

"PRAYER IN HINDUISM AND ISLAM"
(DESCRIPTIVE & COMPARATIVE STUDY)



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ISLAMABAD
2015



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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
MS. in Islamic Studies
With specialization in Comparative study of Religions
At the Faculty of Islamic Studies (Usuluddin)
International Islamic Study Islamabad

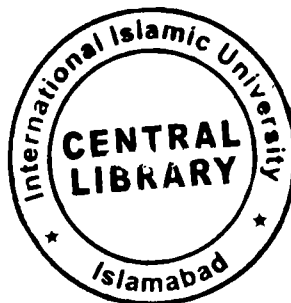
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November, 2015

*Corrections
have been
done.*



FORWARDING SHEET

The thesis entitled “"Prayer in Hinduism and Islam" (Descriptive & Comparative study)".

Submitted by Rabia Unber Malik in partial fulfillment of MS. in Islamic Studies with Specialization in Comparative Study of Religions has been completed under my supervision and guidance. I am satisfied with the quality of student's research work and allowed her to submit this thesis for further process of as per IIUI rules and regulations.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my martyr father “Malik Muhammad Arif”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thanks Allah Almighty who gave me the strength to complete my research work.

It is genuine pleasure to express my deep sense of thanks and gratitude to my respectable supervisor DrAmat-ul-Rafi, for her guidance, advice, and hours of struggling from the beginning till the end of my task. Her timely and scholarly approach has helped me to a very great extent for of accomplish it.

I place on record, my sincere gratitude to DrAkram, head of department for his constant encouragement. I also thank to all lecturers of department, am extremely grateful and indebted to them for their expert, sincere and valuable guidance and encouragement extended to me.

Importantly, I would like to thank my mother Maimoona Malik for providing me the opportunity to engage in this project and her guidance and prayers helped me to complete this task. I am humbly grateful to my all brothers who always there to help me out in this journey, and I won't hesitate to say that my all friends were beside me in completing this task.

It is my privilege to say very special thanks to TehzeebYasinzai whose love, care and efforts helped me throughout my research duration.

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ABSTRACT

Prayer is an integral part of any religion; the given study aims at exploring how it plays an important role in Islam and Hinduism. Both of the religions consider prayer in the spiritual life as the most essential element. There are a lot of differences between both religions in terms of contents of prayers; philosophy and concept of God and the overall conduct of prayer but there are certain similarities between both these religions in terms of objectives of prayers, its importance, and impact of prayer on an individual. In both, Hinduism and Islam, the concept of prayer is well defined in the Holy books and different scriptures. In addition, the scholars of both religions have emphasized a lot regarding the importance and conduct of prayer. Considering the importance of prayer in Islam and Hinduism, it is required to acquire the extracts from the relevant data; for this purpose, the given research study is carried out into two chapters.

First chapter is regarding prayers of Hinduism in which I discussed definition, meaning of Prayers according to Hinduism and its different meanings and different kinds further objectives of prayers and impact of prayers on individual and various important prayers mentioned which offer to different Lords, Moreover significance of prayers discussed.

Second chapters regarding Islam prayers in the context of analyzing the definition, significance, benefits and contents of prayer in both religions in the light of scholars and Holy Scriptures of both religions. Further this chapter deals individual and congregational Prayers, discussed in the light of Quran and hadith. Difference of Salat and Dua is mentioned and importance of both Prayers mentioned separately which clearly define both kinds of Prayers and impact of these on

individual. Also discussed various views of scholars regarding Prayers and its importance in the life Muslims.

Furthermore, analyzing the contents and religious importance of prayer, the current research has been conducted to highlight the spiritual entities, similarities of Prayers in both religions and a way of Mankind communication.

INTRODUCTION

Prayer is derived from a Latin word 'Precari' which means to beg, to entreat or to ask something earnestly. Prayer can take place in public or private. Prayer can be in form of silence, words or songs. Purpose of prayer may be one or multiple like worshipping, seeking guidance, confessing sins, expressing emotions of thanks, sorrow, happiness, etc. Prayer is considered as communication of Mankind with the spiritual entities. Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God.

History reveals that act of prayer is as early as 5000 years ago. Multiple body postures like kneeling, sitting, standing, eyes closed or opened, and hands lowered or raised are adopted for prayers in accordance to the religions. There are standardized ways of offering prayers in different religions. For instance Christians use to bow their heads and fold their arms, Hindus hymn mantras and sing songs, Jews sway back and forth in their prayers and Muslim perform Salat in which they kneel and prostrate.

Some western scholars defined six types of prayers in his Typology of Prayer; these types are Prophetic, Philosophical, Ritual, Mystical, Primitive and Greek Cultural. Purification or cleanliness like wuḍūorghusal is requisite prior to performing some specific prayers. There are two basic types of religions Abrahimic religions and Eastern religions. Abrahimic religions are Bible, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Eastern religions are Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Shinto, Sikhism and Taoism

Hinduism and Islam are the two major religions of South Asia. Religion was the main reason of sub division of sub-continent in two countries. Both the religions consider prayer in the spiritual life as the most essence element. Prayer is like a spiritual respiratory system in both

religions. A person who doesn't breathe is considered as dead, similarly if someone stops praying he is considered as spiritually dead person. The punctuality and strength of believe in prayer is mostly inherited from generation to generation in both Hinduism and Islam. New generation follows their forefathers in religious belief, spirituality and religious practices. Prayer is never being devalued in both the religions. Temples and Mosques are always crowded with the followers of the religion for early morning and nightly prayers. Prayers are never considered liability in both religions. Both religions consider prayer to achieve friendship and spiritual connection with God. Considering the importance of prayer in Hinduism and Islam a detailed sketch will be drawn to elaborate the prayer practices in both the religions separately. Therefore, the research study will be based on an analysis on the prayers in Islam and Hinduism along with their importance, objectives, impact of an individual and their contents.

Statement of the problem

Prayer is most indispensable part of both religions, Hinduism and Islam. To build relation with divine the prayer plays the role of bridge in these religions. Keeping the importance of prayers in consideration it is very much important to find out some lines of differences and similarities between the practices of prayers in both these religions. The research is based on the significant questions which regarding prayers in Hinduism and Islam, such as, definition of prayer in both religions, the significance of Prayer, various impacts of Prayer on individual, and to which extant these both religion have similarities in Prayer.

Importance of the Topic

The comparative study of prayers in Hinduism and Islam carries an immense importance. Hinduism and Islam are two major regions of the globe. Hinduism and Islam stood face to face

with each from centuries in South Asia but remained unfamiliar with each other. In the bosom of Islam are hidden some best religious aspirations which are also found in the core concept of Hinduism. The difference is in the code of conduct, practice, traditions and interpretation of scriptures. Both the religions consider God as the creator. And the followers of both religions seek help from and friendship with God. Spiritual growth is the aim of both religions. In both religions the message conveyed is of peace and harmony in the universe, humanity and humbleness. In Hinduism and Islam God is the ruler of all the universe, the evil exists but will be punished on the Day of Judgment. Hindu cosmology is complicated as compared to Islam

The Islamic cosmology comprise of earth, hell and heaven. Hinduism believes in uncountable worlds and times of existence. Prayers are connected in accordance to both the cosmologies in each religion. In Islam there is no concept of Trinity. There is only one Allah who is the creator and invisible. Muslim visualize that Allah is watching and listening them and their prayers. Whereas Hinduism believes in three functional forms of gods namely Brahma, Vishnu and Siva whose function are creation, preservation and destruction. These three are known as Deities (Trimurthis) and considered as gods

Islam considers Allah and His creations two separate entities. Allah has created mankind and all creatures and universe; He will reward with heaven for good deeds or punish and put in Hell for the wrong deeds on the Day of Judgment. He is invisible but watching everything. So all the followers of Islam aim to be rewarded by Heaven hence their prayers are associated with the aim. But Hinduism considers God and his creation to be the same. God is the instrumental and material cause of his creation and he exists in the form atman in all objects and beings.

Both religions acknowledge the power of God and His power to execute the system of universe as per His will. Both Hinduism and Islam also acknowledge that God listenstothe

prayers and respond to the prayers and grant peace, wealth, success, knowledge and the desired aims. Both consider that God is generous and forgive sins, so in both religions prayers of forgiveness are significant. In Hinduism and Islam it is a strong belief that God loves those who love Him and forgive them for the sins and ignorant deeds. Both the religions consider that God is closer to them and ever watchful.

Research Methodology

The research study is based on qualitative analysis. The qualitative means of research will be carried out in terms of comparative and descriptive analysis regarding 'Prayer in Hinduism and Islam'. In this context, the literature review will be presented in which the practices of prayers in both religions will be discussed and analyzed with the help of renowned sources. With the help of presenting acquired data from different scholars of both religions and other credible sources the purpose of comparative and descriptive study will be fulfilled.

The purpose to conduct this research is to investigate prayer growth, specifically studying the role of prayer as a spiritual reinforcement in two major religions (Islam and Hinduism) of South Asia. In addition, references specifically regarding prayer from religious books of Islam and Hinduism will also be used. The research shares a connection of Mankind with God in both religions. The concept and definition of prayer in both religions will be examined in depth. The intention of the research is to provide insight and gateway to the followers of both religions who desire to transmit truth regarding spirituality, prayer and connection with God.

The research will act as prayer training model. The research will foster the concept that true growth of mind and soul can only be achieved through prayer. The research will stress the impact of prayer in religious growth. Religious growth is impossible if it lacks prayer. Thus

prayer is the most important key to religious and spiritual growth. Throughout the history, from centuries prayers have led great religious and spiritual growth and revivals in both religions.

The role of prayer in spiritual and religious growth in both religions and different ways of prayers will be discussed throughout the research study. Moreover, it is also the intention of the research to act as a catalyst and tool to set a spiritual combustion among the followers of the both religions who have lost their passion for prayer.

Review of the Literature

The previous works in this field are many and multi-dimensional too. Their perspectives differ as well. Detailed readings of these multifaceted works reveal a bunch of approaches and objectives around the issue in question. Here is some major works worth to mention as the background of this present work.

Abundance of literature is present on the Prayer in Hinduism and Islam by its founder, some of his works that relate to my study include;

Noori, Rasoul, and FiroozehZareFarashbandi. "Evaluating the Performance of Muslim Researchers in Publishing Holy Quran Related Articles in Medical Sciences in Scopus Databases." *Quran and Medicine* 1.4 (2012): 108-112.

The research study "Evaluating the Performance of Muslim Researchers in Publishing Holy Quran Related Articles in Medical Sciences in Scopus Databases" by Noori, and ZareFarashbandi, F. (2012) is based on the evaluating different thoughts of Muslim scholars explaining their view point regarding the practices of prayer. With the help of this research study some important analytical information about the Islamic practices of prayers is acquired. This research article is based on the views of different Muslim scholars which develops authentic lines of information to be included in this research study. Therefore, the views regarding Muslim

practices from renowned scholars will develop a credible edge in the presented research study. The presented research study is mostly based on the evaluation based information and assessments of Muslim prayers. As a result, the presented research study is more authentic and credible in terms of collection of data.

Minaei, Mohammad Bagher. "Review of the Unity of God." *Quran and Medicine* 1.4 (2012): 75-76.

Minaei (2012) has presented "Review of the Unity of God, Quran and Medicine" for the purpose of explaining the significance and impact of the Islamic prayers on an individual. With the help of this source some important verses of the Holy book of Quran are included in the research

Study. Moreover, the source contains credible information regarding the impact of prayers on individual from broader perspective such as spiritual, physical and physiological. The gist of the article explains the trio of unity of God, Quran and Medicines. This combination develops an integrated knowledge about Islamic prayers and their relationship with the healing process. The quotations and verses in the source will strengthen the credibility and importance of the research study. There are a lot of evidences present in this study which will certainly give an edge to the presented research study.

Bailey, G. "Oberhammer, Gerhard [Ed.], *Studies in Hinduism. Vedism and Hinduism.*" *Indo-Iranian Journal* 45.1 (2002): 59-75.

The research article "Studies in Hinduism, Vedism and Hinduism" by Bailey, (2002) develops a thorough understanding about the traditional and current Hindu practices. This research article will develop credible and authentic information regarding the prayers in Hinduism and its importance. Along with that the research article covers the thoughts and

opinions of different Hindu scholars which will strengthen the credibility of the research study. The comparison between Vedism and Hinduism presented in the research article has developed a vital understanding regarding the authentic data about the correct and most practiced prayers in Hinduism. Moreover, the information given in this article will be very much helpful and supportive to carry out comparative study with the prayers of other religions, specifically Islamic prayers: The research study is an effort to draw a connection between the traditional Hindu practices with the contemporary Hindu practices.

Therefore, the most important section of the presented research study, the prayers in Hinduism, will be based on the above mentioned source.

Fadil, Nadia. "Performing the salat [Islamic prayers] at work: Secular and pious Muslims negotiating the contours of the public in Belgium." *Ethnicities* (2013): 1468796812471129.

In the research article "Performing the salat [Islamic prayers] at work: Secular and pious Muslims negotiating the contours of the public in Belgium" by Fadil (2013) some important information regarding the practice of prayers among Muslims are presented. The given article develops a thorough and credible understanding about different Islamic prayers in relation to their significance from individual as well as from community point of view. The source will also include the individual benefits gained from prayers along with some important objectives. The research article focuses on different perspectives of Secular and pious Muslims. This information will be very much helpful to carry out a thorough analysis on Islamic prayers and its most practiced contents. The research article has developed a lot of credibility in the given research study due to authentic sources and views of some renowned Muslim scholars.

Bhaktivedanta, A. C. *BhagvadGeeta: tenaMoolRoop*. Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1998.

