

HAJJ

The sense and meaning of Hajj:

The literal meaning of Hajj is intention and Al-Hajjah is the noun of Hajj, which means year too. Perhaps for this reason, the last month of the lunar year in which Hajj is performed is called Zul-Hajjah. In the religion of Islam, Hajj means to make a pilgrimage of the house of Allah in the months of Zul-Hajjah with a view to perform Hajj.

Hajj is obligatory for all sane, adult and monetarily capable Muslims, at least once in his life, yet more than one Hajj is the cause of good eternal reward and worldly pleasure and Allah's blessings.

Capability means:-

- 1) Physical ability of a man is the first condition that is must for a man who intends to perform Hajj. But it is not obligatory on any invalid and incapable person or a blind man who is not in a position to travel, and who has none to help and guide him provided, he has enough money to meet the expenses of Hajj.
- 2) Financial capability means the financial soundness to bear the expenses of Hajj and to have enough money to support the dependants in his absence.
- 3) The passage from his residence to Baitullah Sharif should be safe and secure.
- 4) It is also necessary for a woman to have the accompaniment of her husband or a close relative with whom marriage is unlawful (محرّم). It is not permit-

ted for a women to travel without husband or any Mehram, with whom marriage is lawful.

The days of Hajj are regarded from 8th to 13th Zul-Hajja when the rites and ceremonies (مناسك) of the Hajj are performed. The prescribed day of performance of Hajj is, however, 9th Zul-Hajja. But there is a mention of the words which means that Hajj may be performed in three months of Shawwal, Ziq'ad and Zul-Hajja.

✓ Ahram: Ahram means to intend firmly and formally. Its lawful. (ميقات) is the method to put off all the clothes after having taken a bath and to put on two sheets of unsewn cloth, one to be used as loin cloth and another sheet to cover the upper part of the body, and to say two Rak'at extra prayer and finally recite this Talbih.

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ
إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ

"I am present, O Allah, I am present. None is your partner I am present. certainly it is you who is worthy of all praises All divine favours are yours, and the real sovereignty is also yours. There is no partner of yours."

24 Miquat: (ميقات) Miquat means the place where it is necessary to put on Ahram (احرام) for an intended Haji. The Haji may wear Ahram even before that specified point.

Tawaf (طواف): It is a very important part of Hajj to take seven rounds of the House of Allah on the 10th of Zul-Hajja after offering sacrifice and putting off Ahram. Moreover, when the Haji takes a round of the house of Allah at the initial stage when he enters the house of Allah it is

called the round of welcome (طواف قدوم) and the round that he takes at the time of departure is called the round of (طواف وداع).

Struggle (سعى): To run seven times between Safa (صفا) and Marwah (مره) is also a very important part of Hajj (حج) and Umrah (عمرة).

Stay at Arafat (وقوف عرفة): To stay for a while at the Arafat is the real and the most important part of Hajj. If it is missed, there is no remedy for it.

Throwing of Pebbles (رمي حمرات): - It means throwing stone-chip at the Satan on 9th to 12th or 13th day of Zul-Hajj.

Sacrifice and shaving of head hair (نحر وحجامت): - To offer sacrifice of animals and to get the hair shaved on 10th of Zul-Hajja is necessary before putting off the Ahram.

Pilgrimage of the mausoleum of the Great Prophet (SAW)

Though not a part of Hajj, yet it is a common practice among Muslims to perform pilgrimage of the sacred mausoleum of the Great Prophet (SAW). It has been regarded as a virtuous act in the following Hadith.

"The person who performed Hajj and did not visit my mausoleum will have the requital as if he performed Hajj during my life."

Another Hadith says:

"The persons who visited my mausoleum deserves my intercession." It has also been mentioned yet in another Hadith which is as follows:

"The one who performed Hajj and did not visit my mausoleum has caused me injustice."

The importance of Hajj

Hajj is an important pillar of Islam. In the following verse the Holy Quran has declared the obligation (حجّ بدل) of Hajj.

وَلِلّٰهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ اِلَيْهِ
سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ
(دال عمران آیت ۹۷)

"And pilgrimage to the (House of Allah) is a duty of Allah for mankind for who can find a way there. And the person who disbelieves, should know that Allah is independent of His creatures."

And the Prophet of Allah has said:-

Anybody who is in a position to bear the expenses of passage and has the means to perform the journey, but does not perform Hajj, then it makes no difference whether he dies a Christian or a Jew."

It is a famous saying of Hazrat Umar Farooq (RAA).

✶ "Those who do not perform Hajj despite being capable to do so, I like to impose Jazia (the tax that is imposed on non-Muslims) on them."

The above mentioned verse and Ahadith make it clear that Hajj is a very important pillar of Islam, and the faith of Muslim, who gives it up without excuse, his faith is doubtful, because in that case there remains no differ-

ence between him and a Jew, a Christian, a heathen. It also appears that person remains deprived of Allah's Mercy and the favour of His Holy Prophet which is specially for Muslims.

✓ The religion has particularly approved it that a Muslim should perform Hajj immediately after it becomes obligatory for him. And if he fails to perform Hajj in his life, he ought to make a will in favour of any of his heir to perform Hajj in his place. This is called a substitutive Hajj (حج بدل).

Haji became obligatory on 9 A.H. That year the great prophet did not go to perform Hajj and Hazrat Abu Bakr was appointed the leader of the Hajj (امير حج). The Prophet performed the first as well as the last Hajj of his life on the 10 A.H. This is called the farewell Hajj (حجته الوداع), when he delivered his historical sermon.

The intents and purposes of Hajj:-

Hajj like other pillars of Islam, is self-purposive, and the performance of such worship is not to earn money, but the Great Allah Himself grants the virtues and spiritual gains, some of the gains and spiritual profits are as follows.

1. Absolution and salvation:-

The most important gain of Hajj is the absolution from sin, provided that he chances to perform a complete Hajj (حج), which has been called Hajj-e-Mabroor (حج مبرور).

The most respected Prophet (SAW) has said "whoever perform Hajj and saves himself absolutely from sex and other sins, he will be raised on the Day of Judgement

in a spotless conditions just like he was on the day of his birth, without any stain of sins."

The display of Islamic Unity:- ✓

Hajj is performed in a great memory of Hazrat Ibrahim, the great ancestor of the Great Prophets of three great religions of the world, that is, The Jews, the Christians and the Islam, who claim his following.

On the occasion of Hajj people from all nooks and corners of the world draw close together at the holy city of Mecca. The would be Hajis belong to different countries, and have different cultures, language, habits and complexion. But at Mecca they are dressed in one dress, and adopt one way of life, without any distinction, and ~~express~~ their humility to Allah in the language of the dear Prophet (SAW).

This national unity is the characteristic of Islam only, which is not found in other religions. The most important is the religious humility, and excessive bent of the Hajis to worship and pray with humble supplication. ✓

Manifestation of the love of Allah and Mohammad, the last of the Prophet (SAW):-

Hajj is the impromptu manifestation of the love and respect of Allah and the last of His Prophet. A Haji leaves his house, his business, his children behind simply for the love of Allah, and stands before Allah's house in a wasteland on a fixed day, circumbulates the holy house of Allah, struggles between Safa and Marwa, like a beggar swho tands before a king and vice verse. All these things are inexplicable. But it may be said that all these things are done owing to excessive love of Allah and His Prophet,

and love is the name of attachment which calls for every sort of love including wealth and life.

Hajj-A glorious congregation:

Hajj is a worship which includes every kind of worships. It includes Namaz, Fasting, Zakat and the expenditure of even much more money than Zakat. It has a glimpse of a soldier-like life.