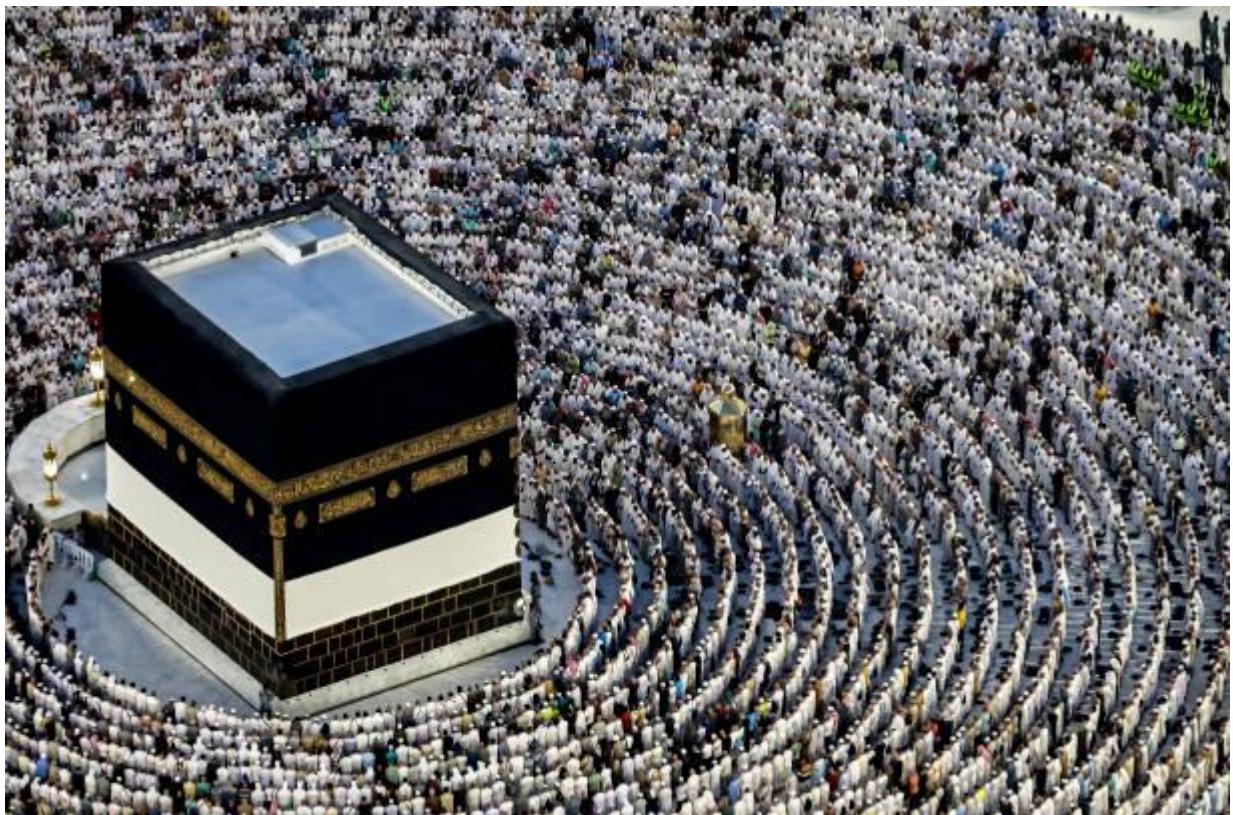


LESSONS FROM HAJJ



Written by Farid Ahmed, MNZM

Contents

Introduction.....	6
Chapter 1: What is Hajj?.....	7
What is Hajj?.....	7
Why does the Hajj visit different from a normal visit?	7
Hajj is the 5th pillar of Islam:.....	9
Why Hajj is the 5 th pillar?.....	10
Why Hajj is a complete worship?	11
On whom Hajj is compulsory?	13
When to perform the Hajj?	14
Can I afford to perform the Hajj?	15
Can Hajj be done with begging?	17
Why is Hajj responding to Allah's call?.....	19
Hajj is a divine reforming program.....	20
Chapter 2: Inner beauty in Hajj	24
Why to look at inner beauty?.....	24
What is behind the Hajj?	24
Purity in the Hajj travelling!.....	26
Beauty of the best gathering!.....	27
Hajj is an ideal Muslim conference.....	31
Hajj provides a secret rope for Muslim unity	32
Divine re-animating spirit through Hajj	34
Hajj as a divine training	35
Hajj is a source for motivation.....	37
Hajj is a centre of inspiration for Da'wa	39
Chapter 3: Some benefits of Hajj.....	41
Why is Hajj beneficial?.....	41
The benefit of Hajj is paradise.....	42
Benefit of Hajj is heart cleansing	43
Benefit of Hajj in wealth	45
Benefits in mental strength from Hajj	47
Benefit of Hajj in economy	48

Benefit of Hajj in learning self-control	49
Benefit of humility in Hajj.....	50
Benefit of learning brotherhood or sisterhood through Hajj.....	52
Benefit of Hajj in defeating racism	53
Benefit of Hajj for resolving world Muslim's problems.....	55
Chapter 4: History of Hajj	57
Allah appointed the first House for Hajj.....	57
Allah chose prophet Ibrahim to build that House	59
Allah saved one of the founders with HIS Divine power.....	60
Allah guided how to build the house.....	61
Supplications of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him)	62
Dua for the Hajj duties.....	65
Prayer for the attracting the hearts	66
Job to look after the Sacred House	68
Gradual loss of true duties in Hajj	69
Muhammad (peace be upon him) re-established the correct Hajj.....	72
Resistance from Idol worshippers	73
Proper Ibrahimī Hajj started again	75
Holy Prophet's last Hajj	77
Chapter 5: Some lessons from Hajj	80
Why do we need to learn lessons?.....	80
Lesson from Ihram and death dress:.....	81
Lesson from Ihram:.....	82
Lesson from Ihram dress:	83
Lesson from Tawaf:	83
Lesson from Talbia:.....	85
Lesson from kissing the black Stone:.....	86
Lesson from Sa'ee:.....	88
Lesson from gathering in the A'rāfah field:.....	90
Lesson from stoning (Throwing pebbles) on pillars:	91
Lesson from sacrificing animals:.....	93
Lesson from Holy Prophet's sermon in Hajj:	95

Chapter 6: Some terms used in Hajj	99
Hajj:.....	99
Three types of Hajjs:.....	99
Umrah Hajj:.....	99
Meekat:.....	100
Ihram:	100
Talbia:	101
Tawaf:	101
Romol:	101
Sa'ee:	102
Uqufu A'rafah:	102
Zamra:.....	102
Hady:.....	103
Halq:.....	103
Ahsar:.....	104
Last Sermon of the Prophet (peace be upon him)	104
Chapter 7: Preparation for Hajj	106
Why preparation?.....	106
Repenting in preparation:	107
Seek forgiveness from others:.....	108
Discharge other's rights:.....	109
Pay off the lenders:	111
Take Halal income:	112
Leave money for dependants:.....	114
Avoid extravagance:	114
Never intend for name or fame:.....	116
Preparation with your health:	117
Prepare with knowledge:	119
Preparation for building good habits:	120
Prepare for the first and the last journey:.....	122
Chapter 8: How to perform Hajj	125
Conditions for accepted Hajj:	125

Main duties in Umrah Hajj:.....	127
How to perform Umrah Hajj?.....	127
Some differences for women in Hajj:.....	128
Different types of Hajjs:.....	129
Fard and Wajib actions in Hajj:.....	129
Hajj days and duties: A brief chart	130
How to perform Hajj?.....	131
How to perform the different types of Hajjs?	133
Chapter 9: Some facts and Rewards.....	134
The beneficial Black Stone:.....	134
Rewards from Tawaf:	135
Dua between Rukni Yaminee and Black Stone:.....	136
Day of A'rafah:.....	136

Introduction

Hajj is the 5th pillar of Islam. Like every other pillar, Hajj is such a worship that prepares the servant of Allah to surrender to Allah's call. Even though this pillar is obligatory on Muslims, once in the lifetime if one has the ability, yet it involves huge sacrifice for the sake of Allah. Unless a Muslim has strong back-up and habits from other, then he or she will find the sacrifice of Hajj is too much to take.

Hajj requires some of the following:

- **Strong Imaan:** Only strong Imaan can motivate Muslims to take risk for hard travelling to perform the Hajj. Imaan (Islamic faith) is the 1st pillar of Islam. If a Muslim is strong in the 1st pillar, then later it helps him or her to dedicate everything for the Hajj.
- **Habit to respond to the call of Allah:** Salah is the 2nd pillar of Islam and everyday it calls Muslims to join in the prayers. If a Muslim is regular in Salah, then he or she builds up a habit to respond to Allah's call daily. Later, when they are called for performing Hajj, despite it being a hard call, they can respond to it with full enthusiasm.
- **Habit of spending in Allah's cause:** Zakah is the 3rd pillar of Islam. It trains Muslims to spend in the path of Allah. Hajj requires a lot of money. Those who spend for Allah as Zakah, find Hajj spending easier as an act to respond to the call of Allah.
- **Habit of sacrifice for Allah's sake:** Salah, fasting and charity train Muslims to sacrifice their time, energy, money to the pleasure of Allah. Hajj is a very demanding worship which requires huge sacrifices. Those who are used to sacrificing in other pillars, find easier to sacrifice for Hajj, to respond to the call of Allah Almighty.
- **Huge self-control:** Fasting is a training for self-control. In Hajj self-control is necessary in terms of sexuality, anger, or any sinful activities. Those who practice self-control in fasting, find easier in self-control in the Hajj.

Hajj is like a combo of all other pillars of Islam. Hajj is the true manifestation of true belief, true Salah, true Zakah, true fasting etc. It prepares Allah's servant to respond to HIS obedience in every step of life. That's why Hajj is called the best worship. Hajj is not just a ritual. It has many lessons for Muslims and for all mankind. How does Hajj give lessons? Why it is not just a ritual only? or what must we learn from it and so on requires explanations. This book is that little effort to explain some of the lessons about Hajj. So, I shall try to include explanations about Hajj in this small book to stimulate the understanding.

I can't do it unless Allah grants me ability. May Allah grant me the beneficial knowledge required to write this book and may Allah accept my little service for HIM! May Allah also reward those who are helping me in many ways for this noble work, Ameen!

In this book, you may find some repetition in issues, and it is for a reason. The reason is to remind you a few times to get the idea to sink into the mind of the reader. The idea is to find the lessons from Hajj to address misunderstanding, and to increase moral character on Muslims in their daily lives. If anyone finds any mistakes in my writing, please feel free to pass your feedback, and I shall take care of it appropriately Insha Allah!

Farid Ahmed, MNZM
April 2025, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Chapter 1: What is Hajj?

What is Hajj?

Hajj is an Arabic word. Allah has mentioned it in the Holy Quran many times. One of those, as an example:

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَاتٌ

“For Hajj, the months are well known.”

[Al-Quran 2:197]

Meaning of the word ‘Hajj’: It means resolution or making up mind.

Meaning of ‘Hajj’ in Islamic Shariah: Making up mind, to visit Allah’s House in Makkah, for the sake of Allah, to do some prescribed duties, according to the teachings of Holy prophet (s.a.w).

Why is it named ‘Hajj’? The reason is, Muslims from all over the world gather in the centre, which is Allah’s house in Makkah, to visit and to perform some duties for the pleasure of Allah.

Hajj also means, a worship of Allah which requires to gather around Allah’s house in Makkah to perform some duties.

So, the summary of the meaning of the Hajj is:

- It is a visit only in response to the call of Allah.
- It is a visit to the Holy House in Makkah because Allah called for the visit.
- It is about making up the mind or making a firm intention to visit Allah’s House to perform some duties.
- It is a worship of Allah and
- It is very rewarding etc.

