each and every ritual of Hajj reiterate the Oneness of God in the pilgrim's mind and soul"( Islahi, 1966,pp.171-172).

who has equated Hajj equivalent to love of God, writes, "The Holy Ka'aba is a place to witness the light of God. It is compulsory on everyone who loves God to visit this house of God who is the Light of the skies and the earth, at least once in their lifetime, to fervently circumambulate around its walls and to kiss its doorstep. Those who declare to love God but do not consider it compulsory to visit His house cannot truly love God"(Kandhalwi 1982,v.1,p.153).



Ashraf Ali Thanawi (1989,pp.142-143) declares “fulfillment of promise” as one purpose of Hajj. Every rite of hajj is the enemy of pride and arrogance and long distances have to be covered. Family and friends are left behind.

We get rid of the dependence of the desires of our inner self, as well as from laziness and listlessness. Most importantly, a centuries old covenant between Man and God exists which is fulfilled every time Man performs Hajj. Hence in this manner, hajj also teaches the fulfillment of a promise and the honoring of a pact.” Shibli Naumani (1982,p.291) sums up the importance of Hajj in a beautifully comprehensive manner when he states “Hajj is not only a pillar of religion, but dominates and influences moral, economic, social, political, indeed every aspect of a man’s national life, and is the brightest star of the Muslim community that indicates their superior international position.”

### **Sacrifice**

Travel to religious places and sacred sites where people gather to sacrifice or give offerings in honor of God, or gods, goddesses and deities is a part of every civilization in the world. In this respect, Allah says in the Holy Quran:

“And for every nation have We appointed a ritual, that they may mention the name of Allah over the beast of cattle that He hath given them for food; and your God is One God, therefore surrender unto Him. And give good tidings (O Muhammad) to the humble.(Al Qur’an, 22:34)

At another place, the same Surah mentions:

“Unto each nation have We given sacred rites which they are to perform; so let them not dispute with thee of the matter, but summon thou unto thy Lord. Lo! thou indeed followqaqest right guidance(Al Qur’an, 22:67).

### **Concept and Philosophy of Sacrifice in Judaic Law**

The concept of sacrifice and offerings is present in Judaism. The Torah mentions it at several places and enjoins adherence to it, for instance“and you present to the Lord offerings made by fire.

From the herd or the flock, as and aroma pleasing to the Lord-whether burnt offerings or sacrifices. For special vows or free will offerings or festival offerings-then the one who bring his offering shall present to the Lord a grain offering of a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a quarter of a hin<sup>c</sup> of oil.”( Number,15:3-4 )

In another place it has been said in the Bible:

“When you sacrifice a fellowship offering to the Lord, sacrifice it in such a way that it will be accepted on your behalf. (leviticus.19:5)”

It is described about the sacrifice given by Prophet David:

After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings,he blessed the people in the name of the Lord Almighty,”(2 sam.6:18,19)

For offerings to God and as penance for sins, animals were scarified. Sacrifices were offered every day and a fire was left burning at the site of sacrifice. They completely burnt any sacrifice given as offering whereas only a certain portion of other forms of sacrifice were burnt.” (leviticus.1:6-9)

The Encyclopaedia Biblica(1899,v.4,p.4184) mentions the following types of sacrifice practiced by the Jews:

The sin offerings ; burnt offerings; guilt offerings and fellowship offerings. For burnt offerings, a male without defect from the herd was necessary but for fellowship offerings an animal from the herd,whether male or female was allowed(leviticus.1:2-3). Complete burnt offerinnngs are comparatively less important than the others in which food offerings and gatherings were also arranged. Burnt offering was not given separately and in certain cases, it was given along with the offerings of the other scarifies. The poor were given the relaxation that they could give a pigeon or a dove as an offering as penance for a sin. However, the rich had to give a four-legged animal as sacrifice.(leviticus.5:7-13).

Since the Bani Israel were given superiority over the other people because of their belief in one God, they were ordained to give numerous sacrifices. Gerald L. Berry (1636,p.31) explains “Any father could make sacrifice, usually a burnt offering of first fruit of crops and herds but sometimes a human sacrifice.”

The destruction of unlawful sacrificial sites was ordered and not giving sacrifice in unlawful sacrificial sites was considered punishable. The Torah says: "Build there an altar to the Lord your God, an altar of stones.

Do not use any iron tool upon them. Build the altar of the Lord your God, with fieldstones and offer burnt offering on it to the Lord your God"(Deuteronomy, 27:6-7)

It also has said in the Bible:

Destroy completely all the places on the high mountains and on the hills and under every spreading tree where the nations you are dispossessing worship their gods. Break down their altar, smash their sacred stones and burn their Asherah poles in the fire; cut down the idols of their gods and wipe out their names from those places. You must not worship the Lord your God in their way. But you are to seek the place the Lord your God will choose from among all your tribes to put his Name there for his dwelling. To that place you must go."(Deuteronomy,12:2-5)

One significant function of sacrifice in Judaism is abstinence from shirk as mentioned in the Talmud: "Has God pleasure in the meat and blood of sacrifices... bring your offerings at least to me."(H.Polano, The Talmud, ND, P:264)

All the sacrifices revolve around the one point, namely nearness to God and purity of the inner self. Hasting's Bible Dictionary (1904,pp.421-422) explains that "Sacrifice belongs to the class of religious acts in which man seeks to draw near to God."<sup>ii</sup> The Universal Bible Dictionary states "In Judaic law, sacrifice is for purity of the soul and to win approval of God."<sup>iii</sup>Hence sacrifice is purity of intention and piety.

