

# Introduction

The word Hajj means "to intend a journey", which reflects both the outward act of a journey and the inward act of intentions. Hajj is believed to be mandatory for all Muslims to perform at least once in their lifetime if they are financially and physically able to do so. It is a pilgrimage performed by Muslims to the Holy city of Makkah, in the month of Dhul-Hijjah (the last month of the Islamic calendar). There are several verses from Quran that provides us with guidance on Hajj.

# Hajj Since Earlier Times

The ritual of pilgrimage to Mecca stretches back thousands of years to the time of Prophet Abraham pbuh. It's evident from the following verses that Hajj has been practiced by successive generations of Prophet Abraham pbuh and Hajj was even known in the times of Prophet Mosa pbuh.

فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مِّمَّا فَرَغَ اللَّهُ مِنْ دَخَلَهُ، كَانَ آمِنًا وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حُجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

**(3:97) In it are clear signs as the standing place of Abraham. And whoever enters it shall be safe. And to Allah is from the people a pilgrimage to the House - for whoever is able to find thereto a way. But whoever disbelieves - then indeed, Allah is Independent.**

قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنَكِّحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَيَّ أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَنِي حَجَجٌ فَإِنْ  
 أَتَمَمْتَ عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِنْدِكَ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَشُقَّ عَلَيْكَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ  
 مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

**(28.27) He said, "Indeed I intend to marry you to one of these two daughters of mine on condition that you serve me for eight pilgrimages. Then if you complete ten, it will be of your own accord, and I would not wish to make it difficult for you. God willing, you will find me of the righteous."**

# The Basic Purpose of Hajj

Many Muslims today believe that Hajj is performed in the memory of Prophet Ibrahim, sacrifice animals as per his Sunnah and all the rituals related to Hajj like Arafat, Mina, Zam Zam, throwing stone etc. are all related to Prophet Ibrahim Sunnah. The basic purpose of Hajj is addressed by the following Qur'anic verses

فِيهِ ءَايَاتٌ مُّبَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ ءَامِنًا وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفِيٌ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

(3:97) In it are clear signs as the standing place of Abraham. And whoever enters it shall be safe. And to Allah is from the people a pilgrimage to the House - for whoever is able to find thereto a way. But whoever disbelieves - then indeed, Allah is Independent.

وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَاتِ الْبَيْتِ أَنْ لَا تُشْرِكْ فِي شَيْءٍ وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ  
لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ ﴿٢٦﴾

(22:26)" And, when We designated for Abraham the site of the House, "Do not associate anything with Me and purify My House for those who compass it round, or stand up, or bow, or prostrate"

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ  
﴿٢٧﴾

(22:27) And proclaim to the people the Hajj; they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel; they will come from every distant pass.

لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَةٍ عَلَى مَا رَزَقَهُمْ  
مِّنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا الْبَائِسَ الْفَقِيرَ ﴿٢٨﴾

(22:28) That they may witness benefits for themselves and mention the name of Allah on known days, for providing them with the animal livestock. So eat from it, and feed the unfortunate poor.

If we analyze the above verses, it's evident that Hajj has a particular purpose which is Performing Hajj For God Almighty from the people, to praise God and fulfil certain rites.

## The Rituals of Hajj as per Quran

### Tawafs or circulating around Kabah

The word Hajj in Arabic: حج [ħædʒ, ɧæɡ] comes from the Hebrew: חג ḥag [χag], which means "holiday", from the triliteral Semitic root ח-ג-ג. The meaning of the verb is "to circle, to go around". In addition to the meaning of the verb, following Quranic verses mention Tawaf as a mandatory requirement of Hajj.

وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَاتِ الْبَيْتِ أَنْ لَا تُشْرِكْ فِي شَيْءٍ وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ  
لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ ﴿٢٦﴾

(22:26)" And, when We designated for Abraham the site of the House, "Do not associate anyone with Me and purify My House for those who circle around it, or stay there, or bow, or prostrate"

ثُمَّ لِيَقْضُوا تَفَثَهُمْ وَلْيُوفُوا نُذُورَهُمْ وَلْيَطَّوَّفُوا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ ﴿٢٩﴾

(22:29) Then let them clean themselves and fulfill their vows, and circle around the Ancient House.