The work “BhagvadGeeta:tenamoolroop” presented by Bhaktivedanta (1998) is very much helpful to include some important sources of the holy scripture of Hinduism, BhagvadGeeta. There are some relevant and credible versus of BhagvadGeeta are included with the help of analytical interpretations. These interpretations will give an extra edge to the research study to evaluate the differences and similarities between prayers in Islam and Hinduism. Historically it is evident fact that the prayers in Hinduism have changed a lot during the passage of time. Therefore, the need of collect an authentic and reliable information regarding prayers in Hinduism is very much important. Moreover, the source includes some important information regarding Hindu prayers and its importance. The interpreted information is included by considering the relevancy to the problem statement of the research study. The authentic scriptures acquired from the holy book of Hindus will present the most valuable and credible information.

CHAPTER 1

1. PRAYER IN HINDUISM

1.1 Definition:

In Hinduism, prayer is an imperative and integrated part of daily life. The conduct of a prayer can be as easy as chanting a mantra or it can consist of multifaceted rituals, for instance the most important form of Hindu worship well-known as puja. Generally, Hindus perform prayer to admire and their divinities whom they expect to receive blessings in return¹. Hinduism distinguishes three paths of emancipation, the path of action and path of devotion², the path of knowledge, adaptation any one of three can free ones so the devotion path is honest prayer and worship of God. According to teachings of Vedas If anyone honestly adopts this path by performing prayer, chanting hymns and mantras so he can attain freedom. In addition, prayer brings strength, a consolation and peace in human life. The primary condition of offering prayers in Hinduism is that it is being offered from the heart. If prayers are not offered from the heart, it seems like just vocal effect of the sounds or just beating of a drum. On the other hand, if the prayers are performed from the heart, it can melt mountains of despair.

“Those people who wake up before sunrise, bathe and pray to God are religious and wise. They are ethical. Their activities are directed towards God. Those men and women who speak softly, pray together and enjoy a good relationship are blessed with happiness.”³

Prayer is even more crucial for the health of the soul than is nutrition for the body maintenance. On some occasion it becomes essential to quit food in order to gain physical health but Prayer must not be abandoned for health of the soul⁴.

¹ Bailey, Oberhammer, *Studies in Hinduism Vedism and Hinduism*. Indo-Iranian Journal, 2002.P59-75.

² Tiwari, KedarNath, *Comparative religion*. Delhi: MotilalBanarsidass Publisher, 1983.P35.

³ *Vedic- Hymns, Mandala: 1*, part- II (Sacred Books of East, ed. & translated by Max Muller, Aryan Books Intl, New Dehli, and Vol.46), 1993. P.2.

The Vedas is a book of Hindu religion in which there is a collection of liturgy, hymns and mantras. According to the *Bhagavad Gita Bhakti Yoga* is the way of devotion and love.

On *Bhakti Yoga*:

".... those who, renouncing all actions in Me, and regarding Me as the Supreme, worship Me... of those whose thoughts have entered into Me, I am soon the deliverer from the ocean of death and transmigration, Arjuna. Keep your mind on Me alone, your intellect on Me. Thus you shall dwell in Me hereafter." B.G., Chapter 12, Verses 6-8⁵.

Therefore, it is fundamentally the procedure of illumination establish through God worship, in whatsoever form one visualizations. Prayer is attained by puja at the local temple or family shrine. In addition, from Krishna's injunction that prayer is primary to Hinduism, that to settle continuously on God is key to illumination. The repetition of Prayer through mantras through *maalaas* is a strong component of Hinduism.

1.2 Significance of Prayer:

In Sanskrit and Hindi the meaning of *pratana* is prayer or seeking. With the course of time its secular meaning has been changed to request, submissiveness and seeking something humbly. In ancient times prayer was similar to mantra or chant which was considered as communication with gods. The Vedic Indians used to do these mantra and chants to please the gods to fulfil the desires of wealth or any potentially important aim. Hindu prayers are of many kinds and forms, but the desire or reason to perform the prayer is to have communication with gods. Hindu holy books emphasize through multiple examples the following lesson:

⁴Gandhi, M.K, *Prayer*. Ahmedabad(India) : Navajivan Publishing house, 1977.P12

⁵Bellenoit, H. Pedagogy for Religion: Missionary Education and the Fashioning of Hindus and Muslims in Bengal. By ParnaSengupta. The Journal of Hindu Studies, 2013. 228-229. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/jhs/hit017>

“God never fails to respond to the sincere calls of His devotees and comes to their rescue”.(Ramayana and the Mahabharata)

Some well-known forms of prayers are mantras, bhajan and japas.

Mantra is considered as to be awarded with magical powers and capable of manifesting desired results via involvement of gods. Likewise, Japa is a repetition of some name of god or text from the holy book given by guru, its main purpose is to calm the nerves and purify soul. Bhajans are group devotional songs, which are sung in front of some pic or guru. The word paradhana is made up of two Persian words. Para means to seek or ask and dhana means wealth. Dhana is also closely related to word dhaanya which means grain, which were quite costly in ancient times⁶.

In most of the native Indian languages including Sanskrit, the literary meaning of prathana means seeking or prayer. At the same time this word has a deep peculiarly Hindu and religious connotation in its origin and acquired a generic and secular and mostly used to express The meaning of seeking something in a polite way with submissive feelings⁷. According to Vedic manner of speaking, prayer was relatively synonymous with mantra, a religious incantation or chant that is used to speak with good and seek favor or some kind of wealth from them. In addition, the Vedic Indians chant mantras, accomplished elaborate rituals, or different prayers for the purpose of pleasing the gods and seeking their help in the fulfillment of human wishes or recognize potentially significant objective either for their community in general, for themselves or for others. For instance, one of the most frequently observed prayers in the Vedic traditions is a desire for making peace everywhere. It means to bring peace in worshipper's body,

⁶Bhaktivedanta, A. *BhagvadGeeta:tenamoolroop*. Bombay: Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. 1998. P.13.

⁷Gaborieau, M. *Muslims in the Hindu Kingdom of Nepal*. Contributions to Indian Sociology, 1972.P.84-105.

in mind, environment or peace in the whole world, in the highest world of the gods and in the middle area of the celestial beings⁸.

Another prayer seeks wholeness and perfection of oneself and the whole world with the help of becoming complete to reach out to “That” which perfect and complete in all means. In Hinduism, prathana or prayer takes on several forms. Their objective, however, is fundamentally the similar which is seeking communion with gods or God, communicating one’s devotion and love to them and seeking their favors and blessings. The Hindu epics and Puranas such as the Mahabharata and Ramayana put stress through several instances that God never fails to answer to the truthful calls of His devotees and comes to their salvage.

1.3 Contents of Prayer:

Hindu prayers focus on stability and welfare of all beings. The key elements in the prayers and ceremonies are reverence, devotion, and surrender to Supreme Being in whichever way that being is seen. The most often used words are Sarve, meaning all, and Shanti meaning peace.

The Hindus possess a body of sacred compositions called the Vedas. Of these there are four collections. Two of them comprise original Hymns. The contents of the others consist largely of poems derived from the former two.

The collection of original Hymns, known as the Rig Veda and the Atharva Veda. Include, respectively, 1028 original Hymns of about 10600 stanzas and 731 Hymns of about 6000 stanzas. The opinions of scholars vary greatly regarding the antiquity of this literature; some think that the Hymns were composed about 6000 B.C, or at still earlier date, while the other

⁸Huffer, A. *Hinduism without Religion: Amma’s Movement in America*. Crosscurrents, 2011.P.374-398.

think that they were composed 1200 B.C, or 1000 B.C. The Vedic hymns are probably the earliest important religious document of the human race.

Atharva Veda Prayers:

The Hymns of the Atharva Veda contain among other things description of charms for curing diseases, prayers for long life and health, imprecations against demons and enemies, charms pertaining to women, to secure their love and jealousy and the charms like securing harmony and influence in an assembly, charms for securing the prosperity of house hold, fields, cattle, business and gambling, etc... charms in expiation of sins and defilement.

Reg Veda Prayers:

The Hymns of Reg Veda, on the other hand, are often praises of various deities, who are frequently mere personification of the different powers of nature, such as the rain god, the wind god, the fire god, and the like. The prayers in these Hymns are praises of greatness and power, the mysterious nature, and the exploits of these deities, as well as prayers for various favors. Often the favors sought are of the nature of the material blessings, such as long life, vigorous offspring, cattle and horses, gold etc...

Prayers for the advancement of the inner spiritual achievements of man, for righteousness or moral greatness, prayers expressing a passionate longing for the divine and humble submission of mind to the divine will are not so frequent. Most of these prayers were recited in the performance of certain prescribed rituals. Though from the praises of gods one might infer that it was the gods who were supposed to bestow the benefits, it was infect the complete set of ritualistic performances that was considered to be the cause of the showering of the benefits. It was supposed that these ritualistic performances when carried out in all their details, precisely

and accurately, could by their joint and mysterious effect produce a mysterious something whereby the prayers were fulfilled.

1.3.1 “Prayers to their God and Goddesses”

MANTRAS FOR LORD GANESHA - REMOVER OF OBSTACLES:

Lord Ganesha is one of the most prominent deities in Hinduism. Ganesha has the unique distinction that his name is always invoked before any other God's name in any prayer service. Legend has it that Lord Ganesha received this distinction as a blessing from his parents, Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. Lord Ganesha is designated as the chief (-eesha) of all of Lord Shiva's ganas (servers) - hence his name, Ganesha.

We begin with an invocation to Lord Ganesha - he of the single tusk, whose vehicle is the mouse and he who penned the Mahabharata with his own hands.

“Salutations to the supreme Lord Ganesha, whose curved trunk (vakra-tunda) and massive body (maha-kaayaa) shines like a million suns (surya-koti) and showers his blessings on everyone (sama-prabhaa). Oh my lord of lords Ganesha (kurume-deva), kindly remove all obstacles (nir-vighnam), always (sarva-) and forever (sarvadaa-) from all my activities and endeavors (sarva-kaaryeshu).”⁹

1.3.2 Prayer to Lord Shiva:

We pray to Lord Shiva whose eyes are the Sun, Moon and Fire

May He protect us from all disease, poverty and fear,

⁹Rocher, Ludo, *Gaṇeśa's Rise to Prominence in Sanskrit Literature*, Brown Press: 1991. P. 73.

And bless us with prosperity, longevity and good health.¹⁰

1.3.3 Prayer to Lord Vishnu:

I sing praise to Lord Vishnu. He who has the peaceful (shaanta-) demeanor and visage (-kaaram).

He who sleeps and reposes (-shayanam) on the serpents (bhujaga-).

He who has a lotus shaped (padma-) navel (-naabham).

He who is the master and lord of all the gods (suresham).

I pray to the Lord Vishnu.

He who holds (-dhaaram) the universe (vishwaa-) in his hands.

He whose vision (-sadrasham) exceeds beyond all the skies (gagana-).

He whose color and visage (-varanam) is changeable like the clouds (megha-).

And he who is filled with goodness (shubh-) in every part (-aangam) of his body.

I sing praise to the Lord Vishnu .He who is the husband (-kaantam) of the goddess of wealth (-lakshmi). He whose eyes (-nayanam) are surreal like a lotus flower (kamala-).

And he who yogis yearn to reach (-agamyam) through meditation (-dhyaana).

I sing praises (vande-) to the Lord Vishnu (-vishnum).He who removes (-haram) all our fears (-bhaya) due to our inborn nature (-bhava).And he who is the master (-naatham) of the entire (-sarva) universe and creation (-lokaika).¹¹

¹⁰Chawdhri, L.R, *Secrets of Yantra, Mantra and Tantra*, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 2005. P. 182.

¹¹Vaswani, J.P, *Mantras for Peace of Mind*, Jaico Publishing House: 2015. P.13.

1.3.4 Mantra for Goddess Sarasvati:

Salutations to the supreme Goddess Saraswati...whose face is fair as a jasmine flower, luminescent like the moon and delicate as a snow flake; who is dressed in brilliant white (shubhra-) garments (vastraa-). She holds the musical instrument (vina-) in her hands to bestow boons (varada.nda-) to her disciples as she sits on her white (shveta-) lotus (padma-) throne (aasana-).¹²

1.3.5 Charms to Cure Diseases and Possession by Demons of Disease

1-“May Agni drive the takman(fever) away from here, may Soma, the press-stone, and Varuna, of tried skill; may the altar, the straw (upon the altar), and the brightly-flaming fagots (drive him away)! Away to naught shall go the hateful powers”?

2-Thou that makest all men sallow, inflaming them like a searing fire, even now, O takman, thou shalt become void of strength: do thou now go away down, aye, into the depths!

The takman that is spotted, covered Nvith spots, like reddish sediment, him thou, (O plant) of unremitting potency, drive away down below!

3- Destroy the takman that returns on (each) third day, the one that intermits (each) third day, the one that continues without intermission, and the autumnal one; destroy the cold takman, the hot, him that comes in summer, and him that arrives in the rainy season!¹³

1.3.6 Charms for Leprosy cured:

1. Born by night art thou, O plant, dark, black, sable. Do thou, that art rich in colour, stain this leprosy; and the gray spots!

¹²Chawdhri, L.R, *Secrets of Yantra, Mantra and Tantra*, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 2005. P.91.

¹³Bloomfield, Maurice, *Sacred Books of the East*, (Hymns of the Atharva-Veda), Oxford University Press: 1897. Vol 42, Ch. V. P. 22.

2. The leprosy and the gray spots drive away from here--may thy native colour settle upon thee--the white spots cause to fly away!

3. Sable is thy hiding-place, sable thy dwelling-place, sable art thou, O plant: drive away from here the speckled spots!