### **Concept and Philosophy of sacrifice in Islam**

In Islam, the obligation of sacrifice is mentioned in very clear-cut terms. The fact that sacrifice is mentioned alongside prayer in the Quran is self explanatory of the importance and significance of sacrifice:

“Lo! We have given thee Abundance; So pray unto thy Lord, and sacrifice. Lo! It is thy insulter (and not thou) who is without posterity” (Al Qur’an ,108:1-3).

Ibn-e- Qadama in Al-Mughni(1405) writes, “The injunctions regarding sacrifice are found in the Holy Quran, the practice of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) and consensus of religious scholars. In the Quran it is interpreted by many scholars as a reference to offer sacrifice after Eid-ul Azha prayer. The Quran considers sacrifice as a sign of God:

“And the camels! We have appointed them among the ceremonies of Allah”(Al Qur’an ,22:36).

The reality of sacrifice and its religious influences can be better understood by the following verses of the Holy Quran:

“That (is the command). And whoso magnifieth the offerings consecrated to Allah, it surely is from devotion of the hearts”(Al Qur’an ,22:32).

“Therein are benefits for you for an appointed term; and afterward they are brought for sacrifice unto the ancient House”(Al Qur’an ,22:33).

Tahir ul Qadri (2002)writes that one of the purpose of offering sacrifice is to keep alive the practice of Abraham: “The sacrifice of animals at Mina at the occasion of Hajjis to remind of how, in extreme submission to God’s command, Abraham bought his beloved son Ismail to this very place to sacrifice him to win God’s favour. Hence this sacrifice is known as the ‘supreme sacrifice’ was awarded with acceptance by God.”Abdul Hamid Badayouni (ND,p.60) writes: “Where sacrifice teaches courage and a spirit of giving, at the same time it also has an economic angle. The meat, skin, bones, blood etc. of the slaughtered animals are such useful commodities on which depend the needs and businesses of many people.”

Qur’an says:

“Their flesh and their blood reach not Allah, but the devotion from you reacheth Him.

Thus have We made them subject unto you that ye may magnify Allah that He hath guided you. And give good tidings (O Muhammad) to the good" (Al Qur'an,22:37).

Ibn-e-Kaseer(1986,v.3,p.479)explains this thus: "When Amir Shoaibi was questioned about the skins of slaughtered animals, he replied that the blood and meat of slaughtered animals does not reach God, hence you can either sell them or keep them. If you wish, you can give them in the way of God. That is why God has given them in your possession so that you can use them in the way of God and refrain from actions that displease God and praise and honor God."

Syed Salman Nadwi (1976,p.40) explains that "the purpose of sacrifice is to give a feast to the poor and to celebrate the tradition of Abraham." Khursheed Ahmed (2001,p.333) explains the philosophy of sacrifice thus: "Sacrifice is the supreme slaughter that God declared as Ismail's ransom. This is why to sacrifice animals in the way of God is actually equivalent to sacrificing yourself. It is a silent acknowledgement that our life is devoted to God and we will willingly give it to Him when He asks for it."

In both Islamic and Judaic law, the purpose of sacrifice is to gain God's approval and pleasure and a means for cleansing the inner self.

In Islamic law, as compared to Judaic law, every injunction regarding aspect of human life is more concerned with "usr" rather than "yusar". The specialty of Islam is that it takes into consideration the ease and comfort of man and ensures that man isn't inconvenienced in following its injunctions. In this regard God says:

"Allah desireth for you ease; He desireth not hardship for you;" (Al Qur'an,2:185) and yet again said:

"Allah tasketh not a soul beyond its scope"(Al Qur'an, 2: 286)

## Conclusion

In Islamic law as in Judaic law, the concept of individual and collective worship is to be found. The purpose of every worship in Islam is to practice piety and uphold and glorify the name of God. Merely rituals are not enough nor required. In contrast, in Judaism, there is stress on rites and rituals alongside cleansing the inner self and glorifying the name of God.

The study found that according to both the Islamic law and Moses' law, the philosophy or purpose of individual and collective worship is achieving piousness, God's pleasure, and remembrance of God and the purpose is not offering rituals only, worship also becomes a source of inculcating good manners and deeds. In turn, these good deeds and manners lead the society towards improvement, peace, prosperity and progress. Gradually, this society is considered an exemplary society and man deserves to be called man in the real sense of the term because the teachings and commandments of God are aimed at not only practice but also making mankind aware of the concept of social welfare.

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