

THE PILGRIMAGE (HAJJ) (PART 1 OF 3)

Rating:

Description: An easy to follow guide outlining the essentials every new Muslim must know about Hajj, the greater pilgrimage to Mecca.

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By: Abdurrahman Murad (© 2013 NewMuslims.com)

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Objectives:

- To learn about the importance of *Hajj*.
- To learn the basic conditions associated with it with their proofs.

Arabic Terms

- Hajj* – A pilgrimage to Mecca where the pilgrim performs a set of rituals. The *Hajj* is one of the five pillars of Islam, which every adult Muslim must undertake at least once in their life if they can afford it and are physically able.
- Jihad* – a struggle, to exert effort in a certain matter, and may refer to a legitimate war.
- Kabah* – The cube-shaped structure located in the city of Mecca. It serves as a focal point towards which all Muslims face when praying.
- Mahram* – a person, man or woman related to a particular individual by blood, marriage or breastfeeding. One he or she is not permitted to marry, such as the father, nephew, uncle, etc.
- Talbiyah* – The proclamation Muslims chant during the pilgrimage.
- Umrah* – A pilgrimage to the Holy House of Allah in the city of Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Often referred to as *the lesser pilgrimage*. It can be performed at any time of the year.

Introduction

Yearly millions chant the *Talbiyah* ‘Lab’baik
Al’laahum’ma Lab’baik, Lab’baika laa Shareeka
laka Lab’baik, In’nal Hamda wan Ni’mata laka wal
Mulk, Laa Shareeka lak^[1].



This ‘*Talbiyah*’ is a miracle in the making; generation upon generation, year after year, millions have said this and will say it in response to the call of Prophet Ibrahim. Allah, the Exalted, says:

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

It is reported in the authentic tradition, that when Prophet Ibrahim finished building the *Kabah*, it was said to him, ‘Call out to the people!’ he then said, ‘My Lord, how far will my voice reach?’ It was said to him, ‘Call out, and we shall relay your call and make it far-reaching!’ Prophet Ibrahim then called out: “O people Indeed Allah has prescribed pilgrimage (*Hajj*) upon you to the Ancient House (*Kabah*)!” People heard his voice and they responded coming from all over saying this *Talbiyah*!^[2]

In this series on *Hajj*, we will talk about some important aspects of *Hajj*, things that should be in everyone’s mind along with practical advice that will guide a person while performing it.

Virtues of *Hajj*

There are many virtues for *Hajj*, what I will mention here are the virtues that pertain to *Hajj* in general, and then mention the rest of them as we discuss the procedure of *Hajj*.

1.It is the fifth pillar of Islam. Allah, the Exalted, says:

“...And [due] to Allah from the people is a pilgrimage to the House - for whoever is able to find thereto a way...” (Quran 3:97)

2.It is a duty a Muslim does with complete pride and submission to God alone. Due to its difficulty it is described by the Prophet as a form of *Jihad* (struggle); rightly so, as it requires of a person to sacrifice their money, time and that they must be patient throughout the entire act of worship. A’ishah, may Allah be pleased with her said: “I said O Messenger of Allah! We view *Jihad* to be among the best of deeds; shall we not then perform *Jihad*?” He said to her: “**The best *Jihad* (for you) is a *Hajj* that is accepted.**”^[3]

3.This act of worship requires that a person dedicates all of his God-given faculties to perfect it! God has promised those who perfect this act of worship a great reward; the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon him, said: **The accepted *Hajj* (*Hajj Mabroor*) has no reward except *Jannah* (Heavenly**

Abode).[4]

4.The Prophet was asked: “What is the best deed in the sight of God?” He answered: “**Belief in Allah!**” He was then asked, “**What is next?**” He answered: “**Jihad in the path of Allah.**” He was then asked, “**What is next?**” He said: “**An accepted Hajj!**”[5]

5.The Prophet said: “O Amr’ do you not know that *Hajj* effaces all sins done before it?”[6]

6.The Prophet said: The one who performs *Hajj* and does not engage in sexual activities with his wife during *Hajj* and does not give into evil behavior (during *Hajj*) will return from that *Hajj* as the day he was born (i.e. sin free).[7]

7.The Prophet said: “As the camel of a person coming for *Hajj* raises and lowers its feet as it walks towards Mecca for the pilgrimage, the person who has intended the *Hajj* receives a reward for each footstep and a sin would be removed with each footstep and he would be elevated a rank.”[8]

8.The Prophet also said: “The one performing *Hajj* is the guest of Allah; He called upon them to perform this duty and they answered that call! They shall ask of Him and He will respond to them.”

Conditions of *Hajj*

Scholars categorize the conditions for the obligation of *Hajj* into various sub-categories, but in general all are agreed that the relevant conditions that are applicable today include:

- 1.Being a Muslim.
- 2.Intellectual sanity and rational capacity .
- 3.Reaching the age of puberty.
- 4.Capability (financial and physical).

The first condition of ‘faith’ is a pre-requisite in all acts of worship. Even if one perfects an act of worship and performs it in a pristine manner, it would not be accepted unless that person is a Muslim. Allah, the Exalted, says:

“And We shall turn to the deeds they have done and scatter them like dust.” (Quran 25:23)

The second condition of intellectual capacity and rational capability is a pre-requisite for all acts of worship, for without it a person’s deeds would not be accepted. The Prophet

said:

“Three would not be held accountable for their actions” and he mentioned among them: “an insane until he regains his sanity.”^[9]

The third condition is an important one. If a person performs *Hajj* before they reach the age of puberty, they would be required to perform it once again when they reach the age of puberty. The evidence for this condition is mentioned in the tradition, where the Prophet mentioned the three who would not be held accountable for their deeds, he said: **“a child until they reach the age of puberty.”**

The fourth condition of capability can be subcategorized into two parts; capability in terms of financial means and physical strength.

If a person does not have the financial means, he is not burdened to take a loan to perform the pilgrimage. Instead he would be exempt from performing the *Hajj*. He would receive reward on account of his intention.

The same would apply for a person who is physically incapable; he is not required to go himself for *Hajj*, but if he has the financial means, he may send someone on his behalf to perform *Hajj*.

This condition has another dimension in relation to women. If they don't have a *mahram* who can accompany them on this journey, they too are exempt from performing *Hajj*.

In the next lesson we will discuss how *Hajj* is performed.

Footnotes:

[1] Meaning: Here I am O Allah in response to Your call, here I am. Here I am, You have no partner, here I am. Verily all praise, grace and sovereignty belong to You. You have no partner.

[2] *Fath al-Bari* 3/478

[3] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari*

[4] *Al-Jami as-Sagheer* #5733.

[5] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari*

[6]

Saheeh Muslim

[7]

Saheeh Al-Bukhari

[8]

Baihaqi

[9]

Abu Dawood

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