4. The leprosy which has originated in the bones, and that which has originated in the body and upon the skin, the white mark begotten of corruption, I have destroyed with my charm.¹⁴

1.3.7 Charm to secure perfect health:

1. From thy eyes, thy nostrils, ears, and chin--the disease which is seated in thy head--from thy brain and tongue I do tear it out.

2. From thy neck, nape of the neck, ribs, and spine--the disease which is seated in thy fore-arm--from thy shoulders and arms I do tear it out.

3. From thy heart, thy lungs, viscera, and sides; from thy kidneys, spleen, and liver we do tear out the disease.

4. From thy entrails, canals, rectum, and abdomen; from thy belly, guts, and navel I do tear out the disease.

5. From thy thighs, knees, heels, and the tips of thy feet--from thy hips I do tear out the disease seated in thy buttocks, from thy bottom the disease seated in thy buttocks.

6. From thy bones, marrow, sinews and arteries; from thy hands, fingers, and nails I do tear out the disease.

7. The disease that is in thy every limb, thy every hair, thy every joint; that which is seated in thy skin, with Kasyapa's charm, that tears out, to either side we do tear it out.¹⁵

¹⁴ Ibid, P.23.

¹⁵ Maurice, Sacred Books of the East, (Hymns of the Atharva-Veda) Vol 42, Ch. II. P.32

1.3.8 Charm for driving away demons:

1. Do ye well offer within the fire this oblation with ghee that destroys the spook! Do thou, O Agni, burn from afar against the Rakshas, (but) our houses thou shalt not consume!
2. Rudra has broken your necks, ye Pisâkas: may he also break your ribs, ye spooks! The plant whose power is everywhere has united you with Yama (death).
3. Exempt from danger, O Mitra and Varuna, may we here be; drive back with your flames the devouring demons (Atrin)! Neither aider, nor support do they find; smiting one another they go to death.¹⁶

1.3.9 Charm for obtaining long life and prosperity by transmission of disease:

1. in the essence of earthly bliss, O ye gods, in strength of body (May he live)! May Agni, Sûrya, Brihaspati bestow upon him life's vigour!
2. Give life to him, O Gâtavedas, bestow in addition progeny upon him, O Tvashtar; procure, O Savitar, increase of wealth for him; may this one, who belongs to thee, live a hundred autumns!
3. May our prayer bestow upon us vigour, and possession of sound? Progeny; ability and property do you two, (O heaven and earth), bestow upon us! May he, conquering lands with might, (live), O Indra, subjecting the others, his enemies!
4. Given by Indra, instructed by Varuna, sent by the Maruts, strong, he has come to us; may he, in the lap of ye two, heaven and earth, not suffer from hunger and not from thirst!
5. Strength may ye two, that are rich in strength, bestow upon him; milk may ye two, that are rich in milk, bestow upon him! Strength heaven and earth did bestow upon him; strength all the gods, the Maruts, and the waters.

¹⁶ Ibid, P.32.

6. With the gracious (waters) do I delight thy heart, mayest thou, free from disease, full of force, rejoice! Clothed in the same garment do ye two drink this stirred drink, taking on as a magic form the shape of the two Asvins!

7. Indra, having been wounded, first created this vigour, and this ever fresh divine food: that same belongs to thee. By means of that do thou, full of force, live (a hundred) autumns; may it not flow out of thee: physicians have prepared it for thee!¹⁷

1.3.10 Prayers for Long Life and Health (Âyushyâni):

1. I release thee unto life by means of (my) oblation, from unknown decline, and from consumption. If Grâhi (seizure) has caught hold (gagrâha) of this person here, may Indra and Agni free him from that!

2. If his life has faded, even if he has passed away, if he has been brought to the very vicinity of death, I snatch him from the lap of Nirriti (the goddess of destruction): I have freed him unto a life of a hundred autumns.

3. I have snatched him (from death) by means of an oblation which has a thousand eyes, hundredfold strength, and -ensures a hundredfold life, in order that Indra may conduct him through the years across to the other side of every misfortune.

4. Live thou, thriving a hundred autumns, a hundred winters, and a hundred springs! May Indra, Agni, Savitar, Brihaspati (grant) thee a hundred years! I have snatched him (from death) with an oblation that secures a life, of a hundred years.

5. Enter ye, O in-breathirig and out-breathing, as two bulls a stable! Away shall go the other deaths, of which, it is said, there are a hundred more!

¹⁷ Maurice, Sacred Books of the East, (Hymns of the Atharva-Veda). Vol 42, Ch. II. P.29.

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6. Remain ye here, O in-breathing and out-breathing, do not go away from here; do ye car anew to old age his body and his limbs!

7. To old age I make thee over, into old age I urge thee; may a happy old age guide thee! Away shall go the other deaths, of which, it is said, there are a hundred more!

8. Upon thee (life unto) old age has been deposited, as a rope is tied upon a bull. That death which has fettered thee at thy birth with a firm rope, Brihaspati with the hands of the truth did strip off from thee¹⁸.

1.3.11 Prayer for exemption from disease and death:

1. From near thy vicinity, from near thy distance (do I call): remain here, do not follow; do not follow the Fathers of yore! Firmly do I fasten thy life's breath?

2. Whatever sorcery any kinsman or stranger has practised against thee, both release and deliverance with my voice do I declare for thee.

3. If thou hast deceived or cursed a woman or a man in thy folly, both release and deliverance with my voice do I declare for thee.

4. If thou liest (ill) in consequence of a sin committed by thy mother or thy father, both release and deliverance with my voice do I declare for thee.

5. Fight shy of the medicine which thy mother and thy father, thy sister and thy brother let out against thee: I shall cause thee to live unto old age!

6. Remain here, O man, with thy entire soul; do not follow the two messengers of Yama: come to the abodes of the living!

7. Return when called, knowing the outlet of the path (death), the ascent, the advance, the road of every living man!

¹⁸ Maurice, Sacred Books of the East, (Hymns of the Atharva-Veda). Vol 42, Ch. III. P.11.

8. Fear not, thou shalt not die: I shall cause thee to live unto old age! I have charmed away from thy limbs the disease that wastes the limbs.
9. The disease that racks and wastes thy limbs, and the sickness in thy heart, has flown as an eagle to a far distance, overcome by my charm.
10. The two sages Alert and Watchful, the sleepless and the vigilant, these two guardians of thy life's breath, are awake both day and night.¹⁹

1.3.12 Charm to repel sorceries or spells:

1. The (spell) which they skilfully prepare, as a bride for the wedding, the multiform (spell), fashioned by hand, shall go to a distance: we drive it away!
2. The (spell) that has been brought forward by the fashioner of the spell, that is endowed with head, endowed with nose, endowed with ears, and multiform, shall go to a distance: we drive it away!
3. (The spell) that has been prepared by a Sadra, prepared by a Râga, prepared by a woman, prepared by Brahmans, as a wife rejected by her husband, shall recoil upon her fabricator, (and) his kin!
4. With this herb have I destroyed all spells, that which they have put into thy field, into thy cattle, and into thy men.
5. Evil be to him that prepares evil, the curse shall recoil upon him that utters curses: back do we hurl it against him, that it may slay him that fashions the spell.
6. Pratikîna ('Back-hurler'), the descendant of Angiras, is our overseer and officiator (purohita): do thou drive back again (pratikiḥ) the spells, and slay yonder fashioners of the spells!

¹⁹Maurice, Sacred Books of the East, (Hymns of the Atharva-Veda). Vol 42, Ch. V. P.30.

7. He that has said to thee (the spell): 'go on!' upon that enemy, that antagonist do thou turn, O spell: do not seek out us, that are harmless!
8. He that has fitted together thy joints with skill, as the wagoner (Ribhu) the joints of a chariot, to him go, there is thy course: this person here shall remain unknown to thee!
9. They that have prepared thee and taken hold of thee, the cunning wizards-this is what cures it, destroys the spell, drives it back the opposite way - with it do we bathe thee.
10. Since we have come upon the wretched (spell), as upon (a cow) with a dead calf, flooded away (by a river), may all evil go away from me, and my possessions come to me!
11. If (thy enemies) have made (offerings) to thy Fathers, or have called thy name at the sacrifice, may these herbs free thee from every indigenous evil!²⁰

1.3.13 Charm to deprive enemies of their strength:

1. As the rising sun takes away the lustre of the stars, thus do I take away the strength of both the women and the men that hate me.
2. As many enemies as ye are, looking out against me, as I come on--of those that hate me do I take away the strength, as the sun takes away the strength of persons asleep (while it rises).²¹

1.3.14 Blessing for a married couple:

1. Through this oblation, that causes prosperity, may this man flourish anew; may he excel the wife that they have brought to him with his sap!
2. May he excel in strength, excel in royalty! May this couple be inexhaustible in wealth that bestows thousand fold lustre!

²⁰Maurice, Sacred Books of the East, (Hymns of the Atharva-Veda). Vol 42, Ch. X.V. 1

²¹Ibid, P.13.

3. Tvashtar begot (for thee) a wife, Tvashtar for her begot thee as a husband. May Tvashtar bestow upon you two a thousand lives, may he bestow upon you long life!²²

1.3.15 Charms to Secure Harmony, Influence in the Assembly:

1. Unity of heart, and unity of mind, freedom from hatred, do I procure for you. Do ye take delight in one another, as a cow in her (new-) born calf!

2. The son shall be devoted to his father, be of the same mind with his mother; the wife shall speak honied, sweet, words to her husband!

3. The brother shall not hate the brother, and the sister not the sister! Harmonious, devoted to the same purpose, speak ye words in kindly spirit!

4. That charm which causes the gods not to disagree, and not to hate one another, that do we prepare in your house, as a means of agreement for your folk.

5. Following your leader, of (the same) mind, do ye not hold yourselves apart! Do ye come here, co-operating, going along the same wagon-pole, speaking agreeably to one another! I render you of the same aim, of the same mind.

6. Identical shall be your drink; in common shall be your share of food! I yoke you together in the same traces: do ye worship Agni, joining together, as spokes around about the hub!

7. I render you of the same aim, of the same mind, all paying deference to one (person) through my harmonising charm. Like the gods that are guarding the ambrosia, may he (the leader) be well disposed towards you, night and day!²³

²² Maurice, Sacred Books of the East, (Hymns of the Atharva-Veda). Vol 42, Ch. VI, P.78.

²³ Ibid, P.30.

1.3.16 Charm to procure influence in the assembly:

1. May assembly and meeting, the two daughters of Pragâpati, concurrently aid me! May he with whom I shall meet co-operate with me, may I, O ye Fathers, speak agreeably to those assembled!
2. We know thy name, O assembly: 'mirth,' verily, is thy name; may all those that sit assembled in thee utter speech in harmony with me!
3. Of them that are sitting together I take to myself the power and the understanding: in this entire vathering render, O Indra, me successful!
4. If your mind has wandered to a distance, or has been enchained here or there, then do we turn it hither: may your mind take delight in me!²⁴

1.3.17 A merchant's prayer:

1. Indra, the merchant, do I summon: may he come to us, may he be our van; driving away the demon of grudge, the waylayers, and wild beasts, may he, the possessor, bestow wealth upon me!
2. May the many paths, the roads of the gods, which come together between heaven and earth, c,ladden me with milk and ghee, so that I may gather in wealth from my purchases!
3. Desirous do I, O Agni, with firewood and ghee offer oblations (to thee), for success and strength; according to ability praising (thee) with my prayer, do I sing this divine song, that I may gain a hundredfold!
4. (Pardon, O Agni, this sin of ours [incurred upon] the far road which we have travelled!) May our purchases and our sales be successful for us; may what I get in barter render me a gainer! May ye two (Indra and Agni) in accord take pleasure in this oblation! May our transactions and the accruing gain be auspicious to us!

²⁴ Maurice, Sacred Books of the East, (Hymns of the Atharva-Veda). Vol 42, Ch.VII. P.12.

5. The wealth with which I go to purchase, desiring, ye gods, to gain wealth through wealth, may that grow more, not less! Drive away, O Agni, in return for the oblation, the gods who shut off gain!
6. The wealth with which I go to purchase, desiring, ye gods, to gain wealth through wealth, may Indra, Pragâpati, Savitar, Soma, Agni, place lustre into it for me!
7. We praise with reverence thee, O priest (Agni) Vaisvâdara. Do thou over our children, selves, cattle, and life's breath watch!
8. Daily, never failing, shall we bring (oblations to thee), O Gâtavedas, (as if fodder) to a horse standing (in the stable). In growth of wealth and nutriment rejoicing, may we, O Agni, thy neighbours, not take harm!²⁵

1.3.18 Exorcism of evil dreams:

1. Thou who art neither alive nor dead, the immortal child of the gods art thou, O Sleep! Varunânî is thy mother, Yama (death) thy father, Araru is thy name.
2. We know, O Sleep, thy birth, thou art the son of the divine women-folk, the instrument of Yama (death)! Thou art the ender, thou art death! Thus do we know thee, O Sleep: do thou, O Sleep, protect us from evil dreams!
3. As one pays off a sixteenth, an eighth, or an (entire) debt, thus do we transfer every evil dream upon our enemy?²⁶

1.3.19 Charm to avert evil:

1. Let me go, O evil; being powerful, take thou pity on us! Set me, O evil, unharmed, into the world of happiness!

²⁵ Maurice, Sacred Books of the East, (Hymns of the Atharva-Veda). Vol 42, Ch. III. P.15.

²⁶ Ibid, P. 46.

