

Purpose of life and Meaning of Worship

At some point in our life there may come a time when we ask ourselves ‘why am I doing this or that? That’s where a sense of purpose comes in. The greater your purpose the more motivated you will feel to invest time and energy. Purpose is the driving force behind our actions. It guides the goals that we set. Consciously living with purpose enables us to lead a values-based life.

Knowing your purpose enables you to live and act with integrity. It becomes easier to behave in accordance with your core values because you know who you are, what you are and why you are performing the role you have chosen. Ultimately it increases the rate of your success and makes life highly gratifying.

Purpose of life in Islam

Allah Almighty (SWT) says in the Holy Quran:

“And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me”. (Surah Adh-Dhariyat, 56)

Since the creation of human beings, worship has played a central role in man’s life and throughout human history people have been worshipping different deities. Devotion to a higher being continues to tie humanity together despite differences in customs and a variety of beliefs. When concept of worship is associated with Islam, it stands distinctive in all of world religions.

In Islam, Worship doesn’t only mean performing certain rituals like prayers or fasting. **Worship encompasses the whole life of a believer and gives a sense of real accomplishment.**

We can define worship as, “Surrendering one’s will to the Will of Allah Almighty unconditionally and completely in order to seek His pleasure.”

So, all of the actions can be acts of worship if they are (i)permissible acts, (ii)we intend to please Allah through these actions and (iii)perform these deeds according to the commandments of Allah and the way of His Prophet Muhammad (SAWW). It can be any act liking eating, drinking, visiting the sick, help the needy, attending a funeral, obeying the parents, joining ties of relationship with the relatives, seeking knowledge etc.

Worship in Islam is to become willing slaves of Almighty Lord who being a master introduces Himself with the names of Al-Rehman (The Most Merciful) and Al-Raheem (The Most-Compassionate). He also defines His slaves as Ibaad-ur-Rehman.

“And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace.” (Surah Furqan, 63)

Submitting as a slave to Allah Almighty has no similarity with this world’s concept of slavery. The custom of slavery practiced in human history has always been a source of cruelty, oppression, and humiliation. Slavery introduced by man revolves around the idea of benefiting the masters and suppression of the bondmen. However, the concept of slavery to Allah Almighty revolves around the ultimate well-being of the slaves.

Reality of Tests of Life

To measure the level of success, we are put in different tests throughout our life span. Allah says in the Holy Quran,

“(Allah) Who has created death and life, that He may test you which of you is best in deed.” (Al-Mulk , 2)

The test could be anything. Allah can test us both with good things as well as with unpleasant things. It can be by bestowing children, health, wealth, authority or it can be by taking away of any of these blessings. We find this in the Holy Quran as:

We will certainly test you with a touch of fear and famine and loss of property, life, and crops. Give good news to those who patiently endure. (Al-Baqarah, 155)

Allah’s judgement is fair to everyone. He puts everyone to the tests of life according to his capacity. As Allah says,

“Allah does not charge a soul except (with that within) its capacity”. (Surah Al-Baqarah, 286)

Remember all the prophets and messengers were put into tests. So, we should also take the tests of life as challenges and struggle to pass them with dignity. The most beloved Prophet Muhammad (SAWW) was tried by most difficult tests but he remain firm and achieved the purpose.

Instead of complaining we should follow these steps to pass the tests:

- Strengthen your connection with Allah through prayers and Quran
- Keep struggling to solve the problems in a right way ,
- Practice patience,
- Remain steadfast,
- Stay positive
- Trust your Lord and don’t loose hope
- Make frequent Dua
- Seek sincere repentance from Almighty Allah for your sins
- Give charity

If we strive in the right direction with patience and dignity, Allah will make things easier and He can raise us in status higher than the angels.

Conclusion:

The purpose of a believer's life is worshiping Allah the Most -Gracious and the Most-Beneficent. Being slaves to other people or one's own desires and emotions results in distress, anxiety, stress and agonies. On the other hand, becoming slave of the Most Merciful ends up in real happiness, comfort and success. It raises us in status in comparison to other creations and sets us free from any kind of other bondage.