Hajj is an important pillar of Islam. It takes place once a year and every year without break unless any terrible calamity. It is a well-known assembly of millions of Muslims to everyone in this world. Muslims and non-Muslims respect it as a holy pilgrimage. It does not take place in privacy, but it is an open program, televised live to all over the world. This book is dedicated towards better understanding of Hajj.

Why does the Hajj visit different from a normal visit?

Hajj is not a normal visiting or normal travelling. It is beyond normal and very noble. Why is the Hajj visit extra-ordinary? Let me point out below a few differences between Hajj visiting and normal visiting to understand the differences.

- **The aim:** All travelling has an aim. In normal travelling the aim is to have fun, joy or entertainment. Or people want to relax after hard work with rest, fun, disengage from working hard, with good foods and stressless environment. People spend lots of money for holiday visit for worldly fun and gain. Is the aim of Hajj the same? Not really. The aim of Hajj is not the same. Aim of Hajj is more noble, and it is to visit Allah’s house to please Allah as a worship.
- **The method:** All travelling follows a method. In normal visit, the method of visit is chosen by the visitors. They make their plans for their own pleasures. They do not want to spend money on a visit that does not satisfy their needs. If the provider cannot meet their choices, they complain about it or they ask for the money back. But in Hajj visit, the choice is not on the pilgrims. The method of Hajj visit is prescribed by Allah, and the pilgrims must abide by it. If

they disobey the method, their Hajj will not be accepted by Allah. To teach the method of Hajj, Allah has chosen HIS Holy Messenger to teach believers, and the pilgrims must follow the teachings of Allah's messenger sincerely.

- **Strict protocol:** In normal travel people try to get away from strict conditions. They seek for freedom from stressful situations, and they go away to relax and enjoy. Or they want to exercise as they wish. Is Hajj with freedom in protocol? Can pilgrims do whatever they feel like to do to satisfy their desires and cravings? No, In Hajj, the enjoyment is there, but with strict protocols for achieving the best self-control. For example, in Hajj husband and wife are not allowed to have any love affairs between them. Besides, one is not allowed to do any fighting, quarrelling, abusive actions, and as well as any sinful actions.
- **Dress:** In normal travelling people wear dresses that they like. Some love to wear less and others in moderation or more. Dress is an expression of people's mentality and attitudes. People in power or position may have their dress codes according to their traditions. What is the dress code in Hajj? Does it have any code about it? Yes, in Hajj, it has its dress code, and pilgrims must follow that code. The dress of Taqwa (Righteousness) is the basis of Hajj dress codes. Such as, male dress code is two white pieces of cloth and for female pilgrim's dress code is moderation with simplicity. Both male and female dress code is with the aim of practicing extreme humility for the pleasure of Allah.
- **Celebration:** In normal travelling there are various activities to celebrate the visit for having fun and enjoyment. Again, the agenda for celebration is chosen by the organizers based on cultures, and traditions to entertain the guests. That includes glory for the nation or nations. What is the Hajj celebration for? How is it different than other celebrations? Hajj celebration is to glorify the praises of Allah, to submit to Allah completely, and to dedicate all efforts to receive Allah's mercy, blessings, forgiveness and Paradise.
- **Accommodation:** In normal travelling, travellers choose the most comfortable accommodation that they can afford. They don't like to compromise with high quality accommodation with the best facilities aiming for the best comfort. Is accommodation a primary concern for the Pilgrims? In Hajj, high quality accommodation is not the primary concern. Pilgrims are flexible around it. They may have best accommodation in Makkah, but they are happy to be in the field of A'rafah, and at night under the sky in the Muzdalifa as well, and then in the tent in Mina city. Their primary concern is to please Allah whether they're in the comfortable position or in the hardship. Most able pilgrims even do not sleep at night to spend their resting time in worship. Their focus on harvesting as much reward as they can in the Hajj season. Their goal is to gain the everlasting best accommodation in the Paradise.
- **Penalty:** In normal travel people don't have to pay penalty if they do little extra fun, or if they miss any fun. Hajj has different rules. In Hajj one is not allowed to include fun according to his/her own desires or cravings, and not allowed to miss any duties as they like. This freedom, they surrender to Allah, and they pay penalty if they miss any important duty (Wajib action). In Hajj, if they miss any Wajib (Compulsory) duty then they must sacrifice animal as penalty (Kaffara). Obedience in Allah is the key issue in Hajj duties. Pilgrims follow the prescribed rituals sincerely, and if they miss any, they offer the penalty happily.
- **Reward:** In normal travel there is no provision to receive rewards from Allah or to become sinless. How is the Hajj different here? In Hajj, Allah grants rewards as well as Allah forgives sins. Accepted Hajj has both benefits, and that's why, pilgrims dedicate their maximum efforts to attain the best rewards from Allah. Therefore, Hajj is not only for the benefits in this life, and it has greater benefits in the hereafter as well.

The few examples above are sufficient for anyone to understand the difference between normal travelling, and they travelling to Hajj. The comparison should encourage the readers to understand more about the Hajj. This is my prayer and hope.

Hajj is the 5th pillar of Islam:

Islam is like a whole house that has every necessary thing in it. Islam in that sense, has every necessary code for the life. That's why Islam is called the "Complete code of life". Allah made Islam complete with codes or guidance for the following reasons (Allah knows best):

- a. **Allah's universal rule:** Allah's universal rule is, HE creates, and HE guides. HIS universal rule is to create, to provide, to look after, to guide and to Judge at the end for reward or punishment. Therefore, HE gives a complete Guide, so that HIS judgment will be fair, and no one can complain that he or she did not receive complete guidance.
- b. **Allah is complete:** Allah is complete with everything and with every quality. HIS knowledge about his creation is complete. That's why when HE guides mankind, HE gives them complete guidance for their best. HE gave Islam as guidance, and HE made Islam as a complete guidance. HIS guidance does not need any editing, inclusion or removals. HIS guidance is complete, accurate and holistic.
- c. **Totality:** As Allah gives complete guidance, Allah also demands from HIS servants the total loyalty. Total submission is the condition from Allah to receive total guidance and to receive total rewards in Paradise. There are no shortcomings in Allah's guidance for which humans need to seek guidance from elsewhere. Subhaanallah! Allah is free from shortcomings, and HIS guidance is also free from shortcomings. HIS complete guidance is a mercy for HIS servants to follow HIS guidance with total devotion.

Again, Islam is like a complete house. For any complete house it requires some main pillars. So, the whole house can stand on solid pillars and the solid pillars can provide support to the complete house. Islam also has five main pillars. The reason is that each pillar will encourage, motivate, prepare, and train each Muslim, towards the complete guidance of Islam. For example, if you have a high goal, you take few regular steps to make your achievement easier. Similarly, to become a complete obedient servant of Allah is a very high goal. 5 pillars are prescribed for the servants to get used to the habits, mentality and so on that requires to achieve that high goal.

If a Muslim is not performing the main pillars of Islam, then he or she cannot be truly a complete servant of Allah. That's why understanding and learning about the 5 pillars of Islam is a primary duty to each Muslim. Then again, they must not stop learning after knowing the 5 pillars. After mastering the knowledge and practice of 5 pillars, they must extend their knowledge and practice to every aspect of Islam to become complete Muslims.

What are the 5 pillars of Islam? They are as following:

1. Declaring that Allah is the One and Only GOD and Muhammad (peace be upon him) is Allah's servant and HIS messenger,
2. Performing 5 times prayers daily,
3. Giving Zakah (Charity on wealth),
4. Fasting in the Month of Ramadan,
5. Hajj (Pilgrimage to the Sacred House in Makkah).

Therefore, Hajj is the 5th pillar of Islam. It is mentioned in a Hadis below:

وَعَنْ أَبْنَىْ عَمَّرَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: بُنِيَّ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَىٰ خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةٍ أَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ وَالْحَجَّ وَصَوْمٍ رَمَضَانَ

Hazrat Abdullah ibn Omar (May Allah be pleased with both) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: **“Islam is standing on 5 pillars. Declaring that there are no other gods but Allah and Muhammad (Peace be upon him) is Allah’s servant and Messenger, Establishing Salah, giving charity, performing Hajj and fasting in the month of Ramadan.”**

[*Muttafaqun A’laih*]

Why Hajj is the 5th pillar?

What is the wisdom of placing the Hajj as 5th pillar of Islam? Allah knows best but I shall try to think of few reasons for our understanding. There must be wisdom behind the order of numbering in Islamic pillars. If we look closely at the pillars of Islam, we can see three common aspects in them. They are:

- **Act of worship:** All pillars of Islam are an act of worship. They are prescribed by Allah, and through them, HIS servants learn to submit to HIM with total obedience without joining any partners in worship with HIM.
- **For all or for some Muslims:** All pillars are not compulsory on all Muslims. Allah Merciful has guided with flexibilities with consideration of age, well-being, sickness, ability either physical or financial etc. For example, paying charity is compulsory on the wealthy Muslims, or performing Hajj is for those who can afford, or declaration of faith is for every Muslim, or 5 times daily Salah is a compulsory duty on every adult Muslim, or for female during menses 5 times Salah is excused etc.
- **The frequency of doing the worship:** In all pillars, there is frequency, but the frequency is different. Frequency means how often one must do the worship. For example, the frequency of Salah is 5 times daily, the faith is in every second, the fasting in the month of Ramadan is once a year etc. Behind these frequencies, there is wisdom, and Allah has prescribed these frequencies for the best of HIS servants.

Now let us look at each pillar of Islam, in the light of the above three factors (Act of worship, for all or for some, and the frequency of performing):

First Pillar of Islam is the Declaration of Faith: It has the first above factor because it is also an act of worship. Since the declaration, a believer must maintain their faith in believing, saying or in acting. Then, it has the 2nd above factor which is about who would do it. This pillar is for all the Muslims, and without it, no other pillars would work. Islamic faith is the first and foremost foundation on which all other pillars, and extensions are built on. Then, it has the 3rd factor above which is the frequency. The frequency of Islamic sincere faith is 24 hours and 7 days a week without any break. Islamic faith needs to be installed in the believers permanently. Now, considering the declaration of Islamic faith as a worship, for every believer, with permanent frequency (3 above factors) is placed as the first pillar of Islam.

Second pillar of Islam is Salah: It has the three above factors as well. First factor is that it is an act of worship. It is a physical-emotional-mental worship with Faith (Imaan, the 1st pillar in him/her). It is an act of daily total submission to Allah. Then, it has the 2nd factor above which is for almost all Muslims (except the underage, insane, women in menstruation etc). This pillar is for most Muslims, but not for all. Then, it has its frequency as 3rd factor above. The frequency is 5 times daily. Therefore, in Salah we see act of worship (first factor in above), not for all but for the most of all (2nd factor in above), and the

frequency is not in every second like the first pillar of Islam, but 5 times every day. That means, this pillar is for lesser numbers of believers with lesser frequency (than the first pillar), and that is why, it is placed in the second pillar of Islam.

Third pillar of Islam is Charity: It also has the three factors above in it. The first factor is that it is an act of worship. This worship is prescribed to purify the heart and the wealth. Pure heart and pure wealth are sources of peace and tranquillity. For peace among humanity, this pillar is vital. It has the 2nd factor above about whether it is for all Muslims or for some. Charity (Zakah) is not obligatory on all Muslims but on the wealthy ones. Allah's guidance is that the well-off ones have duties to look after the poor ones, and the poor has rights on the wealth of the rich. Wealth is Allah's gift, and it must be circulated around for everyone's happiness. Then, this pillar has the 3rd factor from above which is the frequency. The frequency for Zakah is not like every second as the Faith, or not like 5 times daily as Salah, but once a year only. So, considering the lesser compulsion on lesser number of Muslims and for lesser frequency than Faith and Salah, Zakah is placed as the 3rd pillar of Islam.