2. If, O evil, thou dost not abandon us, then do we abandon thee at the fork of the road. May evil follow after another (man)!
3. Away from us may thousand-eyed, immortal (evil) dwell! Him whom we hate may it strike, and him whom we hate do thou surely smite!²⁷

1.3.20 Expiatory formula for imperfections in the sacrifice:

1. The god-angering (deed), O ye gods, that we, the (Brahman) gods, have committed, from that do ye, O Âdityas, release us, by virtue of the order of the universe!
2. By virtue of the order of the universe do ye, O reverend Âdityas, release us here, if, O ye carriers of the sacrifice, though desirous of accomplishing (the sacrifice), we did not accomplish (it)!--
3. (If), when sacrificing with the fat (animal), when offering oblations of ghee with the spoon, when desiring to benefit you, O all ye gods, we have contrary to desire, not succeeded!²⁸

1.3.21 Expiatory formulas for sins:

1. From the sins which knowingly or unknowingly we have committed, do ye, all gods, of one accord, release us!
2. If awake, or if asleep, to sin inclined, I have committed a sin, may what has been, and what shall be, as if from a wooden post, release me!
3. As one released from a wooden post, as one in a sweat by bathing (is cleansed) of filth, as ghee is clarified by the sieve, may all (the gods) clear me from sin!²⁹

²⁷ Maurice, Sacred Books of the East, (Hymns of the Atharva-Veda). Vol 42, Ch. VI. P. 26

²⁸ Ibid, P.114.

²⁹ Maurice, Sacred Books of the East, (Hymns of the Atharva-Veda). Vol 42, Ch. VI. P. 115.

1.3.22 Hymn to goddess Earth:

1. Truth, greatness, universal order (rita), strength. Consecration, creative fervour (tapas), spiritual exaltation (brahma), the sacrifice, support the earth. May this earth, the mistress of that which was and shall be, prepare for us a broad domain!
2. The earth that has heights, and slopes, and Great Plains, that supports the plants of manifold virtue, free from the pressure that comes from the midst of men, she shall spread out for us, and fit. Herself for us!
3. The earth upon which the sea, and the rivers and the waters, upon which food and the tribes of men have arisen, upon which this breathing, moving life exists, shall afford us precedence in drinking!
4. The earth whose are the four regions of space, upon which food and the tribes of men have arisen, which supports the manifold breathing, moving things, shall afford us cattle and other possessions also!
5. The earth upon which of old the first men unfolded themselves, upon which the gods overcame the Asuras, shall procure for us (all) kinds of cattle, horses, and fowls, good fortune, and glory!³⁰

1.3.23 Mantras:

In Hindu prayers the practice of prayers play carries an important place. The word "Mantra" is derived from Sanskrit and it is a combination of two words "man" refers "to think and "tra" refers to "tool", therefore the word mantra means instrument of thought. The mantras in the Vedas are believed to carry tempting magical strength to call upon mystical beings, chanted in a specific way and as per to a specific beat. This practice of prayer is based on praising the

³⁰ Ibid, P.1.

strengths and virtues of a variety of gods and goddesses for the purpose of seeking special treatment from them. The mantras are chanted or recited in strident voice at public ceremonies but there are few mantras which are chanted secretly or privately as per the demand of the situation.

1.3.24 Japa:

The repetition of Mantra is known as Japa. It is a powerful syllable or set of syllables carry out with the object of becoming consciousness about the truth hidden in the Mantra.³¹ Japa in other words refer to constant recitation of the name of God either mutely in one's mind or loudly in a crowd. The continuous recitation of the name of God is practiced to make the mind pure and fill consciousness with vibrant spiritual energy and divine thoughts. In Hinduism the practice of Japa has been focused on specifically maintaining awareness of center of realization. An individual can perform Japa every time just by including it in the mind frame. The technique of silently reciting the mantra without moving tongue is considered the best way of practicing Japa.

1.3.25 Bhajan:

In Sanskrit the word Bhajan is derivative of bhaj which refers to 'serve'. The origin of Bhajan in Hinduism can be traced to the Bhakti saint poets from early eighth century, but most importantly in the scriptures of some renowned poets such as Mira Bai and Sur Das from the 16th century onwards. It is a kind of devotional song more often recited in a specific "raga" with music. This practice in other popular forms is also known as *asHarajasa* which refers to the praise of deity "Hari".³²

³¹M.Pandit, Sri, *Japa (Mantra Yoga)*. Lotus press, 1995. P.181.

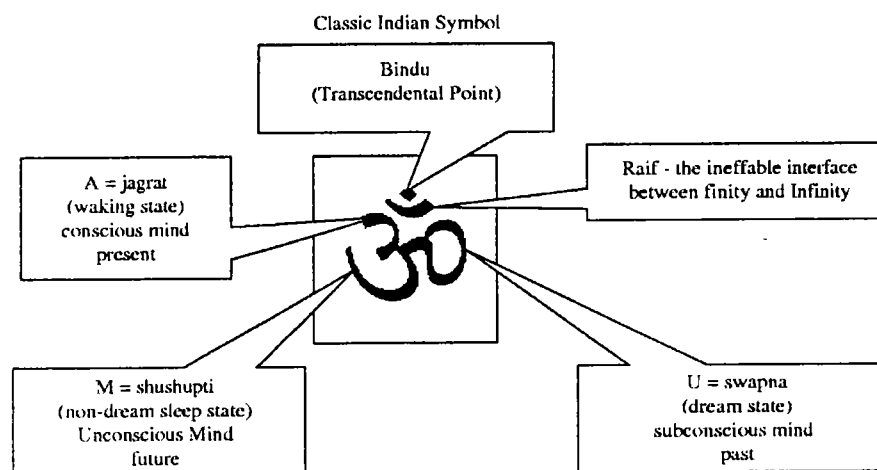
³²Datta, Amaresh, *Encyclopedia of Indian Literature: A-Devo*. India: Sahitya Akademi, 1987. P434.

1.3.26 Hymns:

A hymn is a kind of melody aim to compel an individual to worship and praise God and to struggle to move nearer to Him. The model hymn is a holy song spoken to god. Such kinds of hymns are the most significant in the holy hymnbook. The Hymns are always spiritual in nature and carries spiritual values in it. Moreover, a hymn is a personal religious encounter or insight's poetic statement, complete in its truth, and appropriate for shared expression when sung in specific stanzas to a hymn rhythm.³³

1.3.27 OM (AUM):

In Hinduism, Om is a Hindu holy sound that is regarded the supreme among all mantras. The word Om is the all-inclusive holy symbol that represents the indefinable, infinite Brahman, the truth indicated by the collection of Holy Scriptures Vedas, the substratum omnipresent of this universe. According to Hinduism Om is pranava, or God as primeval sound. It is chanted solemnly at the beginning of all rituals and prayers, and considered an aid to contemplation and concentration.³⁴



Moreover, the word OM (AUM) represents 3 Fold Division of Time such as "A" is the waking state, U is the dream state, and M is the state of deep sleep. At the end of chanting AUM

³³C. Lovelace, Austin, *The Anatomy of Hymnody*. Chicago: GIA Publications, 1965.P5.

³⁴ Buke, Horton, *Hinduism: Frequently Asked Questions*. India: Chinmaya Mission, 2006.P52.

is a silence or pause. This silence represents the inestimable Consciousness. The sound begins from the abdomen and takes upward; the nasalized, long drawn hum sound of M represents the vital truth.³⁵

“Om is Brahman, the Primeval Being. This is the Veda which the knowers of Brahman know; through it one knows what is to be known”³⁶

Hence, Om embodies mystically the spirit of the whole universe. Further, this meaning is deepened by the Hindu philosophical belief that first God created sound and the entire universe is a result of it. Being the most sacred sound of Hinduism, Om is the origin of the whole universe and everything that exists and it persists to clutch everything collectively. One of the Hindu scholar has elaborated the meaning of this syllable in this way:

“This sound [Om] is that Syllable, the immortal, the fearless.... He who knows it thus, praises this Syllable, takes refuge in that Syllable, in the immortal, fearless sound, and having entered it, he becomes immortal”³⁷

Thus OM is the primary part of the most significant mantras in both Hinduism and Buddhism. According to this belief, even prior to the materialistic creation came into being there was only the humming natural energy which had a resemblance to the sound of AUM. Considering this as the core belief, Hindus regular chant the syllable OM and consider this practice as the most beneficial for their worldly affairs and Diety blessings. According to Hinduism, this syllable is the source of energy. This generates certain all around human body inside the body. The internal sound is named as "antar-naada" which can be heard by concentrating to the existence of soul.

³⁵ Payne, Larry, *Yoga for Dummies*. America: John Wiley & Sons, 2014.P10

³⁶*Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad*. Part- II (Sacred Books of East, ed. & translated by Max Muller, Aryan Books Intl, New Dehli, and Vol.15), 1993, P.189.

³⁷*Chandogya-Upanishad*, part- I (Sacred Books of East, ed. & translated by Max Muller, Aryan Books Intl, New Dehli, and Vol.1) P. 2.

Among all the Upanishads, a twelve-verse text, completely devotion is seen to the syllable OM. According to these scriptures the word OM is considered to be the abstract of all the teachings and traditions and every other Upanishads or Philosophy of Vedanta are an annex of this small yet influential syllable. In this context Upanishad states

“The Self [atman] is of the nature of the Syllable Om.... Thus the Syllable Om is the very Self. He who knows it thus enters the Self [Supreme Spirit] with his self [individual spirit]”³⁸

In another text of Upanishads it is state:

“Om: this Syllable is all this. All that is past, the present and the future, all this is only the Syllable Om. And whatever else there is beyond the threefold time, that too is only the Syllable Om”³⁹

In Hindu traditions OM awards variety of strength in every day routine, for example, chanting of Om wipes away all removes distraction and worldly thoughts and injects new energy in the human body. According to some Hindu traditions when a person feels miserable, fifty times chanting is prescribed which will bring new strength and potency. Hence, it can be said that the chanting of the syllable Om is a potent tonic. A person feels more pure and conscious and will have a sweet powerful voice after chanting OM. The rhythmic pronunciation of the word Om makes the mind pointed and serene, and awards the holy qualifications which guarantee self-realization. The mediators of the word Om get tremendous strength⁴⁰.

1.4 Objectives of Prayer:

The Vedic traditions of Hinduism believed in four major things dharma (religion), artha (material wealth), kama (sensual pleasure) and moksha (salvation). The main objective of Hindu

³⁸*Mandukya Upanishad*. Vol. 15. P.40.

³⁹*ibid*. P.27.

⁴⁰*Taittiriya-Upanishad* part- II (Sacred Books of East, ed. & translated by Max Muller, Aryan Books Intl, New Dehli, and Vol.15), 1993, P.45.

prayers is still connected to these four aims. Through prayer they seek wealth of all kinds such as spiritual, physical, personal, universal wealth and power. The essential prayer books are Vedas. In these books different spiritual and ritual prayers are found to communicate and befriend to gods, to beget children, to remove harm effects, to get rid of diseases, to gain wealth, to seek forgiveness on sins⁴¹.

The Hindu prayers seek and understand that in unexpected circumstance when a lot of several pure souls perform prayers to him and make a suffering call, He even personifies upon earth to restore order and destroy evil. Some of the well-known and mostly practiced forms of prayers in Hinduism are Mantras, bhajans and japas. Mantras are chants or incantations which are believed to be endowed with powerful vibrations and magical power capable of manifesting desired results the interventions made by gods. Likewise, Bhajans are devotional songs and rhymes, more often sung in group in accompanying of music in front of the guru or deity's image⁴².

Etymologically, according to the Hindu traditions the objectives of prayers can be understood in different ways. According to one interpretation it is an amalgamation of two origin words, that are prar and dhana, prar means to seek and dhana means wealth. The association of the word "dhana" is closely found with the word dhaanya that means grains, the most profound kind of wealth in the ancient world. This word has been taken from the old ancient practice of giving food as charity to the deserving people. Similarly, another interpretation of prayer in Hindu traditions explains that the word prathana is derived from the three different words that

⁴¹Scheifinger, H. Conceptualising Hinduism. SSRN Electronic Journal. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1468282>

⁴²Hendrick, G. *The Bhagvad-Geeta* ... Translated with notes by Charles Wilkins. 1785. A facsimile reproduction with an introduction by George Hendrick. (Second printing.). Delmar, N.Y.: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints.1972. P.161.

are pra, ardha and na⁴³. In this context “Pra” means resource, “ardha” means wealth and na refers to nada, a voice that come out of the openings of the body. The fundamental concept explains asserts that by praying a single grain an entry into the resource of all kinds of wealth that is God Himself.

Furthermore, a third interpretation given by Huffer, A. (2011) links the word prathana with aartha or suffering. In this context, prathana means any distress call or prayer an individual makes in times of immense suffering asking for a divine assistance. According to this interpretation of Hinduism concept of prayer aarthra means either distress or suffering, or adversity or affliction or calamity. Similarly, Pra means a source that defines or express suffering and “na” is the sound or voice that is created at the time of expressing the pain. In this context, prathana refers to a source of expression to an individual’s affliction or suffering with the help of sound, asking a possible remedy. In Hinduism all prayers are but expressions of speech or sounds. Sounds and speech have a special importance in Hinduism, due to space, that is also recognized with the essence of God, is ought to be the source of sound. At the same time, space is considered the Brahman’s physical manifestation. Therefore, according to this perspective, prayer means to make communication with gods through the instantly accessible mediums of speech, sacrifices, sounds and space⁴⁴.

1.5 Impact of prayer on individual:

According to the teachings of renowned Hindu scholars there are a lot of positive impacts of prayers offered by Hindus. The Vedic Mantras, an important component of prayers in Hinduism, are effective enough for the purpose of providing an external fuse for liberating the

⁴³ Gordon, S. Hindus, Muslims, and the other in eighteenth-century India. *Hindu Studies*, 1999.P.221-239.