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ  
وَلِإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ ﴿١٢٥﴾

**(2:125) And when We made the House a place of gathering of people and peace. And take, from the standing place of Abraham a place of Salaat. And We charged Abraham and Ismael, "Purify My House for those who perform Tawaf and those who are staying and those who bow and prostrate "**

Perhaps Tawaf is one of the most important Ritual of Hajj as prescribed by Quran, supported by not only the above verses but also the meaning of the verb forming the root words in Arabic for Hajj i.e. "to circle, to go around". Please note that there is nothing mention in Quran related to the number of times of Tawafs. One can do more than 7 times or less depending upon one's ability, intention and devotion to God.

### Sa'ayi between Safa And Marwa

Sa'ayi is running or walking back and forth seven times between the hills of Safa and Marwah located near the Kaaba. Sa'ayi is mentioned in Quran as per the following verse

﴿١٥٨﴾ إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِن شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوِ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَن يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا وَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٨﴾

**(2:158) Safa and Marwa are among the symbols of God; so whosoever makes the Pilgrimage to the House, or the Visitation, commits no error by circulating between them. Whoever volunteers good-God is Appreciative and Cognizant.**

As obvious from above the "Sa'ayi" around Safa and Marwa was clearly an existing practice which was allowed to continue in Quran. This rite should not be taken as the real purpose or the ritual of the Hajj as prescribed by Quran. Additionally Quran refers to Safa and Marwa as symbols (Shar'airi) and sacredness should not be associated to these.

### Arafat and Muzdalifah

Arafat is a barren and plain land some 20 kilometers east of Mecca and Muzdalifah is an area between Arafat and Mina. Please note the following verses related to these in Quran.

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَإِذَا أَفَضْتُمْ  
مِنْ عَرَفَاتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِندَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ وَاذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا  
هَدَانَكُمْ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِّن قَبْلِهِ لَمَنِ الضَّالِّينَ ﴿١٩٨﴾

**(2:198) You commit no error by seeking bounty from your Lord. When you leave Arafat, remember God at the Sacred Landmark. And remember Him as He has guided you. Although, before that, you were of those astray.**

ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ  
رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٩٩﴾

(2:199) Then depart from where the people depart, and ask God for forgiveness. God is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مِنْ حَجِّكُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ  
ذِكْرًا فَمَنْ الْكَاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ  
مِنْ خَلْقٍ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

(2:200) And when you have completed your rituals, remember Allah like your remembrance of your parents, or even more. And among the people is he who says, "Our Lord, give us in this world," yet he has no share in the Hereafter.

Arafat and the 'Sacred location' (Mash'ari-lharami)- most probably Muzdalifa, was a place where the Pagans used to perform their rites before Islam was revealed to them. However the remembrance of one God and its purpose was compromised as Quran confirms that they had previously gone astray. However, the practice itself was allowed to continue but in the name of the One True God alone. The historical relevance has not been deemed appropriate by the Quran. Quran only elaborates the purpose which is to remember God.

### Animal Sacrifice as Part of HAJJ

Many Muslims today believe that one of the requirements of Hajj is to sacrifice an animal on the basis of Prophet Abraham pbuh's action to sacrifice his son (37:102) which constituted his personal 'test'. This topic is addressed in Quran in Surah Al-Hajj which is talking about most of the Hajj Requirements as follows.

لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَعْلُومَاتٍ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ  
مِّنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا الْبَائِسَ الْفَقِيرَ ﴿٢٨﴾

(22:28) That they may witness benefits for themselves and mention the name of Allah on known days, for providing them with the animal livestock. So eat from it, and feed the unfortunate poor.