Fourth pillar is Fasting in the month of Ramadan: This pillar also has the three factors above in it. The first factor from above is that fasting is an act of worship. It is an act of surrendering to Allah's will for the fear of Allah's punishment. Through fasting, servants of Allah attain high level of Taqwa (Self-control with righteousness). The 2nd factor from above is whether it is compulsory on all or not. It is compulsory on the able ones, not on the unable ones. Sick, or tired from travelling ones are excused and they can do it later, but the terminally sick or old Muslims can pay charity (Fidya) instead. The 3rd factor as above is the frequency. How often Muslims observe their fasting from dawn to sunset? The frequency is, one month once a year. It is not every second like Islamic faith, nor 5 times daily as Salah. So, fasting is less frequent than Zakah. Zakah on produce could be few seasons in a year but fasting month is only once a year. Fasting comes with alternative options of paying Fidya if someone is too sick or too old. Fasting is easier than giving money away. So, it comes as the 4th pillar of Islam.

Fifth pillar of Islam is Hajj: This pillar also has the three factors above in it. The first factor is that it is a great act of worship. It involves surrendering from the servants of Allah with mind, emotion, energy, time, and wealth etc. With it, Allah's servants sacrifice everything for the pleasure of Allah, and for the rewards from Allah. The 2nd factor in above is whether it is compulsory for all or on some Muslims. It is not compulsory on every Muslim, but compulsory on those who can afford the journey. The 3rd factor as above is about the frequency on Hajj. It is not every second as Imaan, nor 5 times daily as Salah, nor once a year like Zakah or Fasting, but it is once in lifetime. Now, looking at the 3 main factors, it makes sense why Hajj is placed in 5th place in the order of the pillars of Islam. It is the least frequent worship of all on certain believers. So, Hajj is the 5th pillar of Islam. The wisdom behind placing it 5th is with the consideration of who must do it and how frequent it must be done and so on. Allah knows best.

Why Hajj is a complete worship?

Before determining Hajj as the complete worship, we should discuss about the primary question, and that is, what is a complete worship. If we know what a complete worship is, then we can go through a few aspects of Hajj to be convinced of why Hajj is a complete worship to Allah. A complete worship means, it has all the teachings in the other 4 pillars and beyond. In other words, whatever teachings, practices, training or devotion are present in other pillars of Islam, or in other aspects of Islam as a whole, the complete worship has the highest level of all aspects in it. As per my little understanding, Hajj has the highest level of devotion in it, and thus it is a complete worship. Allah knows best about it, and I shall try to present a few reasons to justify the claim, Insha Allah! I seek your attention in the following analysis:

- **Hajj and the 1st pillar:** The 1st pillar of Islam is Imaan, which is to believe in Allah, HIS angels, HIS holy books, HIS holy messengers, the next life and the Qadr (fate). Without a strong faith in the 1st pillar, one cannot go through all the hardship in Hajj. Strong believers happily take the sacrifice for Hajj because they strongly believe in Allah's commands in the Holy Quran about Hajj or they strongly believe in the teaching about the Hajj by Allah's messenger, or they strongly believe in the punishment in next life if he or she does not perform Hajj despite ability. So, we can say that Hajj is the manifestation of stronger Imaan and the materialization of worship from stronger Imaan. This is one of the reasons why Hajj is a complete worship to Allah.
- **Hajj and the 2nd pillar:** The 2nd pillar of Islam is Salah. It requires a Muslim to pray 5 times daily. In Hajj a Muslim prays 5 times Salah as well, but praying in Baitullah is million times more rewarding than praying in his or her nearby Mosque or at home. Also teaching of Salah is to respond to the call of Allah 5 times daily, but Hajj is also a response to Allah's call with greater sacrifice and dedication with time, energy, and money. Without regular responding to Allah's call 5 times daily through Salah, a believer cannot find it easy to respond to Allah's call to perform Hajj with greater difficulties. Salah is a practice to connect with Allah daily, but in Hajj a servant comes closest to Allah in HIS Sacred House, and in the field of A'rafah. In Salah congregation Allah forgives servants, but in the field of A'rafah, Allah forgives HIS servants most lavishly. So, we can say that Hajj is a greater practice of what Muslims practice daily in Salah. Or we can say that Hajj has the teachings of Salah in it as well. This is another reason to say that Hajj is a complete worship to Allah.
- **Hajj and the 3rd pillar:** The 3rd pillar of Islam is Charity which means spending from extra savings above a threshold of the basic needs. 3rd pillar trains a spending mentality in a Muslim in the path of Allah. It also reminds believers that all they have is a gift from Allah and they should not feel stingy spending from Allah's gifts in the way of Allah. It is a training of kind hearts to share Allah's bounties with others for the pleasure of Allah without any selfish motives. To perform Hajj, spending a lot is essential. Without the habit of spending in the path of Allah, a believer may find it very hard to spend so much money for the Hajj. Charity builds up that habit of spending, fills the heart to feel happy in spending in the path of Allah, and that makes it easier to spend when it comes to performing Hajj. So, we can say that Hajj has the spirit of the 3rd pillar in it, but in a greater degree. Therefore, this is another reason to say that the Hajj is a complete worship to Allah.
- **Hajj and the 4th pillar:** The 4th pillar of Islam is fasting in the month of Ramadan. Fasting teaches self-control. For example, husband and wife must practice self-control during the day (not in the night) during their fast. But in Hajj that self-control extends to few days and nights with higher degrees. With that self-control, husband and wife are not allowed to talk, look, or use sexual gestures. Besides, in fasting Believers avoid fights, abuses, backbiting etc, but in Hajj that goes even further like avoiding any kinds of sinful actions (Fosooq) and fighting, quarrelling, argument (Jidaal), and avoiding hunting, or picking up lost goods etc during Ihram period. Also, in fasting believers go without food, drink etc. In Hajj that sacrifice is even harder like sleeping in tent, wearing death cloth (for male), wearing modest clothes for female, walking in the dust, standing under the heat of the sun, standing in long queue for toilet etc. It is a greater form of sacrifice than fasting. Therefore, we can say that Hajj has the practice of the teachings of fasting in it and it demands it in a higher degree. So that is another reason to say that the Hajj is a complete worship to Allah.

Moreover, in all types of worship to Allah, some worship has more physical efforts, some has more financial efforts and some has more mental and emotional efforts to put into it. But in Hajj one can see the presence of everything. Such as:

- **Physical efforts:** In Hajj, going through long journey, going through huge crowds, going through heat in the hot weather, going through hard work etc. are present more than in any other worship. Many people become sick, and some people even cannot survive in Hajj. Some die due to overheating, or overcrowding, or from sickness and so on. Hajj is with the hardest physical efforts.
- **Financial efforts:** Hajj requires lots of money. It also requires leaving enough expenses for those who depends on the pilgrim. Day by day the Hajj expenses are becoming higher and higher. For some Muslims from certain countries require whole life savings. Yet Muslims spend their life savings for the pleasure of Allah. That is the biggest financial dedication in the worship.
- **Mental and emotional efforts:** For Hajj one needs to be mentally very strong to initiate the journey. It is a risky journey in which one may not even survive. Only strong faith with strong mind, one can take the risk. Some people even in their old age dare to make the journey for Hajj. My late father was an example. He was very old, yet he had a strong mind. With Allah's help he was perfectly healthy in his Hajj, whereas members of his team suffered from sickness. Hajj requires the highest mental and emotional devotion than other worships. Hajj has an emotional toll as well. Leaving the family behind with a feeling that he or she may not see them again is an emotional effort. It is hard, but the servants of Allah take the toll to please Allah for Paradise. The other part of the emotion is "The love for Allah". The love for Allah in Hajj becomes dominant. That's why a servant of Allah gets ready to sacrifice everything for it. With my disability in 2022, when I saw the Sacred House in Makkah, I started crying, became speechless, and the love for Allah was at the peak. It was hard work, but most worthy.

Considering the above reasons, we can understand why Hajj is a complete worship to Allah. Hajj includes physical, financial, mental and emotional efforts. That's why the reward for a proper Hajj (Accepted Hajj) is extremely high as well.

وَالْحَجُّ الْمَبْرُورُ لَيْسَ لَهُ جَزَاءٌ إِلَّا الجَنَّةُ

Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said in a Hadis narrated by Abu Huraira (May Allah be pleased with him): "**The reward for accepted Hajj is nothing but paradise.**"
 [Muttafaqun A'laih]

On whom Hajj is compulsory?

Allah is very Merciful on HIS servants. HE did not make Hajj compulsory on every Muslim. Allah knows HIS servant's ability, affordability, safety etc. Among Muslims there are all sorts of people as following:

- Some are poor,
- Some are sick,
- Some are disabled,
- Some are not sane,
- Some simply can't afford financially etc.

Allah's universal rule is "not to place any burden on HIS servants that they cannot carry." That's why about Hajj Allah's rule is with compassion, logic and simplicity. The one who can afford must do Hajj, and the other who can't afford are free from that compulsion. If one is sick and unable but have the money, can send someone to do the Hajj on his or her behalf. It is that simple, easy and flexible. Thanks to Allah Merciful. Allah made that compulsion through the following verse in the Holy Quran:

وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۝ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِّيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Pilgrimage to the House of Allah (In Makkah) is a duty that men owe to Allah those who can afford the journey. But if anyone deny faith (Doing it), Allah does not need help from any of HIS creatures.”

[Al-Quran 3:97]

The same message is echoed in the teaching of Allah’s Messenger Muhammad (Peace be upon him).

وَعَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ قَالَ: جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا يُوْجِبُ الْحَجَّ؟ قَالَ: الْزَّادُ وَالرَّاحَةُ. «رَوَاهُ التَّرْمِذِيُّ وَابْنُ مَاجَهُ

Ibn Omar (May Allah be pleased with both) said, a man came to holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and asked, “**O messenger of Allah! What makes Hajj compulsory?**” He (Peace be upon him) said: **Means for travelling and the transport.**

[Tirmidi, Ibn Maazah]

With this fair ruling from Allah, believers strive to gain the affordability, pray to Allah all the time to grant them affordability, and they always hope to be able to perform Hajj one day. All these actions are parts of worship, and whether they make to the Hajj or not, Allah grants them huge rewards for their intention, love and devotion to the Hajj for the sake of Allah. Moreover, those who gain the ability for Hajj, they appreciate Allah’s help with gratitude, and they keep the other believers in their prayers (Dua) during the Hajj. As a result, one compliments another, and no one becomes deprived from Allah’s Mercy, whether he/she can afford to perform the Hajj or not. What a beautiful system from All-Wise, All-Merciful Allah!

When to perform the Hajj?

What is the perfect time one can perform Hajj? Are there any set rules about the timing? One may ask this question for understanding. Suppose one could perform Hajj, then he/she wants to know, when exactly he or she should perform the Hajj. Is there any consideration on the following things about the right timing to perform Hajj?

- Young age? Or
- In old age?
- Before marriage? Or
- After marriage?
- Before wedding of his/her children or
- After wedding of his/her children?
- Or any other time?

Some Muslims may consider these factors as important. It depends on their culture, and their education in Islam. Lack of right knowledge can allow the intrusion of misunderstanding. Often, religion and culture get mixed up resulting in wrong ideas and practices. That’s why, the right teaching about the timing in Islam must be discussed. For example, some may believe that Hajj should be done after the wedding of all the dependent children. Or some may believe that it should be done in old age when mind is more settled. Sometimes you may hear someone saying, “I am too young to do the Hajj.” Or one may say, “I have not got married yet.” I heard a lot from some people, “I am not yet perfect. Once I do Hajj, I cannot be imperfect. So, I should perform my Hajj after my perfection!”