⁴⁴Huffer, A. *Hinduism without Religion: Amma’s Movement in America*. *Crosscurrents*, 2011.P.374-398.

mental strength of the individual. The internal mental fusion is supported the practices of prayers. There resonant effect in Hindu prayers plays an important role and it has a significant status. When two sound waves of same frequencies combine, then the resultant can have endless amplitude. The chanting of mantras and Hymns makes sound waves and demands a right frame of mind. The uniform speed of recitation makes an individual to realize its effect with appropriate pauses⁴⁵.

According to Hindu traditions the usual practice of mantra is aimed to cure every ill and to develop courage to experience every challenge. For example, the Om Mane Padme Hum mantra has been used in the Tibetan tradition for centuries for the purpose of seeking the blessings of kindness. In addition, the Siri Gaitri Mantra *Ra Ma Da Sais* is chanted in the Kundalini Yoga tradition for healing. Likewise, the Ganesh mantra—*Om Gam Ganapataye Namah* is chanted in the Hindu tradition before the elephant-headed deity to eliminate impediments.

The chanting of mantras creates a melodious effect in the body of an individual. This effect caused by mantras can be termed as the Neuro-linguistic effect. This effect will be benefiting an individual even if the meaning of the mantras is unknown. Therefore becoming aware about the meaning of every mantra is not necessary. Simultaneously, if an individual is well familiar with the meaning of mantras than an additional effect will be observed that is termed as Neuro-linguistic and Psycholinguistic effect. These effects are due to the spreading and production of healing chemicals in the mind. These healing chemicals give curing and smoothening effect in the body of an individual. As a result chanting of mantra is no way a false notion. In other words it can be called as mantra therapy or music therapy.

⁴⁵Bhatnagar, Staish C, *My Hindu Faith and Periscope*. Chandigarh: Trafford Publishing, 2012. V: 1, P. 43.

Mantras create “positive vibrations” and encourage a mental state self-healing process takes place⁴⁶. Moreover, the regular practice of listening mantras directly normalizes heartbeat rate, lowers blood pressure, adrenalin level, cholesterol level even brain wave pattern. Even melodious songs, bhajans, kirtans, etc have the better effect almost comparable to the PLE and NLE. However, a defined melodious pattern is important. The mantra should never be hard, rough or harsh. The speed of reciting mantra must also have a mild effect⁴⁷.

Likewise, the repetitive chanting of Mantras is known as Japa. The goal of *japa* depends on the mantra and the practitioner’s religious beliefs. In Hindu traditions mantras are given by gurus to the aspirants after some form of commencement. The goal of Japa can be bhakti, nirvana, moksha, or simple personal relationship with a godly power in a parallel way to prayer. After a long practice of a mantra that is projected to foster intimacy with a divine power or self-realization, an individual can reach at the state of *ajapajapam*, state in which mantra repeats itself in the mind of an individual. This practice makes an individual closer to divine power and creates a spiritual peace in the mind of an individual.⁴⁸ Chanting of Nam Japas and Mantras and establishes a pure environment principally due to its effect of unpolluted vibration of the sound. Similarly, mental japa of mantras is effective equally in making the environment pure due to the reason that the practice also effect on energy atmosphere due to connection between life energy and thought. The mind of an individual always think about worldly wishes which runs incessantly in brain but keeping the mind engage in practicing Japa is helpful accomplishment which counteracts this propensity⁴⁹.

⁴⁶Swami, Subramuniya, *Merging with Siva pocketbook*. India: Himalayan Academy Publications, 2001. P.187

⁴⁷Sathya Sai Baba. SSS. Vol. 27, Ch, 29, P.18

⁴⁸Sharma, Rajeev, *Pranayama for Better Life*. India: Lotus Press, 2006, P. 101

⁴⁹ Rao, VSP, *Management Text and Cases*. India: Excel Books, 2002. P.778

1.6 The relationship of prayer and God:

There are certain group of people who do not believe in the existence of any god. They argue that there was no need to hypothesize a creator for the universe, due to the reason as there was no requirement for an author to write the Vedas to authenticate the rituals. The main point of view of Atheist Hindus is that the Gods in the Vedas had no physical reality. By the way, the power of the mantras was what was seen as the power of Gods. Mimamsas the expounder of this school of thought reasoned for this belief that the nonphysical existence of the God cannot be sufficient to affirm the fact composing of the Vedas. A personified God cannot author the holy book Vedas either due to the reason that such a Deity would be dependent on natural limitations of sensory understanding and so, could not be able to make supernatural revelations such as the Vedas.

Following are the points on which are given by Samkhya against the concepts of an self-caused, eternal maker God.

- If the god's existence is assumed, the proposition of God as an ethical governor of the whole universe is needless. If though, he is assumed to be within the law of destiny, then destiny itself would be the contributor of consequences and the need of a God is needless.
- In addition, according to atheist Hindus there is no evidence of God's existence. He cannot be the object of observation or imagination, no general proposition exists that can verify him by supposition and the indication of the Vedas speak of prakriti as the origin of the world, not God.

With the help of these points, Samkhya maintained a viewpoint that the variety of ontological, teleological and cosmological arguments could not prove the existence of God. Likewise, the concept of prayer is totally denied by this school of thought in Hinduism and they hold the nature as the cause of all consequences.

1.7 The Advaita Vedanta school of thought:

The Advaita Vedanta school of thought accepts six tests or pramanas of the theory of interpreting or arriving at practical knowledge. They are anumana (inference), pratyaksa (perception), upamana (comparison), sabda (testimony), arthapatti (presumption) and anupalabdhi (negation). Among these the expounder of Advaita Vedanta school of thought mostly refers to three pramanas; inference, scriptural testimony and perception. Of these again the testimony of the Vedas or Scriptural testimony is considered the most significant. In the Vedas it is the Knowledge of the supreme Brahman which is more significant in preparing the jiva for the experience of oneness. This school of thought does not advocate or supports blind dogmatic belief based on scriptural facts. The followers of this school of thought believe that by accepting any dogma without any logical reason would lead them to evil outcomes. In addition, experience is more important than reason and it is regarded as the decisive test of the scriptures and truth because they reveal the character of such experience⁵⁰.

Moreover, according the beliefs of Advaita Vedanta, truth cannot be two due to the fact that anything that implies contradiction, division, conditionality, or negation fails the test of ultimate consciousness whose nature is unconditional and eternal indivisibility and oneness. The followers of this school of thought make perform their prayers by having a faith that if Atman and Brahman are separate, it clearly indicates that one of them is not truth or imperfect, or dependent or mutable or incomplete or divided. The philosophy on which their whole beliefs are based is oneness, no matter what names are given to them. If someone experience dual existence of truth, Maya is responsible, an important aspect of AdvaitaVendata⁵¹.

⁵⁰ Sharma, M. *BhagvadGeetagan*. Delhi: Kalpaz Publications.2007. P.171.

⁵¹ Rao, VSP, *Management Text and Cases*. India: Excel Books, 2002. P.778

The beliefs of the followers of Advaita Vedanta School of thought and theist Hinduism are different on the basis of believing in the existence of god's existence and oneness. The prayer establishes the relations between an individual and God. The existence of God in Vedic Hinduism is evident in Vedas and the believers seek help and blessings from their deity with the help of different ways of prayers such as chanting mantras, japas, bhajans and other rituals.

CHAPTER 2

2. PRAYER IN ISLAM

2.1 Definition:

Prayer is the chief element of Islamic worship and practice. Without a doubt, it is the second most important pillar of the Five Pillars of Islam and, along with the faith, the pilgrimage, fasting and paying the zakat, kinds of the necessary framework of religious life for the Muslims. The performance of the ritual prayer establishes the structure of each day of Muslim, from the pre-dawn Morning Prayer to the night prayer that precedes sleep⁵².

In the Islamic system, there is required daily prayers called Salat and the private petitionary prayers or invocations are called Du'a. Salat are highly regulated, formal prayers that must be recited at fix times with a regulated liturgy and formal body postures. Du'a are "Superogatory" prayers, meaning additional personal prayer that are not required but of course always encouraged.

"The word Salat drives from the word Silat, one of the names of the fire as when it is said, "The wood is burned by fire."⁵³

One of Islam's most renowned philosopher Ibn Rushd, said:

" It drives from the word connection (silat) in that it connects the servant with his creator, meaning the prayer brings him near His mercy and connects him to His generosity and His heavenly paradise."⁵⁴

The Arabic word Salaat (commonly translated prayer) literally means supplication. It is a connection that Muslim establishes with his Lord and Creator and comprises the loftiest

⁵². Mawdudi, AbulA'AlaSyed. IslamiEbadaat .Lahore: Baitul Islam, 1986, P 14.

⁵³Ibn AḥmadQurṭubī, Muhammad, Tafsir al-Qurtubi: classical commentary of the Holy Quran. Lahore: Dar al-Taqwa, 2003. P239.

⁵⁴Gómez-Rivas, Camilo, The Fatwās of Ibn Rushd al-Jadd to the Far Maghrib. Morocco: BRILL, 2014. P 81.

manifestations of total submissiveness to Allah, turning to Him and seeking His assistance and support. When a Muslim stands in prayer before his Lord, invokes and remembers Him, his mind become serene. He realizes his true and deep sense of nothingness, the worthlessness and transitory nature of his life, and recognizes the greatness of his Lord and the immense mercy He has shown him. This prayer then promotes him to adhere to the principles of the divine law and to eschew injustice, indecency and wrong doings.⁵⁵

Ritual prayer, known as Salat, is one of the pillar of Islam. However salat is different than the personal prayer or invocation, in Islam that is called Dua or supplication, formal and informal. Formal Dua are found in the Quran, hadith. Informal Duas are personally structured or spontaneous.

In the Quran the term Salah does not mean the systematic ritual of prayer, but generally expresses an act of praise (hamd), glorification (tasbih), and therefore worship, revealed since the beginning of humanity and practiced by all the Prophets.

2.2 Significance of Prayer:

Prayer is a spiritual communion of a Muslim with his Creator five times a day. That is why Islam has laid greater emphasis on it than all other religious obligations. It is a pillar of Islam and whomsoever abandons, demolishes the order of religion. Therefore it aims at the purification of body and soul and deepens in the human heart the roots of God-Consciousness. Prayers is an indication of humbleness and submission and, is therefore, a means of spiritual exaltation and it's a concrete manifestation of faith and an outer expression of an inner condition. If it is offers with a sincere heart, it generates love for piety and truth.⁵⁶

⁵⁵Hamidullah, The Muslim's Prayer. Lahore: Modern Guide, 2002. P.01

⁵⁶ Al-khizri, AbdullahFazeelatu-Sheikh, Dua and Zaad-e- Muslim, Aziz Abad, Al-Falah Academy Pakistan, 2005, P 38.

اتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ⁵⁷

"Recite, [O Muhammad], what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do."⁵⁸

According to Ibn Kaṭīr Prayer has three attributes, and any prayer that contains none of these attributes is not truly prayer: Being done purely and sincerely for Allah alone (Ikhlās), fear of Allah, and remembrance of Allah. Ikhlās makes a person do good deeds, fear prevents him from doing evil deeds, and the remembrance of Allah is the Qur'an which contains commands and prohibitions. Ibn 'Awn Al-Ansari said: When you are praying, you are doing good, it is keeping you away from immoral sins and evil wicked deeds and what you are doing is part of the remembrance of Allah which is greater.⁵⁹

Pre-requisites of prayer in Islam are: Intention to develop contact with Allah, the Ablution (hand, face, arms, head and foot washing), devotion, direction (Qibla) and Prayer positions (Standing, sitting, kneeling, bowing, prostrating)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ⁶⁰

"O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient."⁶¹

Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi explained above verse That is, "Fortitude and Prayer will generate in you the power which is required to bear that burden of responsibility with which you have been entrusted. Fortitude will give you that patience and courage under the afflictions, privations and

⁵⁷ Al-Quran, 29:45

⁵⁸ Ali, Abdullah, Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation of the Meanings by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. Saudi Arabia: The King Fahd Holy Quran Printing Complex, 1987. P.1164

⁵⁹ Ismā'īl Mad Ad-Dīn, Abū I-Fidā ibn 'Umar ibn Kaṭīr Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Darussalam publishers, 2003. P.578.

⁶⁰ Al-Quran, 2:153

⁶¹ Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation .P.62

temptations which you are bound to encounter and that moral strength and endurance which will be sorely needed in Allah's way, which is full of dangers. The Prayer will train you in discipline and other moral qualities which are essential for the right type of leadership. To acquire the strength that is needed to bear this heavy burden of responsibility the believers should do two things: they should develop patience and they should strengthen themselves by devoting themselves to Prayer.⁶²

Every Muslim strongly believes that there is One Allah who has created Mankind, every creature and earth, He listens to them. It's also mentioned in multiple verses of Quran that Allah listens the prayer of His creature.

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ⁶³

"And your Lord says, Call upon Me; I will respond to you. Indeed, those who disdain my worship will enter Hell [rendered] contemptible."⁶⁴

According to Ibn Kaṭīr Allah encourages His servants to call upon Him, and He guarantees to respond. Sufyan Ath-Thawri used to say: "O You Who love most those who ask of You, and O You Who hate most those who do not ask of You, and there is no one like that apart from You, O Lord." This was recorded by Ibn Abi Hatim. Similarly; the poet said: Allah hates not to be asked, and the son of Adam hates to be asked. Qatadah said that Ka'b Al-Ahbar said, This Ummah has been given three things which were not given to any nation before, only to Prophets. When Allah sent a Prophet, He said to him, 'You are a witness over your nation.' But you have been made witnesses over mankind; it was said to the Prophets individually, 'Allah has not laid upon you any hardship in religion,'⁶⁵

⁶²Mawdudi, Abul'A'la Syed, Tafheemul Quran .Lahore: Naumanikutabkhana, 1980. P.135.