ذَٰلِكَ وَمَنْ يُعْظَمْ حُرْمَتِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُۥ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِۦ وَأُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ  
الْأَنْعَامُ إِلَّا مَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا  
قَوْلَ الزُّورِ ﴿٣٠﴾

(22:30) Such is: whoever honors the sacred rites of God, for him it is good in the Sight of his Lord. Lawful to you are cattle, except those mentioned to you. So stay away from the uncleanness of the idols and avoid false words.

لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ مَحِلُّهَا إِلَى الْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ ﴿٣٣﴾

(22:33) In them, the livestock, are benefits for you until an appointed time. Then their place is by the Ancient House.

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةٍ  
الْأَنْعَامِ فَإِنَّهُمْ كَرِيمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

(22:34) We have appointed a rite for every nation, that they may commemorate God's name over the livestock provided for them. Your God is One God, so to Him submit, and announce good news to the humble.

وَالْبُدْنَ جَعَلْنَاهَا لَكُمْ مِنْ شَعِيرِ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ فَاذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا  
صَوَافٍ فَإِذَا وَجِيتُ جُنُوبَهَا فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْقَانِعِ وَالْمُعْتَرَّ كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرْنَاهَا لَكُمْ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

(22:36) We have made the animal offerings symbols of God for you. In them is goodness for you. So pronounce God's name upon them as they line up. Then, when they have fallen on their sides, eat of them and feed needy who do not ask and the needy who do ask. Thus We have subjected them to you, that you may be thankful.

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهُ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمْ  
لِتَشْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمْ وَيُبَشِّرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

(22:37) Neither their flesh, nor their blood, ever reaches God. What reaches Him is the righteousness from you. Thus He subdued them to you, that you may glorify God for guiding you. And give glad tidings to all who do right.

If we analyze the above ayahs, sacrifice of animals after performing Hajj is clearly mentioned in Quran as a one of the requirements of Hajj. One additional point to ponder with reference of verse 22:33 is that "in the cattle/camel/animals are benefits for the mankind up to a certain time and after that their place is the sacred house", i.e. the sacrifice of the animals is required as a ritual of Hajj at the Khana Kaaba/ the sacred house. Additionally God mentions in the 22:37 that "the neither the meat nor the blood of the sacrificed animal reach God, but it is only one's piety that reaches God". It's being reiterated that these animals are sacrificed to meet the needs of those performing Hajj.

## Prohibitions During Hajj

NO OBSCENITY, NO ANGER, NO WICKEDNESS, NO ABUSE

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي  
الْحَجِّ وَمَنْ تَعَلَّوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمْهُ اللَّهُ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُونِ  
يَأْتُوا فِي الْأَبْنَىٰ ﴿١١٧﴾

(2:197) For Hajj are the months well known. If any one undertakes that duty therein, Let there be no obscenity, nor misconduct, nor quarrelling during the Hajj. And whatever good ye do, Allah knows it. And take provisions, but the best of provisions is right conduct. So fear Me, O people of understanding.

#### NO HUNTING ON LAND

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَوفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ أُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيمَةُ ٱلْأَنْعَامِ إِلَّا مَا يُبْتِغَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ  
غَيْرَ مُحِلِّي الصَّيْدِ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١﴾

(5:1) O you who believe! Fulfill your commitments. Livestock animals are permitted for you, except those specified to you; but not hunting while you are in pilgrim sanctity. God decrees whatever He wills.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُحِلُّوا شَعَائِرَ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهَرَ ٱلْحَرَامَ وَلَا ٱلْهَدْيَ وَلَا ٱلْقَلَاعِدَ وَلَا  
ءَامِينَ ٱلْبَيْتِ ٱلْحَرَامِ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ  
شُرَكَائُكُمْ أَن صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى ٱلْبِرِّ  
وَٱلنَّفْقَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْعُدْوَنِ وَٱتَّقُوا ٱللَّهَ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿٢﴾