The above issues are irrelevant to the question when one should do the Hajj. The condition for Hajj is “Financial ability and transportation.” With it comes health ability, safety in travelling, and proper visa

(in these days). So, if someone has enough money to eat, feed, clothe and other necessary official costs along with transportation cost (Airline ticket) then Hajj is compulsory on him or her in that moment. Then the person should try to perform obligatory Hajj as soon as possible without delay. Once Hajj becomes obligatory, no other excuses is allowed to delay it. In terms of perfection, only Allah is Perfect, and HIS Holy Messenger is a perfect example for the humans, but the believer's aim and efforts should be all the time to achieve as much perfection as possible. Hajj helps the motivation to rise in a believer to work hard for perfection. Therefore, whenever Hajj become compulsory, one must perform it as soon as possible.

Waiting to get married or delaying being old and so on has no basis in the Quran or in Hadis. Instead, Holy prophet (s.a.w) advised Muslims to hurry in Hajj once it becomes obligatory (Fard) on them.

وَعَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَنْ أَرَادَ فَلْيَعْجِلْ . «رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاؤُدَ وَالْمَاجِدُ الدَّارِمِيُّ الْحَجَّ

Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with both) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: **“Whoever has intended for Hajj (once it is Fard on him or her), let him (her) hurry to accomplish it.”** [Abu Dawood. Daremy]

If they don't hurry performing their duty, then so many things may go wrong with them. Such as:

- They may die,
- They may face accidents,
- They may face legal disruptions,
- The condition of travelling may become unsafe,
- They may lose their money,
- Some other costs may increase,
- Something bad may happen,
- They might lose the chance of performing their Hajj etc.

Can they or should they take the risk by delaying tactics? No, the sincere believers cannot because they do not want to neglect their duty to Allah, they do not want to lose the rewards for Hajj, and they do not want to face accountability in Allah's court for neglecting their Hajj when they supposed to perform it. So, the concluding answer is that once believers can afford to perform the Hajj, they should do it without delay.

Can I afford to perform the Hajj?

Hajj is compulsory on Muslims who can afford for the journey. Most often, lots of Muslims have physical and mental ability to perform the Hajj but they cannot afford the financial side of it. This brief article is about that financial affordability for Hajj.

Hajj is related to the financial affordability. It is Allah's Mercy that HE made it easy for HIS beloved servants. If poor people cannot perform Hajj, there is no blame from Allah on them. Besides, Allah will not prevent them from entering Paradise. Wealth or no wealth are both tests from Allah. Wealthy has more responsibilities and duties, and Hajj is one of those responsibilities. Allah could have made Hajj compulsory for rich people once every year. Or Allah could have made Hajj compulsory for even poor people to make their journey on foot. But Allah did not, because Allah is Merciful on HIS servants. HE made 5 times Salah compulsory daily for the rich and poor, but HE made Hajj compulsory only once in a lifetime and again that is only for Muslims who can afford. Let us look at the teachings of Allah's Holy Messenger (peace be upon him):

وَعَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَتَبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْحَجَّ. «فَقَامَ الْأَقْرَعُ بْنُ حَابِسٍ فَقَالَ: أَفِي كُلِّ عَامٍ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: لَوْ فَلْتَهَا: نَعَمْ لَوْ جَبَتْ وَلَوْ وَجَبَتْ لَمْ تَعْمَلُوا بِهَا وَلَمْ تَسْتَطِعُو وَالْحَجُّ مَرَّةٌ زَادَ فَتَطَوُّعُ. رَوَاهُ أَحْمَدُ وَالنَّسَائِيُّ وَالْدَّارَمِيُّ

Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with both) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: “**O People! Allah has made Hajj compulsory on you (so you should perform Hajj those who can afford).**” Aqra ibn Haabis (May Allah be pleased with him) stood up and said: “**O Messenger of Allah! Is Hajj Fard every year?**”

Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: “**If I had said yes, then it would have become compulsory (every year), and you would not perform it and you would not be able to perform it. Hajj is once (in life). Whoever does more than once, then the extra ones are voluntary Hajj.**”

[Ahmed. Nasaee. Daremy]

Can I afford to perform the Hajj? This is a simple question every Muslim should ask himself or herself soon after the maturity. The sooner one is mindful about this great worship, the easier it would be to afford for it. Every parent begins thinking about the child's future soon after the birth of the child which is a good habit. But do we give same importance about the worship of Hajj? Do we fear Allah enough to give importance about HIS worship in Hajj? The measure we take to save money for the future of our children, do we take the same measure for our children's Hajj? Or we do not make enough effort? If we make enough effort, then Allah will make a way for us. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلُ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ۚ وَيَرْزُقُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۝

“**And for those who fear Allah, HE (always) prepares a way out and HE provides for him by (means that) he could never imagine.**”

[Al-Quran 65:2-3]

Afford and effort: Without active effort one can never afford anything. Most of the time, proper effort helps people to achieve most of the things they want to achieve. For example, if someone wants to find money for study, then needs certain efforts to be successful. Sitting and doing nothing does not give anything. Similarly, for Hajj one should not wait for the affordability rather one should make active effort to gain the money or means for it. That effort will also be a worship and on right effort Allah will bless on it. I met some pilgrims in a hotel in Madinah. We had brief conversation in the lift. One of them told me that in their society, once a baby is born, all the relatives gift money to set up a Hajj account for the baby in future. I was very pleased about their efforts.

So once in your life, Hajj does not cost too much, does it? Most Muslims can afford to do Hajj if they truly make proper effort for it. Well-planned efforts are necessary, and even if we cannot achieve our goal, Allah will grant us rewards for our intentions and efforts. We have nothing to lose, have we? There are some tips below about how believers can make effort to afford the finance for performing Hajj once in their lifetime:

- **Make Hajj a priority:** They must decide that Hajj should be the number one priority in their hobby list. Often people spend money on their hobbies such as travelling, tour, visiting birth places, buying nice things, expensive honeymoon etc. If they place Hajj in the top of priority list, then most people can afford to perform Hajj.
- **Plan:** Every Muslim should plan for Hajj without delay. Making plan is the important step because it is a solid step for making up your mind. In your plan include the year, income,

savings etc and work according to your plan. That will be an active effort for the sake of Allah and the effort itself will be rewarding.

- **Start saving from now:** No matter how little you save, start saving some money for your Hajj. Make this saving a regular habit. Whatever your income is, try to save a few dollars every week and be determined about it. Once you have a habit of saving then you will see the change in you. Your habit will make you to save more and more. One day you will discover that you can afford the Hajj Journey.
- **Budget the spending:** You need to make a thrifty budget every week to avoid extra spending to be able to fulfil your saving target. Find ways of shopping that costs you less. For example, instead of buying lunch from outside, you can buy a bread and make your own lunch. You will save huge that way. Or instead of dining out, cook your own meal which is healthy as well as very cheap.
- **Cut down un-necessary spending:** For example, smoking cost is un-necessary. Even if you support your family, cut down the support that makes your family extravagant. Support on basic health, education, food, accommodation etc and not on the extra money if they spend on un-necessary things like expensive gifts, buying too many clothes, or hiring expensive private transport etc.

I have lived in a poor country as well as well-off country. With my experience I have noticed that so many Muslims can afford the Hajj if they truly make effort for it. I know they can if they follow the above suggestions. But if the Muslims are placing Hajj in the bottom of their priority list, then they are missing the boat. They are spending money into other less important priorities for which they are failing to do their Hajj sooner or in due time.

We must remember, Allah is testing us with our time, life and wealth. Allah is testing us whether we put HIS worship as number one priority or not. Allah knows whether we can afford for Hajj or not. Allah knows whether we are making sincere effort for the Hajj or not. If we do yet cannot afford for genuine reasons then Allah will forgive us but if we use “Can’t afford” as an excuse, then Allah will question us on the Day of Judgment. Therefore, before Allah questions us, we should question ourselves sincerely, “Can I really afford to perform the Hajj?”

Can Hajj be done with begging?

Affordability and Hajj are interconnected. One complements another. Allah made Hajj a compulsory worship on those who can afford. In the Holy Quran Allah specified this fact below:

وَلَهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ حَجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۝ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِّيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Pilgrimage to the House of Allah (In Makkah) is a duty that men owe to Allah – Those who can afford the journey. But if anyone deny faith (doing it), Allah does not need help from any of HIS creatures.”

[Al-Quran 3:97]

So, the condition for Hajj is affordability. If one can afford must do the Hajj as soon as possible without delay. But if one cannot afford, then Hajj is not compulsory on him or her. We can pause for a question here. The question is, how much money is considered affordability? The answer is if a Muslim has the following:

- Enough jewellery to cover the cost of journey for the Hajj,
- Enough money saved in the bank to cover the cost of journey,
- Enough land to sell a part to cover the cost of journey,

- Enough money in running business that selling some shares will cover the cost of Hajj

To be clearer, what is considered “enough money?” Well, “Enough money” means after deducting the necessary costs such as:

- One must calculate the cost of dependant ones, while he or she is in Hajj journey and after that cost, if he or she has enough money for Hajj, then Hajj is Fard on that Muslim,
- If one sells a part of land for Hajj and then must beg for living, then he or she should not sell it for Hajj. If lands are such that it is extra after fulfilling the basics needs, then one can sell the part of land for Hajj. If someone has land as such (More than basic needs) then Hajj is Fard on him or on her.
- The same with the business. If part of business sale does not hamper his or her basic needs, then selling that part of business is necessary, because Hajj is Fard on him or on her.

Despite one’s affordability, if one denies performing the Hajj, then in the sight of Allah, that person will be guilty. Allah knows the intention of the Muslim. HE knows if the Muslim is trying enough or not, to perform the Hajj. For example, a Muslim is squandering money in unimportant or luxury things, yet when Hajj issue comes, he says, “Oh! I can’t afford it.” Allah knows that his failure of performing the Hajj is due to his bad habits. He did not surrender his habit to Allah to follow Allah’s code of life. If he did, he would avoid luxury spending that Allah made prohibited (Haram) for him. So, Hajj is not an isolated worship, and it is related to the holistic lifestyle according to the code of Allah. No one escapes from Allah’s fair Judgment. That’s why, Allah warns those who try excuses to escape from Hajj in the Holy Quran:

وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۝ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِّيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Pilgrimage to the House of Allah (In Makkah) is a duty that men owe to Allah – Those who can afford the journey. **But if anyone deny faith (Performing Hajj), Allah does not need help from any of HIS creatures.**”

[Al-Quran 3:97]

Allah is not in need for Muslim’s money or Hajj. It is Muslims who need Hajj desperately to be saved from Allah’s punishment and to be rewarded paradise by Allah. Therefore, every Muslim must be keen to do the Hajj as soon as he/she can afford. Is affordability and begging the same thing? Not at all. Affordability comes through Halal (Allowed/permited sources of income), and begging is a Haram (Prohibited source of income). In worship, only Halal income is acceptable. Some people in the past, in the time of ignorance, innovated begging method in the Hajj. Holy Messenger of Allah came to reform it. Let us look at a hadis to learn about it.

عَنْ أَبْنَى عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: كَانَ أَهْلُ الْيَمَنِ يَحْجُجُونَ فَلَا يَتَرَوَّدُونَ وَيَقُولُونَ: نَحْنُ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ فَإِذَا قَدِمُوا مَكَّةَ سَأَلُوا النَّاسَ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: وَتَرَوَدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى (
رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي

Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: “**People of Yemen used to perform Hajj without bringing the cost with them.** They used to say, ‘**We are the ones who rely on Allah**; but when they used to arrive in Makkah, they used to beg. Then Allah revealed the following verse in the Quran, “**And take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best of provisions is right conduct**

(Taqwa),

[Al-Quran 2:197].” [Bukhari]

So, the answer to the question is, begging for Hajj cost is not allowed. In Islam begging is prohibited anyway. Muslims should not beg for Hajj even in the following ways because Allah knows their secret intentions:

- **Begging in the name of “help”:** If they ask relatives “Please help me, I want to do Hajj” that is one kind of begging. They can't afford therefore Hajj is not Fard on them. Therefore, they should not insist others to help them for Hajj. BUT WITHOUT ASKING IF A RELATIVE GIVES THE COST FOR HAJJ AS GIFT, THEN THAT IS NOT BEGGING, AND IT IS OK TO TAKE THE GIFT. Remember, for affordability, believers always should ask Allah (In Dua) for help. Some other cases, if some Muslims who can afford the cost if they want to because they have different means available, yet they always expect money from their family members. Is it begging too? Yes, it is also a begging mentality. They want to save their money, or they have too much love for their own money more than the Hajj for Allah, and they remind their relatives to feel guilty to give them money for Hajj. This type of begging mentality must be avoided for TAQWA.
- **Actual begging:** A beggar can beg lot of money, but that money is not allowed to do the Hajj because Allah has prohibited to beg for Hajj. In the verse above 2.197 Allah said that the best provision is Taqwa which is not begging, not stealing etc.