⁶³ Al-Quran, 40:60

⁶⁴Yousaf, the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation, P.1443.

⁶⁵Ismā'illmad Ad-Din, Abū l-Fidā ibn 'Umar ibn KaṭīrTafsir Ibn Kathir . P. 141.

لَهُ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا كَبَاسِطٍ كَفَّيْهِ إِلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِبَالِغِهِ وَمَا دُعَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ⁶⁶

“To Him [alone] is the supplication of truth. And those they call upon besides Him do not respond to them with a thing, except as one who stretches his hands toward water [from afar, calling it] to reach his mouth, but it will not reach it [thus]. And the supplication of the disbelievers is not but in error.”⁶⁷

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً صُمُّ بُكْمٌ غُمِّي فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ⁶⁸

“The example of those who disbelieve is like that of one who shouts at what hears nothing but calls and cries cattle or sheep - deaf, dumb and blind, so they do not understand.”⁶⁹

SayyidAbul Ala Maududi explained above verse that this parable has two aspects. On the one hand, it suggests that these people are like herds of irrational animals, dumb cattle that always follow their herdsmen, moving on as they hear their calls without understanding what they mean. On the other hand, it also suggests that when the Truth is preached to them they show such insensitivity to it that one may as well be addressing animals who merely comprehend sounds but are incapable of understanding their meaning. The expression lends itself to both interpretations.⁷⁰

As per Islam there are different names of Allah and every name has a specific meaning, and Muslims address to Allah in their pray (Dua) with those beautiful names. For Prayer purification (Wuḍū) is considered as an essential element.

فَذُكِّرْ مَنْ تَزَكَّى (14) وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى⁷¹

⁶⁶ Al-Quran, 13:14

⁶⁷ Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation. P.676.

⁶⁸ Al-Quran, 2:171

⁶⁹ Yousaf, the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation, 1987. P.68

⁷⁰ Mawdudi, AbulA`Ala Syed, Tafheemul Quran .Lahore: Naumanikutabhkhana , 1980. P.134.

⁷¹ Al-Quran, 87:14-15

"He has certainly succeeded who purifies himself. And mentions the name of his Lord and prays.⁷²"

Above verse explained by Mulana Mawdudi, he purifies himself from despised characteristics and he follows what Allah has revealed to the Messenger, (And remembers the Name of his Lord, and performs Salah.) meaning, he establishes the prayer in its appointed time, seeking the pleasure of Allah, obedience to His command, and implementation of His Law. We have already reported from the Commander of the believers, 'Umar bin 'Abdul-'Aziz that he used to command the people to give the Sadaqat Al-Fitr, and he would recite above verse.⁷³

As per Quran prayer is not ordered to the Ummat of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). God Urged Prophet Moses also to establish Prayer to remember Allah. All prophetic religions offer prayer.

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي⁷⁴

"Indeed, I am Allah. There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance.⁷⁵"

Above verse explained by Ibn Kaṭīr that it is the first obligation upon all responsible people of age, that they know that there is no God worthy of worship except Allah alone, Who has no partners. Concerning Allah's statement, This means, "Single Me out alone for worship, and establish My worship without associating anything with Me." It has been said that this means, "Pray in order to remember Me." It has also been said that it means, "And establish the prayer whenever you remember Me." There is a supporting evidence for this second statement in a Hadith recorded by

⁷²Yousaf, the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation, P.1938.

⁷³Mawdudi, AbulA'Ala Syed, Tafheemul Quran. P.315

⁷⁴ Al-Quran, 20:14

⁷⁵Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation. P.881

Imam Ahmad from Anas, who said that the Messenger of Allah said, (Whenever one of you sleeps past the prayer, or he forgets to pray, then let him pray when he remembers it. For verily, Allah said, (And perform Salah for My remembrance.) In the Two Sahihs it is reported from Anas that the Messenger of Allah said, (Whoever slept past the prayer, or forgot it, then his expiation is that he prays it when he remembers it. There is no expiation for it other than that.)⁷⁶

Prayer is considered as a source of spirituality and purification. In Quran Allah ensured all the followers to seek guidance and help from Him as he listens and answers the dua of every seeker.

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ⁷⁷

"And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided."⁷⁸

Imam Ahmad recorded Abu Sa'id saying that the Prophet said: (No Muslim supplicates to Allah with a Du'a that does not involve sin or cutting the relations of the womb, but Allah will grant him one of the three things. He will either hasten the response to his supplication, save it for him until the Hereafter, or would turn an equivalent amount of evil away from him.") They said, "What if we were to recite more (Du'a)." He said, (There is more with Allah.)⁷⁹

Prayer doesn't mean the recitation of few Quranic verses; it involves the heart, soul and concentration of mind as well.

It is narrated on the authority of Jabir (Radi Allah Anhu) that he heard the Apostle (May peace and blessings be upon him) saying

⁷⁶ Umar ibn Kaṭīr Tafsir Ibn Kathir .P.188.

⁷⁷ Al-Quran, 2:186

⁷⁸ Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation. P.77

⁷⁹ Umar ibn Kaṭīr Tafsir Ibn Kathir, P.188.

"Verily between men and between polytheism and unbelief is the negligence of prayer."⁸⁰

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Zubair(Radi Allah Anhu) that he heard Jabir b. 'Abdullah (Radi Allah Anhu) saying. I heard the Messenger of Allah (sal-allahu- alleihi-wasallam) observing this:

"Between man and polytheism and unbelief is the abandonment of salat."⁸¹

Hadith and stories that extol the virtues of prayer, described its importance and its benefits are many. No mention is liable everyone. The devout Muslim community try to pray Abu Hurayra (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates: "the Messenger of Allah said, 'No prayer is harder for the hypocrites than the morning and the night prayers and if they knew the reward for these prayers at their respective times, they would certainly present themselves in the mosques even if they had to crawl."⁸²

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his progeny) has said: "One who considers the prayers to be insignificant and trivial is not from me. By Allah! He shall never come close to me at the pool of Kauthar."⁸³

It is narrated on the authority of 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud(Radi Allah Anhu) that he observed. I asked the Messenger of Allah (sal-allahu- alleihi-wasallam) which deed was the best. He (the Holy Prophet) replied: Prayer at its appointed hour. I (again) said: Then what? He (the Holy Prophet) replied: Kindness to the parents. I (again) said: Then what? He replied: Earnest endeavour (Jihad) in the cause of Allah. And I would have not ceased asking more questions but out of regard (for his feelings).⁸⁴

⁸⁰Sahih Muslim: Book 1 Kitab Al-Iman, Hadith 146.

⁸¹ibid, Hadith 147.

⁸²Sahih Bukhari: Book, 8 Adhan, Hadith 29.

⁸³Biharul Anwar, Vol; 82, P 224.

⁸⁴Sahih Muslim: Book 1 Kitab Al-Iman, Hadith 151.

It is reported on the authority of ‘Abdullah (Radi Allah Anhu) that the Apostle of Allah (salallahu- alleihi-wasallam) observed:

"The best of the deeds or deed is the (observance of) prayer at its proper time and kindness to the parents."⁸⁵

The Noble Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) has said: "Do not abandon your prayers intentionally for surely the obligations of Allah and His Messenger cease to cover one who forsakes his prayers intentionally."⁸⁶

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his progeny) said: "Whenever the time of each prayer arrives, an Angel announces to the people: (O' People Stand up and extinguish, with prayers, the fire which you have set alight for yourselves."⁸⁷

According to a renowned saying of the holy Prophet; prayer is the spirit of worship. It is the basis and living ground of religion. The conception of prayer in Iqbal's RA view is the foundation of all his religious concepts. As Iqbal RA says, "religious goal soars superior than the goal of philosophy. Religion is not satisfied with simple conception; it demands a more association with the object for its quest and its intimate knowledge. The source through which this association is achieved is the act of prayer ending in spiritual enlightenment." According to Iqbal's view, "each act of prayer is a form of Ascension to Heaven or 'Meraj'.

Moreover, Iqbal RA asserts that prayer is a principle of integration for the reason that it harmonizes all the elements that constitute the personality though, emotion and will of a human being, through their relation to a dominant rationale. Iqbal RA believes that congregational approach is the real essence of all true prayer and it is the real object of prayer is achieved when the act of prayer becomes congregational. When people collectively perform prayer with their

⁸⁵ibid, Hadith 155.

⁸⁶Kanzul Ummal, Volume 7, Tradition 19096. P.638

⁸⁷Biharul Anwar, Volume 82, P. 209.

complete concentration to achieve the core object of establishing an association with Almighty, it strengthens the basis of prayer and makes it more precious in the eyes of God.

According to Iqbal RA prayer performs another significant social function. He asserts that "Prayer fosters and creates the logic of social equality as much as it tends to obliterate the feeling of race or rank superiority in the worshippers." In other sense, it makes all the people equal. In classic lines, Iqbal says that at the time of prayer, as explained this concept in his famous literary work, *Bang e Dara*. The philosophy of Iqbal on prayer can be summarized by the fact that with the help of prayer humanity gains liberty from the mastery of all but Almighty. The act of prayer is purposeful only if people worship God by having no other authority.⁸⁸

Imam Ghazali RA there is a strong relationship between Dua and prayer. The person saying the 'Dua' for acceptance of prayer and it should be earnest appeal. After The submissive and humble gesture Dua becomes more effective. There are a lot of blessings hidden in the prayers which are awarded when a believer perform Dua. It connects the will of an individual to the will of ALLAH which further results in favorable outcomes for an individual. There are certain conditions which are instructed by Imam Ghazali. These conditions are physical as well as spiritual. The physical condition includes cleanliness, and ablution and the spiritual requirements are purity of heart and soul. The concept of purification of soul is much emphasized by Imam Ghazali. He further asserts that the purification of soul makes a person closer to Almighty and the acceptance of prayers can be achieved.⁸⁹

Azkar e Nafea by Dr. FazalIllahi is yet another evidence of importance of prayer and its benefits. DrFazalIllahi RA in his book has conditioned the ultimate worldly gains as well as hereafter with the prayers. The spiritual health of a person is directly related with the physical

⁸⁸Muhammad,Iqbal, *Bang-e-Dara*, Lahore; maqtabaJammat- Islami, 1983. P.116-118.

⁸⁹Qadri, Syed Hussain, *Imam Ghazali's philosophy of Dua*, Dehli: Nadwat-ul-Musanif, 1977. P.386-387

wellbeing and the overall life. He further asserts that with the help of prayers a person can get rid of all sorts of evils and negative thoughts. In addition, he also explained the importance of reciting Isma e Azeem and the Holy book Quran. Dr. FazalIlahi claims that there is a specific impact of every name of Allah if recited by sincere intentions and pure heart. He further emphasized on the components of prayers which includes, the importance and benefits of call of prayer, prayer, congressional prayer, voluntary prayers, Dua and other forms of worship. The gist of Azkar e Nafea confirms that prayer is a basic and integral part of human life without which the existence of human is meaningless.⁹⁰

Shah WaliullahDehlavi RA in his master literary work Hujjatullah-il-Baligha revealed some realities and secrets of Sufism and Shariah. Shah Waliullah is one of the renowned Muslim scholars of his times. He asserted that prayers contain utmost importance in the life of human and in daily matters of life. The Shariah is the straight and directed path instructed by Allah and practiced by Holy Prophet. Shah WaliUllah in Hujjatullah-il-Baligha claims that the true implementation and practice of Shariah is impossible without the practice of prayer with understanding. Moreover, Shah Waliullah said that the ritual of congressional prayer prevents an individual from fatal effects. The correct practice of this ritual is an obligation on every Muslim believer.⁹¹ The ritual Prayer is the religious observation that surpasses all others in universality and importance, attested by both scripture and reason; therefore it becomes totally essential to get it recognized collectively by arranging special congregations and propagating it.

2.2.2.5 Relationship between Dua and Allah:

Dua plays an important role in constructing a bridge between a human being and Almighty

⁹⁰Elahi, fazal, Maqaalat-e-Fazal-e-Elahi, Lahore: Baitul Islam. 1965. P.164.

⁹¹WaliullahDehlavi, Shah, Hujjat-Allah- ulbaligha, Beirut: Dar Ahya-e-uloom. 1992. P.22-25

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ⁹²

"O mankind, you are those in need of Allah, while Allah is the Free of need, the Praiseworthy."⁹³

Allah tells us in above verse He has no need of anyone or anything else, but all of creation is in need of Him and is in a position of humility before Him. He is unique in His being Free of all needs, and has no partner or associate, and He is Worthy of all praise in all that He does, says, decrees and legislates.

In the Quran it is written:

In the holy book Quran it is instructed that a person must make a Dua with strong faith that Dua (supplication) will be respond, for the reason that later or sooner it will be responded

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ⁹⁴

"And your Lord says, "Call upon Me; I will respond to you." Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell [rendered] contemptible."⁹⁵

It is an obligation on every Muslim to remember Allah in the times of happiness as well as sorrow. The interpretation of the above versus of Quran can clearly explain that Dua is the mode of communication between Allah and human being. The act of Dua makes a person closer to Almighty and wash out all sorrows, evils and pains in life and hereafter.

2.3 Significance Of Pray (Dua) In Islam:

Nobody can remain happy forever. It is the belief of every Muslim that fate, happiness, sorrow and tough times everything is from Allah. Whenever Allah wants to testify any human being then He takes their exam by tough times. And for all happiness and blessings Muslims

⁹² Al-Quran, 35:15

⁹³Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation.P.1303

⁹⁴ Al-Quran, 40:60

⁹⁵Yousaf, the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation, P.1443.

thank to Allah and for all problems, sorrows, hardships, etc Muslims seek help from God by Dua.