(5:2) O you who believe! Do not violate God's sacraments, nor the Sacred Month, nor the offerings, nor the garlanded, nor those heading for the Sacred House seeking blessings from their Lord and approval. When you have left the pilgrim sanctity, you may hunt. And let not the hatred of people who barred you from the Sacred Mosque incite you to aggression. And cooperate with one another in virtuous conduct and conscience, and do not cooperate with one another in sin and hostility. And fear God. God is severe in punishment.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ وَمَن قَتَلَهُ مِنكُم مُّتَعَدًّا فَجَزَاءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ  
ٱلنَّعْمِ يَحْكُمُ بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ هَدْيًا بَلَغَ ٱلْكَعْبَةَ أَوْ كَفَرَةً طَعَامُ مَسْكِينٍ أَوْ عَدْلُ ذَٰلِكَ  
صِيَامًا لَّيْذُوقَ وَبَالَ أَمْرِ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا سَلَفَ وَمَن عَادَ فَيَنْقِمُ ٱللَّهُ مِنْهُ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو  
ٱلْإِنْقَامِ ﴿٣﴾

(5:95) O you who believe! do not hunt while you are in pilgrim sanctity. Whoever of you kills any intentionally, its penalty shall be cattle/livestock comparable to what he killed, the judge of which will be determined by two honest persons among you-an offering delivered to the Kaabah. Or he may atone by feeding the needy, or its equivalent in fasting, so that he may taste the consequences of his conduct. God forgives what is past. But whoever repeats, God will take revenge on him. God is Almighty, Avenger.

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ ٱلْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُ مَتَاعًا لَّكُمْ وَٱللسَّيَٰرَةِ وَحُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ ٱلْبَرِ مَا دُمْتُمْ  
حُرْمًا وَٱتَّقُوا ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٤﴾

(5:96) Permitted for you is the catch of sea, and seafood-as sustenance for you and for travelers. But forbidden for you is to hunt on land while you are in pilgrim sanctity. And fear God, to Whom you all will be raised/gathered.

## Redress And Redemptions

The following Ayah Identify the Redemptions

وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ فَإِنْ أُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ وَلَا تَحْلِقُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحَلَّهُ، فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ أَذًى مِنْ رَأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِنْ صِيَامٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسْكِ فَإِذَا أَتِمْتُمْ مِنْ تَمَنَعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلَهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿١٩٦﴾

(2:196) Perform the pilgrimage and the visit for Allah. And if you are prevented, then send such offerings as can be obtained with ease, and shave not your heads until the offering has reached its destination. And whoever among you is sick or have an ailment of the head must pay a ransom of fasting or charity or offering. And if you are in safety, then whosoever contend himself with the visit for the pilgrimage such offering as can be had with ease. And whosoever lacks the means, then a fast of three days while on the pilgrimage, and of seven when you have returned; that is, ten in all. That is for him whose household is not present at the Sacred Mosque. Observe your duty to Allah, and know that Allah is stern in retribution.

As is obvious from above Ayah, if you cannot complete the Hajj for whatever reason, then a sacrifice is compulsory of whatever can be obtained with ease (is'taysara). Furthermore, one cannot shave their heads until the sacrifice reaches its destination. If there is a sickness or an ailment of the head which has necessitated the cutting of the hair before the sacrifice reaches its destination, then a ransom (fidya) is due in one of the three ways i.e either 1) Fasting or 2) Charity or 3) Sacrifice. If one is able and can complete the HAJJ then sacrifice whatever sacrificial animal can be obtained with ease. If you cannot find a sacrificial animal then: (i) Fast three days during Hajj and seven days when you return (total 10 days) home.

## OTHER RITES OF HAJJ

### Sighting of the Moon for Hajj

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهِلَّةِ ۖ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا

الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ اتَّقَى وَأَتَى الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٨٩﴾

(2:189) They ask you, about the new moons. Say, "They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj." And it is not righteousness to enter houses from the back, but righteousness is one who fears Allah. And enter houses from their doors and observe God that you may succeed.

The sighting of the moon for Hajj is given in Quran not as an Instruction or a Hukku but to help Prophet Muhammad answer people's question about the reason for the existence of moon. Also we need to keep in mind that the explanation of the moon's existence was given in Quran keeping in accordance with those



times, that era, intellectual development and the people of that era. However today we know the reason of the moon's existence, which is to keep the earth in steady rotation on its own axis.