Hajj is an act of worship to Allah. Worships are with purity in every aspect. Begging is not pure and prohibited in Islam. Any worship with prohibited income is not accepted by Allah. Therefore, a Muslim must be careful about which money he or she is using for Hajj. At the end of the day, if Hajj is not accepted, then what is the point of working hard for unfair means, if it brings Allah's wrath rather than HIS pleasure?

Why is Hajj responding to Allah's call?

Hajj is Allah's special blessings for the mankind. On top of it, Allah has called the people to come to HIS Sacred House to perform Hajj around it. When Allah calls for something, it carries the highest degree of dignity and respect. Allah has honoured HIS beloved servants by inviting them to perform the Hajj. Who is inviting here? The Lord of the universe, the creator of the mankind, the ruler of the mankind and the GOD of the mankind is inviting here. How special and wonderful that invitation is! It is a divine and holy invitation for the benefits of mankind. Allah is inviting people to come for Hajj from near or far, from every corner of the earth, and Allah knows that so many of HIS servants will love and respect that holy invitation.

Where can we find that invitation from Allah for the Hajj? We can find it in the Holy Quran in which Allah asked HIS Holy Messenger to make the announcement to invite people to come to the Hajj on Allah's behalf. The Holy Quran states:

وَأَذِنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجَّ يَأْتُوكَ رَجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجِّ عَمِيقٍ

“And proclaim (the duties of Hajj) among men: They will come to you on foot and on every kind of camel, (turned) lean because of travels through deep and distant mountain roads (Far and hard journey).”

[Al-Quran 22:27]

Look! This invitation is not limited to a group of people, or for a nation or two, but for all from everywhere. The earth belongs to Allah, the humans are creation of Allah, and the invitation is for all from anywhere on this earth. That's why no one is left out from the invitation whether they live near to the Sacred House of Allah or very far. In this call, Allah acknowledges the hardship in journey from HIS beloved guests, but HE appreciates that they will come overcoming all the hardship and challenges because of their strong love for Allah. Their love for Allah, their loyalty to Allah and their strong desire

to receive Allah's love will pull their hearts towards Hajj. That has been exactly happening with the Hajji and Hajj. Millions of Muslims every year respond to the call of Allah. They take Allah's invitation to the bottom of their hearts, and they find no rest in their hearts until they take the hard and expensive journey towards Hajj. If the space allowed, then hundreds of millions of servants of Allah would have taken Allah's invitation seriously, and they would have attended the Hajj to respond to the Holy invitation of Allah.

On one hand, we see Allah's love for HIS servants, inviting them to Hajj to receive HIS blessings, and on the other hand, we see those who love Allah very much, takes all forms of sacrifice to be there to respond to the invitation of Allah. They leave family behind for the love of Allah, they spend so much money because they believe their wealth is Allah's gifts, and they put up with mental-physical-emotional exertion to please Allah. They find their hearts are filled with Allah's love, and their minds are filled with total submission to Allah, and with that they find energy to go ahead station after station to arrive in Hajj. Once they arrive in the Hajj boundary, they respond with certain words to say, "O Allah! You invited me, and I am here present to respond to YOUR invitation." Those words are short and simple. Once they arrive in Hajj, the first thing they say, "**Labbaika, Allahumma labbaik**". It means, I am present, O Allah! I am present. In other words, O Allah! You called me through your Holy Messenger, and here I am to respond to your Noble Call. Like in school, teacher does the roll call, and we say, "I am present."

When I could say Labbaika, Allahumma Labbaik, in 2022, I broke down in tears. The thought of Allah's call and my humble response was going through my mind. One part of my mind was reflecting, and another part of my mind was thanking Allah for granting me the opportunity to be present to HIS service by responding to HIS call. My heart felt such a peace, love and increase in Imaan that I cannot put it in words. I think, when our duties in Hajj accompanies with our reflection, thoughts behind them with our right knowledge, then the intensity in Imaan increases, and we feel the divine taste of it.

Tafsir Ibn Kasir has explanation about the verse of the Quran above (22.27) as following:

Allah asked HIS Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) to call (To announce) mankind for Hajj. It is narrated that Ibrahim (a.s) said: "**O Allah! How will my voice reach to all mankind?**" In answer Allah said: "**Your responsibility is to call only. And reaching the voice of yours to all is MY responsibility.**" Then Ibrahim (a.s) stood on Maqam-e-Ibrahim, or On Safa Mountain, or on Hazr-e Aswad or on Abu Qubais Mountain and called: "**O people! Your Lord has made HIS house. So, you perform Hajj of that House!**" Then all mountains reduced in heights and Prophet Ibrahim's sound echoed all over the world. Even the one who was in father's back (Yet unborn) and the one in mother's womb could hear it. Each Stone, tree and the ones for whom Hajj was determined replied with

Labbaik (I am present).

[Ibn Kasir, Tafsir for 22.27]

That call was made for all the people until the doom's day. For thousands of years, some people have been responding to that call and this responding will continue for very long time (Allah knows exactly for how long). Allah's call is very important to HIS servants and that's why HIS true servants feel very emotional about it. As a result, they make every effort to reach there by responding to Allah's call to say, "**Labbaika Allahumma labbaik.**" **I am present! O Allah! I am present (to YOUR service)!**

Hajj is a divine reforming program.

Some may think that Hajj is just a ritual. That is far from the truth. Every divine program from All-Wise Allah is full of wisdom and full of benefits for the mankind as well as for all the creations of Allah. So, Hajj is prescribed to reform the person, the society and the world in a righteous way. Insha Allah! I shall try to explain this more clearly below.

How Hajj reforms? Hajj is to change the person from within and to change the world in a peaceful way. I shall describe some point in below to explain it Insha Allah:

- a. **Reforming Muslim minds:** Hajj reforms Muslim minds towards responding to Allah's call in every step of life. That can be responding to the calls for 5 times Salah daily or to the calls to follow Halal and Haram, or to be obedient to the boundary that Allah has placed on believers for their safety, protection and for Paradise. Hajj teaches, no matter how hard is to respond to Allah's call daily, true believers must do it for success. In other words, it is called total submission to Allah's calls. That is the main training of Hajj. Allah made Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) as an example who submitted and responded to Allah's every call.

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْ ۖ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۖ ۱۳۱

“Listen! His Lord said to him: ‘Surrender (your will to ME)’. He (Ibrahim) said: ‘I surrender (my will) to the Lord and Cherisher of the Universe.’

[Al-Quran 2:131]

- b. **Reforming Muslim culture:** Hajj itself is Muslim culture. It happens every year and it engages Muslims for few months in the activities of Hajj in their communities. Every year some Muslims will go to Hajj, families will share in the planning and preparation for Hajj, every year Muslims say “goodbye” to someone or “welcome” to or from Hajj. Besides, Hajj season brings Eid Ul Adha celebration and the culture of sacrificial practice in the societies. Hajj inspires Muslims to stick to the Islamic culture only. They adhere to Islamic culture and avoid any culture that contradicts the teachings of Islam. They are different than people who used to say:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ أَتَبْعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَفْيَنَا عَلَيْهِ عَابِرَانَا ۖ أَوْلَوْ كَانَ
عَابِرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ۖ ۱۷۰

“When it is said to them: ‘Follow what Allah has revealed:’ they say: ‘No! We shall follow the ways of our fathers.’ What! Even though their fathers did not have the wisdom and guidance?”

[Al-Quran 2:170]

- c. **Reforming Muslim behaviour:** In Hajj a Muslim is required to practice self-control for longer period than fasting. In the days of Hajj, a Muslim must practice best manners such as: avoiding sexual behaviour with wife, avoiding any sinful actions, and avoiding any harmful manner like quarrels or fights and so on. Hajj teaches that true believers should follow the Hajj culture to reform their behaviour all the time. If they can practice self-control in their manner in daily life, they can avoid sins, and they can qualify easily for the Paradise by Allah's permission. Holy Quran describes the self-control in manners in the Hajj:

فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جَدَالَ فِي الْحَجَّ ۖ

“If anyone undertakes that Hajj duty, let there be no sexual behaviour, no sinful behaviour, nor quarrelsome behaviour during the Hajj.”

[Al-Quran 2:197]

- d. **Reforming Muslim's earning and spending:** Hajj also reforms Muslims economy. In Hajj the requirement is that Muslims must spend money that was earned in a Halal way. With Haram money, Hajj is not accepted. That enforces the fact that Muslims are not allowed to earn or to spend money in Haram way. Haram way means, the way Allah has prohibited. For example, extravagance is Haram in Islam, and one must not take Hajj as an extravagant journey. Similarly, extravagance should be absent from Muslim's spending all the time. The Hajj

teaches purity in income and expenditure. An example from the Holy Quran regarding the extravagance in a Muslim's life:

وَلَا تُبَدِّرْ تَبْدِيرًا ٢٦ إِنَّ الْمُبَدِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَنَ الشَّيَاطِينِ

“But do not waste (your wealth) like a wasteful person. Surely, wasters are brothers of the Satan.”

[Al-Quran 17:26-27]

e. **Reforming Muslims perception to life:** Hajj reminds Muslims that life can be short, and they may die any time for which they must be prepared for. Once a Muslim prepares for Hajj, it's like he or she is preparing for death. Muslims say goodbye to their known ones as if they may not return alive. They seek forgiveness from others, and they pay if there is any due. Then they wear dress (For men) of two pieces of white cloth and proceed to Hajj like towards a death procession. Millions of pilgrims wear the same death dress, and their mind truly goes out of the excessive love for this life. Muslims should hold onto the spirit of “Preparation for death” all the time because it will meet everyone. Holy Quran reminds us:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۖ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّونَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۖ فَمَنْ رُحْزَخَ عَنِ النَّارِ
وَأَدْخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ ۖ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتْلُعُ الْغُرُورِ ۱٨٥

“Every soul shall have a taste of death: And only on the Day of Judgment you shall be paid your full due wages (for what you have earned). Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Paradise will have attained the success: BECAUSE the life of this world is only goods and passing objects (based upon) deception.”

[Al-Quran 3:185]

f. **Reforming Muslim Ummah:** Hajj also reforms Muslims in terms of “Muslim nation.” Millions of Muslims come to Hajj from all over the world, with different languages, with different nationality, from different cultures, from different races, from rich and poor, from high educated or low educated, from high jobs or low jobs and so on. But they come to the centre with one aim, and they follow one method. In their Hajj rules, they abandon their own wishes, cultures, methods and they follow only one rule from One Allah. With that, all the races, all the languages, all the national pride gets shattered and what remains is only one identity and that is they all are surrendered to the rules of One Allah. Or they take the one identity that they are nothing but Muslims. Hajj reminds them practically that they must reform themselves to be one Ummah with unity. Holy Quran reminds that:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخْوَيْكُمْ ۖ وَأَتَقْوُا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ۖ ١٠

“The believers are a single brotherhood. So, make reconciliation (offering peace and agreement) between your two (contending) brothers: And fear Allah, that you may receive (HIS) Mercy.”