Muslims believe Dua (Supplication) as the strongest weapon against adversity. Every Muslim believes that whatever is happening in the life it's as per order of Allah Almighty and for unfavorable conditions Muslims belief to be humble and thankful to Allah and for unfavorable conditions be patient and seek help from Allah through Dua.

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ⁹⁶

“And we will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient.”⁹⁷

He tests them with the bounty sometimes and sometimes with the afflictions of fear and hunger, The frightened and the hungry persons show the effects of the affliction outwardly and this is why Allah has used here the word 'Libas' (cover or clothes) of fear and hunger.

Allah has sent many Prophets, and dua of 11 Prophets are mentioned in Quran. They asked for help from Allah when in trouble through Dua. The power of dua is enlightened by the incident of Prophet Nuh (A.S)

فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مَجْنُونٌ وَازْدُجِرَ (9) فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانْتَصِرَ (10) فَفَتَحْنَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَاءٍ مُّنْهَمِرٍ (11) وَفَجَّرْنَا الْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا فَالْتَقَى الْمَاءُ عَلَى أَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِرَ⁹⁸

“The people of Noah denied before them, and they denied our servant and said, a madman, and he was repelled. So he invoked his Lord, Indeed, I am overpowered, so help. Then we opened the

⁹⁶ Al-Qur'an, 2:155

⁹⁷Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation. P.62-63

⁹⁸ Al-Quran, 54:9-12

gates of the heaven with rain pouring down. And caused the earth to burst with springs, and the waters met for a matter already predestined.⁹⁹"

(The people of Nuh. They rejected our servant) means, they denied him categorically and accused him of madness,(and said: "A madman!" Wazdujir.) Mujahid said about Wazdujir: "He was driven out accused on account of madness." It was also said that Wazdujir means, he was rebuked, deterred, threatened and warned by his people saying "If you do not stop O Nuh, you will be among those who will be stoned." (Then he invoked his Lord (saying): "I have been overcome, so help (me)!") Meaning, 'I am weak and cannot overcome or resist my people, so help Your religion!' Allah the Exalted said,(So, We opened the gates of the heaven with water Munhamir.) As-Suddi said about Munhamir, "It means abundant"¹⁰⁰."

Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) said that dua is the essence of worship. So Dua is considered as a power weapon in Islam.

Prayer is an obligation of the faith in the ritual sense to be practice five times a day by mature Muslims. As per Islamic law, prayers have various conditions and obligations of observance of prayers. On the other hand, beyond the extent of practicing prayers, there are some spiritual aspects and conditions of prayer which clearly represent its real spirit.

In the Holy Qur'ān, Allah says:

"I created the jinn and humankind only that they might worship me"¹⁰¹.

Therefore, prayer primarily, is the answer to this Divine instruction to worship the God. Prayer clearly represents the affirmation of servant hood of an individual prior to the Lord of Creation and obedience to His supreme Will. It also shows representation to a willing

⁹⁹Yousaf. The Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation.P.1649-1650.

¹⁰⁰Umar ibn KaṭīrTafsir Ibn Kathir .P.398.

¹⁰¹Yousaf. The Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation. P.1620

recognition of an individual's neediness and weakness by asking Mercy, Divine Grace, Forgiveness and Abundance¹⁰². Prayer, then, is a determined action by the believer, seeking unmediated and direct, communication with Almighty for Muslims believes that every individual is of interest to the Marvelous.

As the Holy Qur'ān asserts:

“And there is not a thing but hymneth His praise; but ye understand not their praise”.

Prayer, by its very true spirit, is a kind of entreaty or request, and therefore demands the full aware contribution of the one praying, with intellect, will, soul and body. An individual engaged in prayer is in straight connection with the Almighty Who listen to everything the requesters says and responds – although not of necessity in the assenting to each call. This is the actual demonstration of the role of Allah as The Aware, The Responsive, The Hearer which signify three of the Attributes and Holy Names of Allah that shape the basis of the Islamic conception of the Divine hood¹⁰³.

In Islam the literally meaning of prayer is to communicate with the Creator.

Salat "(prayer) literally means to communicate"

In other place in the Quran the importance of prayer is clearly defined

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ¹⁰⁴

"Take, [O, Muhammad], from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them increase, and invoke [Allah 's blessings] upon them. Indeed, your invocations are reassurance for them. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Azad, Abulkalam, Haqeeqat-e-Salah, Lahore: Umer Publication, 2004. P171.

¹⁰³ Albani, Nasiruddin, Fazail-e-Amaal, Lahore: Baitul Islam, 2012. P: 275.

¹⁰⁴ Al-Quran, 9:103

¹⁰⁵ Yousa the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation.P.533

In above verse word used for Salah, supplicate for them, and ask Allah to forgive them. 'Abdullah bin Abi Awfa said, "Whenever the Prophet was brought charity, he used to invoke Allah for those who brought it. My father also brought his charity and the Prophet said, (O Allah! I invoke You for the family of Abu Awfa.)" Allah's statement, (Verily, your Salat are a Sakan for them), means, a mercy for them.¹⁰⁶

2.4 Significance of reciting Isma e Azam:

Isma e Azam is considered the greatest name of Allah that is mentioned in the hadiths and Quran. Allah has made ism azam hidden in his names. The main reason of this may be to create interest among his followers for al-Asma al-Husna and to motivate them pray Him by reciting all of the names. Ism Azam carries immense value before the God. It is narrated in a lot of scriptures of hadiths, such as AbuDawud, Tirmidhi, Nasai, Dawood Ibn Majah, Duathat which signifies the significance of mentioning Isma e Azam while performing prayers to confirm their acceptance before ALLAH¹⁰⁷.

Considering the importance of the holy names of Allah all the Muslims recite Isma e Husna daily after performing their prayers. These holy names praise Allah and define His existence with different qualities. The recitation of Isma e Azam is an essential practice after prayers which further strengthens the relationship between an individual and Almighty¹⁰⁸.

In addition, according to different Islamic scholars the recitation of Isma e Azam is very much important to add value in the prayers. According to Imam Azam, Ism e Azam consist of two

¹⁰⁶ Umar ibn Kaṭīr Tafsir Ibn Kathir .. P.514.

¹⁰⁷ Albani, Nasiruddin, Fazail-e-Amaal, Lahore: Baitul Islam, 2012. P.278.

¹⁰⁸ Shibli Nomani, Ghulam, Ebadaat, Islamabad: national book foundation. 2001. P.384.

names which are Adl and Hakam. According to AbdulQadir Gilani, “Hayy” and Imam Rabbani says Qayyum is the Isma e Azam¹⁰⁹.

As it is known, Islamic scholars have found Ismaazam in various names. Possibly, Ismazam that was apparent in their private realm was dissimilar. According to the narration by Abu'l-Hasan Shazili:

"When I was a student, I was sitting before my teacher one day. I thought to myself: "I wonder if my teacher knows ism azam?" While I was thinking so, my teacher's sons, who were at the outside gate looked at me and said, "O Abu'l-Hasan! Honor and respect does not depend on knowing ism azam but being honored by ism azam"¹¹⁰

Burayda, one of the companions of the Prophet of God narrates:

Someday, the Prophet of God saw some in the mosque praying as follows:

(O my Allah! I ask from you as that (belief); I witness that you are Allah; there is no god but you; you are only one and eternal, who begetteth, not nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him.) There upon, the Prophet of ALLAH said, " I swear by Allah, in whose hand is my soul, that this person prayed mentioning ism azam, through which Allah gives anything that is asked and accepts any prayer" ¹¹¹.

2.5Contents of Prayer:

In Islam there are five obligatory prayers which are Fajr (morning prayer), Zuhar (noon prayer), Asr (afternoon prayer), Maghrib (prayer after sunset), Isha (night prayer)¹¹².

¹⁰⁹Gilani, Abdul Qadir, Ghaniyat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Gilani, Lahore: MadniKutub Khana.1960. P: 376-377.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, P.381.

¹¹¹Arosi, Abu Abdulrehman bin Hazar, Kitab-Al-Dua, Lahore:NomaniKutub Khana,2003. P.345.

¹¹²Elahi, fazal, Importance of congregational prayers, Islamabad: Dar Alnoor, 2011. P.12.

2.5.1 Timing:

The five times of mandatory ritual prayer are Fajr, from dawn to sunrise; Zuhar, from noon until mid-afternoon; Asr, from mid-afternoon to sunset; Maghrib, from sunset to early evening; Isha, from early evening to the middle of the night. These times correspond with the important sequential changes that are division of the cycle of each day on earth as the earth moves through its a variety of stations with regard to the Sun. Being the focal point of the solar system, the Sun becomes a guiding light for the prayer performer, representing the starting and end of each the interval of prayer.

Muslims regard the day to commence at sunset, with the Maghrib prayer at evening. This holds incredible importance on a spiritual level. The sunset prayer (Maghrib) represents the position of leaving existence. The night prayer represents the station of death and darkness, nonexistence and annihilation.

Narrated by Saiyar bin Salama;

I along with my father went to Abu- Barza Al-Aslarni and my father asked him, "How Allah's Apostle used to offer the five compulsory congregational prayers?" Abu- Barza said, "The Prophet used to pray the Zuhr prayer which you (people) call the first one at mid-day when the sun had just declined The Asr prayer at a time when after the prayer, a man could go to the house at the farthest place in Medina (and arrive) while the sun was still hot. (I forgot about the Maghrib prayer). The Prophet Loved to delay the 'Isha which you call Al- Atama and he disliked sleeping before it and speaking after it. After the Fajr prayer he used to leave when a man could recognize the one sitting beside him and he used to recite between 60 to 100 Ayat (in the Fajr prayer).¹¹³

¹¹³Sahih Bukhari, Vol 1, Ch. 10, Haith 522.

2.5.2 Nawafil, Voluntary Prayers:

In addition to the obligatory fixed ritual prayers, Muslims deem supererogatory prayers of huge significance. Enormous emphasis is placed on the observance of prayers that the Prophet of ALLAH used to perform besides the five prescribed obligatory prayers. In addition to the obligatory prayers, the Prophet observed certain sets of supererogatory ritual-prayers just before and after them. In addition to these, the Prophet used to observe additional prayers known as Nawafil. The merit of performing these prayers are supplement acts of devotion to God. There are some of the notable voluntary or non-obligatory prayers in Islam such as Ishraq, prayer just after sunrise; Duha, in the forenoon; Awabin, after the evening prayer; Tahajudd, the night vigil. "When asked why he used to pray so much, to the point that his feet were swollen, the Prophet replied, "Should I not be a thankful servant of Allah?"

In this saying, the Prophet of God expressed the spirit of voluntary prayers, to illustrate gratitude to the God and therefore to draw closer to the presence of Lord¹¹⁴.

2.5.3 Cleanliness and dress:

Islam instructs that (Salah) prayer be performed in ritually clean surroundings. When worshipping it is important the place of prayer and the clothes that are worn should be clean. Both women and men are instructed to cover their (awrah) bodies in sensibly loose garments. The well-known Hadith by the Prophet of ALLAH signifies the importance of cleanliness "purity is half the faith". This saying of the Prophet shows the way Islam has modified and incorporated existing rules of purity in the religion¹¹⁵.

¹¹⁴Elahi, fazal, Importance of congregational prayers, Islamabad: Dar Alnoor, 2011. P33.

¹¹⁵Tahnvi, Ashraf Ali, Ashraf ulKalam, Karachi: idara e Islamiyat, 1424 Hijri. P: 218.

2.5.4 Ritual ablution:

In Islam before conducting prayers, it is mandatory to perform ritual ablution. The ablution (Wuḍū) is performed using water and minor ablution tayammum is conducted when water is not available or not to use for certain reasons such as ill health. The ablution (Wuḍū) is conduct by the believers of Islam as per the instructions of God prescribed in the holy book Quran. In this regard the Quran says;

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُم مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ¹¹⁶

"O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles. And if you are in a state of janabah, then purify yourselves. But if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women and do not find water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and hands with it. Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favor upon you that you may be grateful."¹¹⁷

Above verse explained as When you stand for (intend to offer) the Salah, Allah commanded performing Wudu' for the prayer. This is a command of obligation in the case of impurity, and in the case of purity, it is merely a recommendation.

Narrated by Abu Huraira;

Allah's Apostle said, "The prayer of a person who does, Hadath (passes, urine, stool or wind) is not accepted till he performs (repeats) the ablution." A person from Hadaramout asked Abu

¹¹⁶ Al-Quran, 5:6

¹¹⁷Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation.P.281-282

Huraira, "What is 'Hadath'?" Abu Huraira replied, " 'Hadath' means the passing of wind from the anus."¹¹⁸

More particularly, ablution is performed by washing some parts of the body such as hands, mouth, face, nose, arms, and hair and beyond the neck, ears, and feet. All these parts are washed three times however, It is not mandatory to wash the hair and neck three times, once is enough, and males also wash their mustache and beard while washing the face in the ablution.

2.6 Objectives of Prayer:

The prayers in Islam is regarded the most important practice. Its core purpose is to make an individual in direct contact with God; for the purpose of strengthening the relationship with Him; to remind of His Greatness and to be thankful for all His blessings. As the body needs physical requirements such as water and food, similarly, the soul has spiritual requirements which are fulfilled by performing prayers. The Prophet while explaining the importance of Prayer* said, "The evaluation of one who remembers Almighty and one who does not, is similar to that of the living and the dead."