## Months for Hajj

Unknown to many Muslims, there are actually four sacred months of Hajj, as is obvious from the following ayahs

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي  
الْحَجِّ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمْهُ اللَّهُ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُونِ  
يَأْتُوا إِلَى الْآلِ بْنِ ١١٧

(2:197) For Hajj are the months well known. If any one undertakes that duty therein, Let there be no obscenity, nor misconduct, nor quarrelling during the Hajj. And whatever good you do, Allah knows it. And take provisions, but the best of provisions is right conduct. So fear Me, O people of understanding.

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ  
تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ١٢٣

(2:203) And remember God during the designated days. But whoever hurries on in two days commits no wrong, and whoever stays on commits no wrong-provided he maintains righteousness. And obey God, and know that to Him you will be gathered.

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضَ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ أَنْفُسَكُمْ  
وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ  
مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ٣٦

(9:36) Indeed! the number of the months with Allah is twelve months by Allah's ordinance in the day that He created the heavens and the earth. Four of them are sacred: that is the right religion. So wrong not yourselves in them. And fight the polytheists collectively, as they fight you collectively, and know that God is with the righteous.

As evident from Verse 9:36, Hajj can be performed in any of the three out of four sacred months. The month of Ramadan which is one of the four sacred months, has been kept separate for fasting only. For the rest of the three sacred months, Hajj can be performed in any month. Verse 2:197 also confirms that performing of Hajj is associated with "Months well-known" instead of one Month only. Nowadays Hajj has been limited to specific dates in one particular month only, which is contrary to what Quran is saying. Verse 2:203 mentions that the duration of hajj can be done in two days or more depending upon one's devotion, ability and resources at hand.



## Wearing of Ihram

As per the Hajj Rituals by Muslim Scholars, when the pilgrims reach their respective Miqat, they enter into a Ihram that consists of wearing two white seamless cloths for the male, with the one wrapped around the waist reaching below the knee and the other draped over the left shoulder and tied at the right side; wearing ordinary dress for the female with hands and face uncovered. As per Quran there is no mention of the requirement to wear any specific garments for men or for women in Quran. The Quran only mentions a 'state' of 'huruman', a condition of a pilgrim's sacredness. The word 'hurumun' comes from the root word 'HRM' which means to prohibit, deprive and in this context, to be in a state of prohibition. This refers to all the restrictions during Hajj (which we will be discussing later) rather than a dress Code. "Ihram" is not the Dress code but the state of being in "Huruman" i.e. a condition of Pilgrim's sacredness, a state of prohibition. There are many beliefs and rituals with respect to Ihram that find no support from Quran but have become a part of Muslim tradition and practice. For example, what type of sandals to wear, what part of feet must be visible, what type of ihram, whether a pin can be worn to tie up the ihram or not, etc.

## Touching Hajar al Aswad for each Tawaf circle

There is nothing in the Quran that substantiates the ritual during tawaf, where pilgrims starts each circle with the kissing or touching of the Black Stone (Hajar al- Aswad). As per the guidance of most Muslim scholars, if kissing the stone is not possible because of the crowd, one may simply point towards the stone with his hand on each circle. Such requirement is not mentioned in Quran.

## Stoning of the Devil

As per the current rituals followed by Muslims, pilgrims gather pebbles in Muzdilah for the next day's ritual to stone the Devil (Shaitan). This is done in three separate days and for three separate Devils. There is no mention of picking up stones at Muzdalifah to cast at the 'Jamaraat' or any other such rite in Quran. Additionally there is no such story of Satan appearing to Prophet Abraham 3 times in the Quran. If one visits this location, it is a choice. There is nothing in the Quran to support this practice in which many lives are potentially compromised every year.

## Shaving or Cutting of the Hair

As per Muslim Scholars once a pilgrim is in the state of Ihram, he/she can not shave head, cut hair or nails until the Hajj is completed. There are two main verses in Quran which address this topic: 48:27 and 2:196.

وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ فَإِنْ أُخْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ وَلَا تَحْلِقُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحَلَّهُ ۚ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ أَذًى مِّن رَّأْسِهِ ۖ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِّن صِيَامٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ ۖ فَمَنِ تَمَنَّىٰ بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ۚ فِى الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ۚ تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلَهُ حَاضِرِى الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۖ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿١٩٦﴾

**(2:196) Perform the pilgrimage and Umrah. And if you are prevented, then send such offerings as can be obtained with ease, and shave not your heads until the offering has reached its destination. And whoever among you is sick or have an ailment of the head must pay a ransom of fasting or charity or offering. And if**

you are in safety, then whosoever contend himself with the visit for the pilgrimage such offering as can be had with ease. And whosoever lacks the means, then a fast of three days while on the pilgrimage, and of seven when you have returned; that is, ten in all. That is for him whose household is not present at the Sacred Mosque. Observe your duty to Allah, and know that Allah is stern in retribution

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ آلُ الرَّءِ يَا الْحَقِّ لَتَدْخُلَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ  
ءَامِنِينَ مُحَلِّقِينَ رُءُوسَكُمْ وَمُقَصِّرِينَ لَا تَخَافُونَ فَعَلِمَ مَا لَكُمْ تَعْلَمُوا فَبَجَلٍ مِنْ دُونِ  
ذَلِكَ فَتَنَّا قَارِبًا ﴿٢٧﴾

**(48:27) God has indeed fulfilled the vision He vouched to His Messenger truly: 'You shall enter the Holy Mosque, if God wills, in security, your heads shaved, your hair cut short, not fearing.' He knew what you knew not, and has granted besides that an imminent victory."**

As is obvious from above Ayah (2:196), the shaving of head or haircut has been prescribed as a condition of the retribution offering i.e. only if one is unable to perform the Hajj for some reason after he/she is already at the sacred Mosque and until such offering reaches the destination. This is not a requirement of Hajj or any of the rituals of the Hajj as per Quran. If we analyze the ayah (48:27), the condition prescribed to enter the Holy Mosque is entirely the opposite that is to cut your hair or shave your head before you enter the sacred place. The requirement of not shaving head or to avoid hair cut is only if one intends to perform Hajj once he/she is at the sacred mosque and then prevented from Hajj for some reason, he has to then give an offering as a retribution, and until that offering reaches its destination. It seems to be an intention that one should not be wasting time in self grooming or etc. unless the offering reaches its destination. Not to shave your head or avoid hair cut until animal sacrifice is done during Hajj, has no support from Quran. Additionally there is no mention in the Quran that avoiding Haircut or cutting of nails during specified days guarantees the removal of one's sins which is a prevalent belief in Muslim thought today.

## Conclusion

Contrary to common Muslims' belief, as per Quran, Hajj is not performed in the memory of Prophet Abraham pbuh, or in the name of what tests He may have endured personally but the purpose of the Hajj is to worship, commemorate and to magnify God alone. Additionally, in Quran, there is absolutely no link between Prophet Abraham's personal 'test' and the need to sacrifice animals during Hajj. There are many rituals today associated with Hajj with no support from Quran, such as Holy water Zam Zam, Hajj by proxy (Performing Hajj on another's behalf), Visit to Madinah, running between Safa and Marwa in memory of Prophet Ismael's wife (Hagar), Stoning of Satan, etc. There are many unnecessary distractions and rituals which find no support from the Quran. The Quran serving as a complete guidance, details the clear objective and purpose of Hajj, the requirements of how to perform Hajj, the acts that are forbidden, those that are allowed, those of redemptions and those that are mandatory. If we perform Hajj as outlined by Quran; we can perform Hajj during any of the four sacred months, can complete Hajj in 2 or more days, we must complete the rituals such as Tawaf, Arafat, muzdilah and animal sacrifice as per guidelines from Quran. We can also include Sa'aye between Safa and Marwa as allowed by Quran but it's not highlighted as one of the requirements of Hajj.