[Al-Quran 49:10]

g. **Reforming the mankind to be united in peace:** Hajj is a world conference where no abuse is allowed, no indecent activities are allowed, no stealing/robbery is allowed, no quarrel or fighting allowed. That area is made peaceful, secured and millions of Muslims follow the peaceful process in Hajj. With this, Hajj sends a clear message to the mankind that if mankind together follows their creator's code like in Hajj, then they can enjoy happiness in this life as millions of Muslims enjoy peace in Hajj, because they follow only one code in there and that is Allah's code. Allah created mankind to live in peace as Quran describes:

يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْفَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَيْرٌ ۖ ۱۳

“O mankind! WE have created you from a single (pair) of male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you know one another (not that you may hate each other).

Surely, the most honourable of you, in the sight of Allah is (he, who is) the most righteous of you. Verily, Allah is All Knowing and is Well-Aware (of all things).”

[Al-Quran 49:13]

In this message, Allah calls mankind for unity in peace. Then Allah prescribed Hajj to show how practically mankind can enjoy unity and peace if they surrender to their One Creator. Moreover, Hajj is to reform Muslim's attitude to be peaceful by surrendering to Allah's code as they do in Hajj. So, they should learn to be peaceful towards their families, neighbours, other Muslims and to other humans as they act peacefully in Hajj.

In conclusion, Hajj is a reforming program to change Muslim's personal, social, economic, cultural, national and international life to surrender to Allah completely, and to earn peace in both lives. If the reform begins from Muslims rightly, then the entire mankind will get the message from them rightly. But if Muslims misunderstand the purpose of Hajj, the reforming plan of Hajj, and if they take Hajj just as a ritual, then the entire mankind will get the wrong message of Hajj from them.

Chapter 2: Inner beauty in Hajj

Why to look at inner beauty?

Beauty is generally what amazes our look. What we see with bare eyes that cools our eyes, or attracts our souls, and we long to sight is again and again is called beautify. Beauty is healing for the heart, and people are obsessed with beauty. People do not realize how fast time goes by if they have emerged in looking at something beautiful. We find stories in the Holy Quran about Prophet Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) who used to thank Allah looking at his beautiful horses, and high-class ladies cut their fingers while they supposed to cut their fruits with knives when they saw the beauty of Prophet Yusuf (Peace be upon him). People spend so much money for the tour to see the beautiful natural sceneries. Humans are surrounded by beauty in this earth, and if anyone wants to count all the beauties, they cannot finish it in his/her lifetime.

Beauty, whether it is from the nature, or in humans, makes us ponder about it. We ponder about the creator of different beauties, it makes us realize the ultimate power of the creator of beauty, and about how beautiful the creator is. Looking at a beautiful flower can be simple, but if that looking is combined with reflection and thinking what is behind it, then that looking becomes very meaningful, educative and food for the soul. With that notion, we can classify the looking in two main categories. One category is, looking at the outward beauty, and another is, looking at the inward beauty. Interestingly, the same thing has both outward and inward beauty. For example, a ripe mango has beautiful shape and colour outside, and beautiful colour and flesh inside.

In Islam, we are taught to look at both outer and inner beauties. It encourages us to look outwardly, and inwardly. Inward look comes with reflection, deep thinking and the endeavour to understand. We can look at an example in the Holy Quran:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَابًا ۖ مَا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِنْ تَفَوُتٍ ۖ فَارْجِعُ الْبَصَرَ
هَلْ تَرَى مِنْ فُطُورٍ ۗ ثُمَّ أَرْجِعُ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقِلِبُ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِبًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ ۖ

“He is the One Who created seven heavens, one above the other. You will never see any imperfection in the creation of the Most Compassionate.¹ So look again: do you see any flaws? Then look again and again—your sight will return frustrated and weary.”

[Al-Quran 67:3-4]

In this verse, “No imperfection” means perfectly beautiful, and “Look again” can be looked outwardly and with thoughts. When thinking and outward look go together, the inner beauty starts revealing. The same way, believers look at the Hajj outwardly and inwardly. With reflections, believers try to unveil the inner beauties and benefits of Hajj, and they become overwhelmed with the love of Allah. Their wise look makes them more and more obedient and grateful servants of Allah.

In this chapter, I shall try to highlight few points to encourage us to look at the beauties and benefits of Hajj beyond its outer beauties. Hajj is a beautiful gift from Allah. It attracts the hearts of the believer by going deeper than the eyes and satisfies the soul which is deeper than the hearts. The hearts and souls of believers are beautified by the beauty of Hajj. Therefore, when we look at Hajj, we should try to have outer and inner look at it. We pray to Allah to increase the ability of our inner look to be happy and to be guided to be qualified for the Paradise which is filled with ever beauty and joy.

What is behind the Hajj?

Outside, we see Hajj as a large gathering, believers are unitedly doing their duties, finishing their tasks and going back home. There are so many beautiful things in the Hajj duties that are cooling for the

eyes and the heart. But if we take a deeper look inside the Hajj, what is the beauty that we see? We need to see what is behind the Hajj. What is the single aim behind the Hajj which is demonstrated by all outer activities? Is there any? Or is there none? We can only find that out if we use our inner look. Therefore, Hajj needs to be looked at outwardly and inwardly to understand the total beauty in it. We look at Hajj beauties to satisfy our souls.

The inner beauty of Hajj is the aim of making believers to surrender to Allah completely. It is a divine aim, Allah does not force it on anyone, but Allah beautifies it in the hearts and souls of the believers who submit themselves to the Will of Allah without any fuss or question. When a person declares his/her faith in Allah, makes the promise that he/she will submit to Allah fully. By Hajj Allah helps and guides HIS believers to demonstrate their full submission to Allah. Money, bribe, or worldly allurement cannot bring millions of Pilgrims into that demonstration of total submission by Hajj, but it is easy for Allah to bring hearts together in the Hajj by HIS Divine guidance. That is a super spiritual beauty, and the more we think about it, the more it soothes our hearts and souls for our beautiful faith.

Let me explain a bit more. Allah created humans to be HIS ambassadors in this earth. As ambassadors they will follow HIS guidance, and they will invite and join each other to follow HIS guidance. That is Allah's noble plan behind the creation of humans. Through this plan Allah also will test humans who are willing to be HIS ambassador and who is not. Suppose a government appoints an ambassador to represent the Government in a certain country. In that appointment the ambassador has some duties towards the Government such as:

- a. Ambassador must accept the Government as his/her authority,
- b. Ambassador must be loyal to the authority,
- c. Ambassador must be following the policies of the Government
- d. Ambassador must not follow his/her own desires disobeying Government
- e. Ambassador is accountable for breaking any rules given by the Government

If an ambassador follows the above rules, then we can say that the ambassador is fully loyal to the Government and that total loyalty is called total surrendering. Like that, Allah wants Muslims to surrender to HIM fully. Allah has commanded it in the Holy Quran:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي الْسَّلَامِ كَافَةً وَلَا تَتَبَرَّغُوا خُطُوطَ الشَّيْطَانِ ۝ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌ مُّبِينٌ

“O you who believe! Enter Islam fully; and do not follow the footsteps of the Satan; he is your open enemy.”

[Al-Quran 2:208]

Hajj is the manifestation of that total surrendering to Allah. Or in other words, Hajj is the training to become a fully surrendered servant to Allah. How does Hajj train a Muslim to become fully surrendered to Allah? Let us look at some aspects of surrendering that Hajj manifests in Muslims below:

- **Loyalty to Allah:** Muslims take the difficult Hajj journey only to please Allah. Muslims do Hajj to follow Allah's command. Therefore, Hajj manifests Muslim's surrendering to the will of Allah.
- **Loyalty to the policy of Allah:** Muslims perform Hajj according to Allah's prescription. They follow the method that Allah's Messenger taught them. They do not follow their own method, instead in every inch of Hajj they follow divine method. That is also a manifestation of them being surrendered to Allah.

- **Loyalty when summoned:** Muslims perform Hajj because they were summoned by their Lord Allah through HIS messenger. That's why when they arrive for Hajj to say, "I am present! O Allah! I am present!" Responding to the call of Allah is also a strong manifestation of their fully surrendering to Allah in Hajj.
- **Loyalty in giving up desires:** Muslims give up their comfort, luxury etc in Hajj. They wear death like dress (for male in particular), avoid intimacy between husbands and wives, avoid using scent, avoid shaving, avoid luxury by embracing hardship etc. That is another strong manifestation of their self-sacrificing for the sake of Allah because of their fully surrendering to Allah through their Hajj.
- **Loyalty in giving up life:** Muslims know that the Hajj journey can take their lives. Many die in there. Many Muslims sincerely wish to die in that journey because of the pleasure that they would die in the path of Allah. Muslims are so loyal to Allah that they wish to give their lives for HIS pleasure. That is another strong manifestation of their full surrendering to Allah through their Hajj.
- **Loyalty in giving up wealth:** For Hajj one must spend quite a lot of money. This spending is giving up money for the loyalty of Allah. That is another strong indication of surrendering fully to Allah from a Muslim through Hajj.

When a Muslim does give up all the above for Allah in the Hajj, then it truly manifests that Muslim has totally surrendered his or herself, wealth etc for the loyalty of Allah. Muslims should be prepared to dedicate themselves to the cause of Allah anytime when HE calls them. Muslim means the one who surrenders fully to the will of Allah. Hajj manifests that surrendering. Muslims must understand the lesson of Hajj and should extend this lesson in every step of life to become a complete Muslim.

To conclude, what is the inner beauty behind the Hajj? The inner beauty is the divine motivation through Faith that is gifted by Allah to the sincere believers, and the outer beauty of Hajj is the large gathering to perform the noble duties in a harmonious and peaceful manner.

Purity in the Hajj travelling!

This is another inner beauty of Hajj. To see it, one must think deeper and look at the Hajj travelling with an inner look. One must not look at the Hajj travelling superficially. A superficial look does not take the mind deep enough to pick the pearls under the sea. Should one be satisfied enough for looking at the wavy upper part of the sea? No, because if the look does not extend deeper, then one will miss all the beautiful underwater beauties. Most of the precious things are under the water. Similarly, most of the beauties of Hajj is gained from deeper thoughts. One must not miss it.

Travelling in general can be looked as tiring, chaotic, challenging, expensive, entertaining or relaxing. If anyone limits the beauty of Hajj travelling in those aspects, will fail to see that Hajj travelling has a special beautiful purity in it, and no matter how difficult it may become, the purity and the peace of mind from it exceeds all the comparisons between the general travelling and the Hajj travelling.

To start with, Hajj is not a travelling to indulge wrong things. In this life, travelling is a common thing. People make their travel for many different reasons such as:

- For business,
- For leisure,
- For sighting new things,
- For researching about wonderful things,
- For having fun,
- For relaxation,

- For sports,
- For other good reasons etc.

Besides, in those tour or travelling often many bad things can be also included such as:

- Intention for material gains,
- Alcoholism for drinking,
- Gambling for gain or lose,
- Indecencies of any sort etc.

Hajj is not such a travel. Hajj is the purest form of travelling. In it, no prohibited or immoral activities are allowed. Every year millions of people gather for Hajj and due to its purity, the gathering is safe from wrong doings. Alhamdulillah! In Hajj, every kind of sinful actions are prohibited. Hajj only reminds pilgrims about good things, about pure lifestyle, about their Lord WHO is Pure from any wrongdoing. Hajj reminds them about the Day of Judgment where they will face accountability for their actions in this life. To keep the Hajj pure from sins, Allah has forbidden many things for the pilgrims in Hajj. Such as:

فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجَّ

“If anyone undertakes Hajj duty, let there be no sign of offense, no wickedness, nor disputes during the Pilgrimage (Hajj). And whatever good you do, Allah knows it.”