2.6.1 Direct communication with Allah:

The closest a person is to His Lord is when he is in prostration. The Islamic prayer is the source to establish a connection with God. (As-Salah), the Arabic word for prayer is actually derived from the word that means "connection." The Prophet Muhammad said: "When anybody of you prostrate to pray, he is in direct communication with his God, so let him pay concentration to the way he communicates to Him."

¹¹⁸Sahih Bukhari, Vol, 1, Ch.4, Hadith 137.

2.6.2 A pillar of Islam:

In Islam, Prayer is regarded as the second most imperative pillar of Islam, and is the most usual obligation in the life of a Muslim. The Muslims fast just once in a year; give Zakah once a year; and perform Hajj only once a life time. On the other hand, prayer is the crucial obligation that is ordered to be fulfilled minimum five times a day, despite of the circumstance. In actual fact, Allah did not even let off the Muslims from prayers at the time of battle. In Quran Allah Says,

خَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ¹¹⁹

"Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and stand before Allah , devoutly obedient, if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on foot or riding. But when you are secure, then remember Allah [in prayer], as He has taught you that which you did not [previously] know.¹²⁰"

Above verse explained in detail by Ibn Kaṭīr he said that, to offer the prayers at their fixed times, especially the Middle Salah. Allah commands that the prayer should be performed properly and on time. Furthermore, Allah has specifically mentioned the Middle prayer, which is the 'Asr prayer according to the majority of the scholars among the Companions, as At-Tirmidhi and Al-Baghawi have stated. Al-Qadi Al-Mawardi added that the majority of the scholars of the Tabi'in also held this view. Al-Hafiz Abu 'Umar bin 'Abdul-Barr said that this is also the opinion of the majority of the scholars of the Athar (i.e., the Hadith and the statements of the Salaf). In addition, Abu Muhammad bin 'Atiyah said that this is the Tafsir (of the Middle prayer) of the majority of scholars. Al-Hafiz Abu Muhammad 'Abdul-Mu'min bin Khalaf Ad-Dumyati stated in his book on the Middle prayer that it is the 'Asr prayer and mentioned that this is the Tafsir of 'Umar.

¹¹⁹ Al-Quran, 2:238-9

¹²⁰Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation.P.106

'Ali, Ibn Mas'ud, Abu Ayyub, 'Abdullah bin 'Amr, Samurah bin Jundub, Abu Hurayrah, Abu Sa'id, Hafsa, Umm Habibah, Umm Salamah, Ibn 'Abbas and 'A'ishah. This is also the Tafsir of 'Ubaydah, Ibrahim An-Nakha'i, Razin, Zirr bin Hubaysh, Sa'id bin Jubayr, Ibn Sirin, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Kalbi, Muqatil, 'Ubayd bin Abu Maryam, and others.¹²¹

Having mentioned the laws for the guidance of human society, God rounds off this address by emphasizing Prayer, for it is Prayers which instil in man the fear of God. They inculcate the feelings of goodness and purity and the disposition to obey the ordinances of God, and foster adherence to righteousness. Without Prayer it would be impossible for men to persist in observing the laws of God, and they would likely be swept away by a current of defiance and disobedience, as happened in the case of the Jews.

2.6.2 Success lies in the Prayer:

The Prophet of Allah said: "The first of his deeds for which a man will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection will be the prayers. If it is found to be perfect, he will be safe and successful¹²². But if it is defective, he will be unfortunate and a loser." Through couple of hadiths it can be very much easier to evaluate the importance of prayer in the lives of Muslim.

2.7 Impact of prayer on individual:

The practice of Prayer imparts a lot of significant benefits to an individual. Some of the most important and noteworthy individual benefits of prayers are discussed below which are regarded by Islamic scholars.

¹²¹Umar ibn Kaṭīr Tafsir Ibn Kathir .P.347.

¹²²Ghazali, Imam, Islami Aqeedah, Lahore: Qamar Saeed Publisher. 1981. P.178.

2.7.1 Shields against evil:

Most of the Islamic researchers have regarded prayer as shields against evil. It is an evident fact that Man is originally weak and without help from Allah, it will be not possible to abstain from evil.

Allah Almighty says:

اَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ¹²³

"Recite, [O Muhammad], what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do."¹²⁴

It is no denying the fact that an individual who stands before Allah enthusiastically will be dissimilar from an individual who doesn't. Therefore, those people who practice regular prayers are protected from the evil thoughts and desires¹²⁵.

2.7.2 Enriches the soul:

The practice of prayer enriches the soul and it is the best nutrition of the soul. Man is neglectful, particularly with the hectic lifestyles. In this situation prayer successfully satisfies spiritual need of an individual and makes all the tiredness away. The main reason of this relieve is to be in contact with the Creator. This with no doubt gives the soul contentment and peace¹²⁶.

Allah says in the Quran

¹²³ Al-Quran, 29:45

¹²⁴ Ali, Abdullah, Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation.P.1164

¹²⁵ Gahzali, Imam, Philosophy of Dua, Dehli: NadwatAlmusanfeen. 1977. P. 320.

¹²⁶ Mawdudi, AbulA`Ala Syed, research on Islamic ebadaat, Lahore: Baitul Islam .2000. P.25.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ¹²⁷

"Those who have believed and whose hearts are assured by the remembrance of Allah. Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts are assured."¹²⁸

2.7.3 Makes us humble and tolerant:

By realizing dependence on God and His greatness, man becomes more humbled and gets rid from arrogance and pride. While performing prayer, the source of intellect and the highest part of his body, his head, on to the earth and recites, "How perfect is my God, The Most Superior" According to the interpretation of the Islamic research it can be said that humbleness is one of the essential qualities which has been associated with success by Allah¹²⁹. Almighty Allah says,

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (1) الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ¹³⁰

"Certainly will the believers have succeeded, they who are during their prayer humbly submissive."¹³¹

Certainly this can be achieved only when one comprehends what one is reciting and concentrates with modesty.

Above verse explained in tafseer of Mariful Quran through mentioning hadith, Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said: "(Khashi`un) means those with fear and with tranquillity." This was also narrated from Mujahid, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Az-Zuhri. It was reported from `Ali bin Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, and that Khushu `means the Khushu `of the heart. This was also the view of Ibrahim An-Nakha`i. Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, "Their Khushu`

¹²⁷ Al-Quran, 13:28

¹²⁸ Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation. P.628.

¹²⁹ Elahi, Fazal, fazail e dawat, Lahore: Maktabaqudsia, 2001. P14.

¹³⁰ Al-Quran, 23:1-2

¹³¹ Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation. 977.

was in their hearts." So they lowered their gaze and were humble towards others. Khushu' in prayer is only attained by the one who has emptied his heart totally, who does not pay attention to anything else besides it, and who prefers it above all else.¹³²

2.7.4 washes away sins:

Prayer, according to Islamic scholars is considered the best sources of washing away sins. It is no denying the fact that no individual is devoid of committing sins, but, Allah has gifted the source of prayer, a method to eradicate those sins¹³³.

Allah Almighty in the Quran says:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِنْ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبُنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَى لِلذَّاكِرِينَ¹³⁴

"And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember."¹³⁵

Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, (And perform the Salah, at the two ends of the day) "This is referring to the morning prayer (Subh) and the evening prayer (Maghrib)." The same was said by Al-Hasan and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam. In one narration reported by Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak and others, Al-Hasan said, "It means the morning prayer (Subh) and the late afternoon prayer (`Asr)." Mujahid said, "It is the morning prayer at the beginning of the day and the noon prayer (Zuhr) and late afternoon prayer (`Asr) at the end of the day." This was also said by Muhammad bin Ka'b Al-Qurazi and Ad-Dahhak in one narration from him.¹³⁶ (Verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds.) This is saying that the performance of good deeds is an

¹³²Usmani, Shafi, Moulana Mariful Quran. Karachi: Qadeemikutabkhana, 1992. P.535.

¹³³Waliullah, Shah, Fauz al haramain, Multan: farooqikutabkhana. 1986. P.178.

¹³⁴Al-Quran, 11:114

¹³⁵Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation P.617.

¹³⁶Umar ibn Kaṭīr Tafsir Ibn Kathir. P.624.

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expiration of previous sins. (There is not any Muslim who commits a sin, then he makes Wudu' and prays two units of prayer, except that he will be forgiven (that sin).

Similarly, the Prophet of God gave a beautiful instance when he said to companions: "Consider if one of you had a river by his door in which he bathed five times a day. Would any filth remain on him?" They said, "No." Then the Prophet responds: "Similarly, Allah washes away sins with the daily five prayers¹³⁷."

In addition, man is bordered by many problems and trials. When the practice of strengthening the relationship with God is started through prayer, He, who has absolute power, fixes worldly problems. The Islamic scholars assert that whoever strengthens their association between Allah and themselves, Allah will also make their relationship between themselves and the creation even stronger. In this context Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ¹³⁸

"O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient."¹³⁹

Allah commanded His servants to use patience and prayer to acquire the good of this life and the Hereafter. Muqatil bin Hayan said that this Ayah means, "Utilize patience and the obligatory prayer in seeking the Hereafter. The prayer is one of the best means of assistance for firmly adhering to Allah's orders.

2.7.5 Unites the Muslims:

When the prayer is performed in group, it establishes equality, humility and brotherhood between Muslims. Likewise, the worshippers position themselves in rows, without any

¹³⁷Albani, Nasiruddin, Prophet's Prayer, Lahore: Umer publication. 2012. P.218.

¹³⁸ Al-Quran, 2:153.

¹³⁹Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English P.62.

distinction of nationality, color, wealth, family or status, race, shoulder to shoulder, and all perform pray together as a single body. This practice of unity supports to demolish all barriers and conflicts which stand between men¹⁴⁰.

The Prophet of Allah said, "Prayer in group is far better than praying alone by 27 degrees¹⁴¹."

There are many benefits and effects of the prayers that are featured in the temporal and spiritual life. The powerful and strong man always remains in search of something to stop the evil intentions and who could lead a life free from the chains of sin. In view of the strong and powerful thing is prayer. Indeed prayer restrains from sins and evils, in Quran Allah says:

اِنَّ مَا اَوْحِيَ اِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَاَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ اِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهٰى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ اَكْبَرُ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ¹⁴²

"Recite, [O Muhammad], what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do."¹⁴³

The Prophet said:

"Until Adam prays regularly and keeps focus until the devil is afraid of him, but I would give them the devil is overcome, and it is pushed into the pit of sin." Worshiper of God has a special status and position which God has blessed other people and call them and have they removed¹⁴⁴.

It is very much clear that there are certain differences between the prayers of Muslims and Hindus but some of the worships of Hindus are a bit similar to the worships in Islam. The major part of the conflict is the philosophy and basic concept of God which is totally in contrast.

¹⁴⁰Ibn taimia, fiqh al Salah, Beirut: Dar Alrabi. 1988, P. 265.

¹⁴¹Elahi, fazal, Importance of congregational prayers, Islamabad: Dar Alnoor, 2011. P32

¹⁴² Al-Quran, 29:45

¹⁴³Yousaf the Holy Quran (Koran) English Translation. P.1164

¹⁴⁴Waliullah, Shah, Alfauz al kabeer ,Dehli: Maqtaba Burhan faroolBagh, 1980. P.188.

With the above discussion it has been affirmed that the practice of prayer in Hinduism has been changed with the passage of time. In contrast Islam brought its system of rituals and prayers in a true nature and was preserved in the magnificent Sunnah and Qur'an¹⁴⁵. The principles of prayers and their proofs were successfully saved by the realistic instances of the Prophet of Allah. In addition, those rituals and practices of prayers were transferred by his companions and were followed by the whole Muslim Ummah, generations after generations all the way through the magnificent Islamic history¹⁴⁶.

¹⁴⁵ShibliNomani, Ghulam, Ebadaat, Islamabad: national book foundation, 2001. P334.

¹⁴⁶Ghazali, Imam, IslamiAqeedah, Lahore: Qamar Saeed Publisher, 1981. P.181.

3. CONCLUSION:

- Every religion in the world whether man-made or divine has some kinds of worship.
- In Islam there are some religious aspirations which also prevail in Hinduism. The difference is on the basis of practice, conduct, interpretation of scriptures and traditions.
- Both the religions, consider God as the sole creator.
- The followers of both religions look for assistance from God, Spiritual growth is the aim of both Hinduism and Islam.
- In Islam and Hinduism God is the divine and supreme ruler of the whole universe, the evil do have existence but on the Day of Judgment will be punished.
- The practices of prayers revolve around the cosmologies of both the religions. The cosmology in Hinduism is much complicated as compared to Islam.
- Prayers are closely knit in relation to both the cosmologies in both Hinduism and Islam.
- Hinduism believes in three functional forms of gods namely Vishnu, Siva and Brahma .
- The practices of prayers in Hinduism, such as Mantras, Japa, Bhajan and other sorts of Puja revolve around these three gods.
- In Islam there is no concept of Trinity of gods. The followers of Islam believe in oneness of God.
- Both religions recognize the authority of God and His influence to accomplish the system of universe as per the will of God.
- Both Islam and Hinduism also envisage a firm faith that the divine power, God, have tendency to listen the prayers and answer to the prayers and grant knowledge, wealth, peace, success, and the desired objectives.
- Both the religions consider that God is munificent and forgive sins.

- To elevate the soul to purify uplift it to the highest possible plain, this cannot be accomplish unless prayer is ultimate goal and focus of both religions.

In this research study, the comparative and descriptive study was carried out for the purpose of analyzing the trends and practices of 'Prayer in Hinduism and Islam'. Moreover, the research concluded that there are similarities in both religions in terms of the purpose and aim behind the practices of prayer but differ in the way or conduct of prayers.

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