

# Spirituality in Islam

Islam has a unique view on spirituality, as it encompasses all aspects of the Muslim's life. Islam doesn't view 'spirituality' separately from everyday activities. All actions that are referred to Allah are spiritual, including the supplications we utter before we go to bed and the type of bank account we hold. Allah (God) has prescribed certain actions that develop positive characters, as well as bringing the Muslim closer to Him, thereby attaining *taqwa* (God consciousness). This state achieves many things including Allah's love, closeness and divine assistance.

In Islam, everything is potentially 'spiritual', because all actions must be in accordance with Allah's guidance about what pleases and displeases Him. This view comes from the Islamic creed and the Muslim's understanding of *tawhid* (the oneness of God). The fundamental Muslim belief that '*There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah*' creates a world view, a distinct perspective on life and a unique behaviour. It essentially means that all actions, thoughts and desires - from intimate romantic relations with one's spouse to picking up litter from the floor - should be referred back to the Creator of Man, Allah. It establishes a constant awareness, mindfulness and consciousness of Allah in everything that a Muslim thinks, says or does.

Such consciousness is not static, it is dynamic. The level of *taqwa* (God consciousness) is dependent upon how close the Muslim is with his Lord. This personal relationship is established and strengthened by following a unique programme of activities that have been prescribed by God Himself.

This 'spiritual' programme is also an effective means to minimise the negative traits and habits of the Muslim. Some of these activities include remembrance of Allah, prayer, giving charity, fasting, reading and reflecting upon the Qur'an, and asking for Allah's help and mercy.

*Taqwa* (God consciousness) is an essential element in Islamic spiritual practice, without it, the Muslim's behaviour and attitude are corrupted. The benefits of God consciousness, as derived from the Qur'an, are:

**Help and facilitation of ones affairs;** because of His words "*Whoever has taqwa of Allah He will make easy for him his affair*" (Quran chapter 65, verse 4)

**Closeness to Allah;** because of His words "*Allah is the close friend and protector of the muttaqeen (the ones who have taqwa)*" (Quran chapter 45, verse 19)

**Love;** because of His words, "*Truly Allah loves the muttaqeen*" (Quran chapter 2, verse 194)

**A way out from unhappiness,** and provision from where one does not expect; because of His words, "*Whoever has taqwa of Allah He will make a way out for him and provide him from where he does not expect*" (Quran chapter 65, verse 2)

**Covering up of wrong actions** and magnification of rewards; because of His words, "*Whoever has taqwa of God He will cover over his wrong actions and magnify a reward for him*" (Quran chapter 65, verse 5)

**Entrance into the Garden;** because of His words "*Truly, there are for the people of taqwa with their Lord Gardens of bliss*" (Quran chapter 51, verse 15)