[Al-Quran 2:197]

Even, Allah prohibited ill gotten money to be used for the Hajj, to keep the Hajj totally pure from contamination of sins. Allah commanded in the Quran:

وَتَرَوَدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْزَادِ التَّقْوَى وَأَنَّقُونَ يَأْوِلِي الْأَلْبَابِ

“And take a provision (the money with you) for the journey, but the best provision is Taqwa (Lawful money and lawful conduct without begging, stealing, or robbing etc.). So, fear ME, O! You, who are wise.”

[Al-Quran 2:197]

Therefore, in Hajj, there is no provision of indulging impure sinful things. In Hajj, the strict self-control, the strict code of moral practice, the strict code of righteous intention is present. Subhaanallah! Allah is the Purest and HE prescribed Hajj for Muslims as a “Pure Journey for pure Practice” only due for HIS pleasure. Looking at the Hajj travelling from that perspective, we can see the deeper program in Hajj and that is purity in all levels. So beautiful!

To summarise, what is the inner beauty in Hajj in terms of travelling? The inner beauty is the nobility behind it, and the outer beauty is the massive journey by millions of pilgrims towards the same centre.

Beauty of the best gathering!

Do you see the Hajj gathering from outside only? You can, nothing wrong with that. With outer look, you will be amazed with so many people moving like a wave, if you see it from the sky with drones or helicopters. You will be amazed with the continuous flow in Hajj as if it is a never-ending flow. It shows the eternal continuity. How can so many dedicated servants of Allah come together with the same spirit of love for Allah to do the duties for the sake of Allah? The scene is breathtaking, and the movement in unity is extra-ordinary! Is there any peaceful, pure, faith based large gathering in this world like Hajj? These outer beauties make one wonder, attracts the heart, and motivates the mind in positive ways. But how does this gathering touch the inner soul in a person? Have you thought about it? Or what is the best beautiful thing we can see in Hajj with our inner look? Can we see the beauty in

it about Allah being the best LORD Who prescribed the best gathering (Hajj) for mankind? Let me discuss little more about gatherings.

Gathering is common in this world. People gather for lots of reasons. Such as:

- People gather for worshipping idols,
- People gather for economic reasons,
- People gather for political reasons,
- People gather for protesting Government,
- People gather for marriage celebrations,
- People gather for social occasions,
- People gather for shopping in markets,
- People gather for entertaining programs,
- People gather for celebrations etc.

So, is it fair to say that among all these gatherings in this world, the Hajj gathering is the best gathering? Should we check it out with explanation? I shall highlight a few best aspects in Hajj gathering and those aspects should make sense that Hajj is the best gathering and that is the inner beauty of Hajj we must not miss.

- **Best aim:** The aim of the Hajj gathering is very noble. In it there is no agenda to defeat one another, or to attack one another, or to disadvantage one another, or having to do anything for selfish desires or nationalistic interest and so on. In this world, in gatherings, there is grouping, there is motive to gain something, there are efforts to get some benefits, there is competition to excel from one another, there is often slander, backbiting, mean political motives, there is often conspiracy plans against one another, there is often money-making motives, there is often indecency, shamelessness, or immoral activities and so on. But in Hajj gathering the aim is pure. The aim is to gather for the pleasure of Allah only. It does not allow any room for corrupt intentions or actions. Allah made the aim of Hajj very clear in the Holy Quran:

وَأَتِمُوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةِ لِلَّهِ

“And complete the Hajj or Umrah in the service of Allah.”

[Al-Quran 2:196]

Therefore, in Hajj gathering the aim is not for the name or fame or any material competition for gain etc. Due to the best aim, Hajj is the best gathering in this world. This is one of the inner beauties of Hajj. Aim can't be seen but it stays behind the Hajj gathering.

- **Best method:** The method in Hajj gathering is very pure as well. The method is prescribed by the Ruler of the universe (Allah) and demonstrated it by HIS Holy Messenger (Peace be upon him). In this gathering there is no room for greed, indecent actions, fights, competition to gain more than others, abuse, stealing, racism, class system, hatred, destruction, conspiracy etc. The method is pure and the best. Millions of pilgrims come and gather without national pride, without social discrimination, without preference to one over another, without haughtiness, without allowing any sinful actions, without allowing any violence but peace, and without allowing anyone to put anyone down but respect and respect etc. In the method, Allah has prohibited any sexuality (Rafas) including talks, gestures, affairs about it, to keep the method completely pure from physical needs. In the method, Allah has forbidden any kind of sinful actions (Fosooq) including greed, hatred, racism, conspiracy, grouping to divide unity, cursing, abusing, hurting others, even hurting a fly or a mosquito, even hurting an animal for hunting, disrespecting other's property like lost property and so on. In the method, Allah has

completely prohibited any fight, any violence, even any secret plan for causing harm to others physically, emotionally or mentally.

In Hajj method, Allah has made it pure, sinless, and peaceful method which is totally different than any other worldly gatherings. It is so beautiful with the blessings of Allah. Any wise person with inner look cannot miss that inner beauty in Hajj, and that beauty is only possible for divine support. Allah has commanded the three main things must be avoided in the performance of Hajj and they are:

﴿فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جَدَانَ فِي الْحَجَّ﴾

“If anyone undertakes the Hajj, let there be no sign of sexuality, no sinful actions, nor fights during the Hajj.”

[Al-Quran 2:197]

➤ **Best outcome:** In this world, the organisers plan for the likely outcome from a gathering as they want. For example, from a soccer gathering, organisers would expect outcome of more popularity of soccer, more income for the organisers, more memberships in the clubs, more business for the advertising companies, and more business from soccer stars, or in some cases promoting gambling for some to gain and for others to lose. Likewise, each gathering expects some outcomes. In those outcomes there can be a mix up of greed, gain, pain of loss, anger from disappointment, grouping to get more advantage, gambling, competition to defeat one another, hurt if lost and overjoyed if won, alcoholism with health risks, grief or anger causing harms etc. along with good intentions. In the worldly gatherings, there is no guarantee for the best moral and spiritual outcome.

But what about the outcome from Hajj? The outcome from Hajj is totally different. Allah did not organize Hajj gathering for any reasons that humans usually aim for. Allah is beyond needs. HE does not need to gain anything from HIS servants. HE does not need to increase income from Hajj gatherings. HE does not need any gain from Hajj gatherings like humans need from worldly gatherings. So, from the outcome point of view, on Allah's side, the Hajj is a gathering pure from any bad outcome.

Now, from human point of view, the outcome from the Hajj gathering is best as well. The outcome of Hajj is righteousness in pilgrims, the cleansing from sins, the forgiveness for their shortcomings, the increase in their moral characters, the increase in their piety (Taqwa), the positive change in their natures and so on. Let us just look at a Hadis that indicates about the outcome of Hajj for the pilgrims:

وَعَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مِنْ حَجَّ فَلَمْ يَرْفَثْ وَلَمْ يَفْسُقْ
«رَجَعَ كَيْوَمْ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمَّهُ»

Abu Huraira (r.a) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: **Whoever has performed Hajj for the pleasure of Allah only and has not talked anything indecent (sexual) or has not done anything sinful, he (she) would return from Hajj (as sinless) as like the day his mother had given birth to him (her)."**

[Muttafaqun A'laih]

Now, can we see the sin? What is sin? Sin is the dirt in the heart. What happens when dirt is cleaned up properly? Cleaning makes the surface shiny and nice looking. Hajj brings that shiny looking pure heart. Is not it beautiful when the heart is sinless? Don't we then use our inner look to look at the sinless beautiful heart from Hajj?

➤ **Best reward:** Hajj is for Allah and only Allah has the power to give the best rewards in this life and in the next life. In other gatherings, people gather mainly for two different types of rewards such as:

- **Material rewards in this world.** For example, from a gathering in the market, people expect monetary profits as a reward. If they do not receive monetary reward, they consider themselves as failure. So, some gatherings are for material rewards only and they do not expect any spiritual rewards from their gatherings. As a result, the outcome of those gatherings in terms of material gain could be positive or could be negative. But in terms of Spiritual gains from those gatherings is nothing but zero.
- **Spiritual rewards.** Some gatherings are organised for spiritual rewards, for example, religious gatherings. But the spiritual gain for some goes only up to this life and it does not extend up to the next life. For example, if some people gather in spiritual discussion without believing in any GOD, the outcome maybe with positive feelings gained from it, but there is no guarantee that the rewards will extend to the Paradise in the next life. Therefore, the reward in the long run for those gatherings may end without guaranteed happiness in the Paradise.

Now, come about Hajj gathering. It is done for Allah, prescribed by Allah, and the method of celebrating that gathering is also prescribed by Allah and it is demonstrated by Allah's messenger. Besides, Allah controls HIS creation's life and death, the reckoning in the Day of Judgment and their ultimate ending either in Hell Fire or in Paradise. So, Allah has fixed the best reward for proper Hajj, and that is sinless peace of mind for pilgrims in this life, and the ultimate happy place of Paradise in the next life. Let us look at a Hadis:

وَالْحَجُّ الْمَبْرُورُ لَيْسَ لَهُ جَزَاءٌ إِلَّا جَنَّةً

Abu Huraira (r.a) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "**The reward for an accepted Hajj by Allah is nothing but Paradise.**"

[Muttafaqun A'laih]

Allah's rewards we cannot see with bare eyes, but we can see it with our inner spiritual look. When we look at the Paradise with our inner look, our minds fill up with Joy. Isn't it a beautiful feeling? That's why, believers must look at the Hajj, and what beautiful things are behind the Hajj for enjoying the continuous joy.

➤ **Biggest gathering:** This is a fact that Hajj is the biggest gathering in this planet. Muslims from all over the world love to come to Hajj. Billions of Muslims all over the world dream to get there at least once in their lifetime. So many Muslims want to go more than once to the Hajj gathering. They have means to do that. But due to avoiding the overcrowding, the Hajj organisers place a quota system on countries to send only a limited number to Hajj each year. If there was no quota system, then the number of pilgrims would have been 60-70 million roughly each year. Even the limited number allowed to perform Hajj each year is close to or over 2 million Muslims. What a great number! Why a great number of Muslims want to do Hajj? Why are their hearts attracted to the House of Allah in Makkah? Why every year so many Muslims get emotional to visit there? It is because of the supplication of prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him). Holy prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) made supplication to Allah after building the Holy House in Makkah to attract people's hearts towards that Holy House. Allah accepted that supplication and poured love for the Holy House for Hajj in the hearts of true believers. [According to Tafsir ibn Kasir explanation of 2:125]

Holy prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) made supplication which Allah has quoted in the Holy Quran:

فَاجْعَلْ أَفْدَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِمْ

“(O Allah!) Fill the hearts of some from among men with love towards it.”

[Al-Quran 14:37]

Allah made HIS Holy House like a most powerful magnet to pull believers hearts towards it. As a result, Allah's house is always visited by Muslims 24 hours a day for thousands of years. You would not find any other holy place in this earth as alive and busy in day or night as Holy House of Allah in Makkah. To see or to think of the power of supplications, and the power of Allah for answering the supplications, to unseen pouring of love from unseen Allah, one needs to use the inner eyes, inner look and feelings to grasp the inner beauties of those things. Therefore, let us reflect, and use our eyes in the hearts to see the inner beauties of Hajj beyond the peripheral look. These beauties are to beautify the hearts and souls of the believers for total rest and satisfaction with Allah, and Allah's prescription the Hajj.

Hajj is an ideal Muslim conference

Ideal! Yes, Allah prescribes ideal programs. All-Wise Allah knows about HIS creations, the needs for HIS creations, and the ideal remedies for their needs. It is only possible by All-Knowing Allah. That is why, manmade conference and Allah's prescribed conference has no similarity. Manmade ones have shortcomings, but Allah's prescription is perfect. This "Ideal" aspect in the Hajj is perfect with divine beauty, and one must try to see it with inner look. "Ideal Hajj as Muslim world conference" is a divine beauty, and with it, a believer can imagine about Allah's beauty and perfection. Subhaanallah!

To think of it a bit more, let me highlight about other conferences in this world. In this world, people organise conferences for various reasons. Below are some main reasons for any conferences:

- To remind the aim and objectives of the organizations to the members,
- To educate more about their ideology to the members,
- To unite the members and leaders,
- To encourage, or motivate the leaders and members to continue their mission,
- To achieve the high spirit,
- To plan for the better, and
- To spread the message all over through the selected representatives in the conference etc.

Now, let us take a deeper look at the Hajj. It is an ideal conference for world Muslims. World Muslims believe in the same ideology which is worshipping one Allah without giving any partners to HIM. It is like, Allah made a centre for Monotheism in Makkah for the world Muslims. Whoever will surrender to the will of Allah will become an automatic member of this main centre. To become a member of Allah's house in Makkah, there is no fee, no membership form or anything. If anyone accepts Allah without any partners, gains the privilege to become a member of Hajj Conference. Then once he or she becomes a member, gains the right to attend in there for Hajj as a conference. In Hajj, members perform duties to remind themselves about monotheism, about worshipping one Allah. Every action or duty they do in there educates them more about oneness of Allah. In that Hajj conference, millions of Muslims (as conference members) sing Allah's oneness. For example, they say, "Labbaika laa shareeka lak - I am present! Allah! YOU have no partners."

Then from that Hajj conference, they get filled up with high spirit of Imaan. They become highly motivated like re-charged battery with full power to become best Muslims. They feel much closer to Allah in Hajj conference. Their Imaan level goes very high. Their love for Allah goes to a peak level. They

get motivation to be righteous, to be a best surrendered servant of Allah in their lives. Then they come back with that high spirit to spread it around. Other Muslims come to welcome them from their areas. Other Muslims feel encouraged to talk to them. They ask the pilgrims to make supplication for them because a successful pilgrim comes back as sinless as a newborn baby. Other people get information about the Hajj conference. Many of them drop tears out of love for Allah and Hajj when they hear description from the returned pilgrims. The wind of righteousness blows around. The sense of righteousness is spread like this all over the world.

So truly, if we look at the above-mentioned aspects of Hajj, then it is correct to say that the Hajj is the best righteous world Muslim conference in this world. This is a conference:

- Happens every year,
- It happens at the same venue,
- It takes place for the same aim and objectives,
- It gives the same message every time,
- This conference is all about surrendering to Allah fully and glorifying Allah only,
- This conference is made safe by Allah (Not allowed to kill, hunt, fight, steal etc),
- This conference is a world Muslims conference because Muslims come from all over the world,
- This conference unites the world Muslims under the one slogan “Labbaika Allahumma labbaik—I am present O Allah I am present!” and
- Through this conference, the message of Monotheism spreads all over the world etc.

Now, let us look at a verse in the Holy Quran. In this verse Allah describes HIS holy house in Makkah as a safe, centre for gathering or conference.

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا

“And (remember) when WE made the House (Ka’ba) a Place of assembly for men and a place of safety.”

[Al-Quran 2:125]

Allah made it a “Masaabah” for people. Masaabah means coming back again and again to gather, to visit or to perform Hajj duties. House of Allah in Makkah is a place of world assembly for Muslims. A place to gather. It is a centre for Monotheism for the world. That’s why Muslims from all over the world gather here as a world Muslims conference every year. The inner specialty about that conference is that Allah put love about this conference in the hearts of the believers. That love is divine and priceless. One needs to feel it in the heart. It is unseen but it has overwhelming expressions in the action of Muslims. The inner beauty behind the Hajj conference is “Allah placed love for it in the believer’s heart.” It is unseen yet real. Believers must not miss it, must think about it, and thank Allah profusely for it. If believers do not think about the inner arrangement behind the great worship Hajj, then they will miss the ocean to find a small river. That will be a big loss!

Hajj provides a secret rope for Muslim unity

Unity comes through joining hearts. It can’t be seen yet JOINING is a very powerful force to bring hearts together. Who can do it? Can entire mankind do it with their expertise that Allah has provided? With inner look, we can realize the magnanimity of it. With money or wealth, unity cannot be purchased because every unique individual has different idea, choice and preference. But with which secret power, Millions of Muslims can gather with a single aim? What is the beautiful unseen thread that makes a garland with numerous hearts? That thread is Allah’s Mercy believers receive through their submission to one Allah. All hearts in Hajj submits to One Allah, and as a result, numbers do not matter, the result of unity in hearts is the same. That unseen Mercy and Power of Allah, that works

as a secret rope to unite hearts is extra-ordinarily beautiful. Muslims must ponder about it, try to see the Hajj beyond its outer duties, and to boost their level of faith up and up.

It is Allah's Mercy again on Muslims. Allah prescribed Hajj on world Muslims to maintain unity throughout the life. For Hajj, Muslim countries must communicate, cooperate in working together to materialise the Hajj duties. It is such a cause, a divine cause that brings Muslims together. For unity, countries are working hard in many ways. For unity among nations, there are many organizations working, spending so much time, spending so much money and effort. But is it giving any unity as expected? Rather, mankind is dividing themselves in the name of nationality, culture, race and regions. They can't achieve effective unity due to the national or regional interests. Race, class, language come in to determine who would get the preference on what. As a result, mankind is dividing further and further without achieving much unity.

Unity among Muslims is also not possible based on money. Unity comes through the unity of hearts. Unity of hearts comes only through Allah's Mercy for the surrendering of believer's hearts to one single point. In Islam that single point of unity is Allah. When billions of Muslims all over the world surrender their hearts to one Allah, then unity comes among them. Hajj is a worship that unites Muslims all over the world. Hajj is not only for Arab Muslims who are living around Makkah. Hajj is for all the Muslims. Hajj is only for Allah, not for the name, fame, national or regional interest and so on. Hajj is the response to the call of Allah with one single aim, with one single method and with one single target for the Paradise. Therefore, when millions of Muslims come to Hajj for one reason, then their hearts unite to a single aim, and that single aim brings unity among world Muslims.

Hajj is every year. So, every year the connection among Muslims is going on. Every year in Hajj, the world Muslims are praying for the rest of the Muslims in this world. Every year the message for unity is spreading to Muslims all over the world. That united spirit, united efforts, united worship, united cooperation is keeping Muslim unity efforts alive every year. Without divine program like Hajj, there are no other ways that are effective to achieve such widespread feeling of unity, brotherhood or sisterhood. I am not saying that there is no misunderstanding among Muslims. Misunderstanding is obvious because Satan is working continuously to divide Muslims to cause fights. But what I am saying is, Hajj is a major contributor towards the unity among Muslims. It is working in the believer's mind to be united for the sake of Allah.

When Allah unites hearts together then only the real unity comes. Otherwise, unity achieved based on racism, nationalism, regional interests are very short lived and with little shake up that kind of unity collapses easily. But unity based on faith in one Allah is a solid unity because its aim is noble, its aim is above selfish interests, and its aim is blessed by Allah. When Allah blesses on hearts to unite, then nothing can stop it. Hajj is such a worship that unite Muslims all over the world. Allah is so kind on Muslims by ordaining Hajj in every year which will bring Muslims to one centre with one aim to achieve unity in faith and to be saved from destruction, fighting, killing and ruining one another. Hajj sends that unity message every year through millions of pilgrims all over the world.

In the Holy Quran Allah reminds the believers about how HE united the hearts of the true believers, not with money or wealth but through divine faith!

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرُّوا ۝ وَإِذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ أَذْكُرْتُمْ أَعْدَاءَ فَالْأَفَّالَ
بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَنًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِّنْهَا ۝ كَذَلِكَ
يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَالِيَتِهِ ۝ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ۝ ١٠٣

“And hold fast, all of you together by the Rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and do not be divided among yourselves (being Muslims). And remember with thanks Allah's favour on you; for

you were enemies and HE joined your hearts together in love, so that by HIS Grace you became brethren;”
[Al-Quran 3:103]

Allah says further in the Holy Quran:

وَالَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ ۝ لَوْ أَنْفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَا أَلْفَتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ
بَيْنَهُمْ ۝ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝ ٦٣

“And HE has placed unity between their (believer’s) hearts: Even if you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have produced that unity (and love); but Allah has united them, surely, HE is Supreme in Strength, All Wise.”

[Al-Quran 8:63]

The unity in hearts behind successful Hajj program is a key issue. We do not see that background of how Allah’s power works over all those hearts. If we reflect about it, acknowledge it, take it dear to our hearts and souls, and remember it, then that will enlighten our hearts with the bright light of Imaan, and we can appreciate the power of Allah behind the Hajj more.

Divine re-animating spirit through Hajj

When a patient is suffering from heart ailment, the doctors give electric shock to re-activate the heart. Weak heart needs it desperately to be active again. I shall discuss more about the heart in the next paragraph, but here I would like to remind the importance of re-animation in spirituality. Human heart can be given shock but what about the human soul? Human soul is beyond doctors’ knowledge or ability in fixing it. The soul becomes weak after committing sins or becoming detached with the creator of Soul by being busy with worldly temporary fun and games. How can that weakened status be revived when no Xray or Scan can detect it? That is the secret power that has full control over the souls, and that power can penetrate its will through the souls to revive them without electric shocks. That is the power of Allah, and that power needs to be reflected upon by inner search or inner look. The inner beauty of re-animating souls is superb.

Imagine! How important the role of the heart is in a human body. If the heart survives the rest of the body survives. If the heart is dead, then nothing can stop the body from rotting. Why is that? It is because the heart pumps the blood from it to all other organs in a human body. That way the heart animates the body. Then again, the heart collects all the blood from all organs back to it. Why? So that the heart can purify the blood and send it to all over the body to re-animate it. Holy Ka’ba, the centre of Hajj is also like a heart for all the Muslims. Allah made this centre, so world Muslims can gather in it to be empowered with spiritual elevation, to be charged with high degree of Imaan. Then, after that charging, they can spread back to all over the world to re-animate the world Muslims. Alhamdulillah! What a great centre for motivation the Hajj gathering is!

If we notice closely, about 6 months of the year, the spirit of Hajj season goes around the world Muslims. From after the Month of Ramadan Muslims from outside Makkah begin their preparations for Hajj. They inform their families, relatives, friends, local communities and so on. They pay off all the debts, they seek forgiveness from others, and they begin feeling a high degree of Imaan in them. Their families, relatives and communities are also influenced from it positively towards Imaan. That begins the assisting to one another through visiting, through inviting, through organising Dua program, through giving charity and so on. All these things are like reviving the dead hearts into live hearts in terms of Imaan. This process of re-animation of Imaan continues until the pilgrims leave homes. Friends and families feel it in their hearts when they say goodbye to the pilgrims. Many of them cry,

shed tears with live emotion, with acute love for the pilgrims and the pilgrimage for the love of Allah in their hearts.

Then their feeling is continuously alive or animated until the pilgrims come back. Once they welcome the pilgrims back, their hearts re-animate to the peak again. When pilgrims come back, people gather around them to listen to their spiritual experiences, to know everything in Hajj so eagerly with hearts and souls. With that, their hearts are re-animated more. In this process the message of Taqwa, the Faith in one Allah, the love for Allah and HIS messenger goes around all over the world through pilgrims to re-animate Muslims hearts in this world. This re-animation process does not stop after one year. This process continues every year. Alhamdulillah! For last many thousands of years Allah has prescribed this Hajj and thus Hajj is playing a very important part to keep Muslims hearts with Imaan alive. Every year of Hajj is like a re-animation season for world Muslims.

This re-animation of pilgrims and the others are a great gift from Allah Almighty. Holy Quran indicates that:

وَأَذْنِ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجَّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَىٰ كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجَّ عَمِيقٍ ٢٧
لِيَشْهُدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ وَيَذْكُرُوا أَسْمَ اللَّهِ

“And proclaim (the duties of Hajj) among men: They will come to you on foot and on every kind of camel (Transport) ...That they may see the rewards for themselves and celebrate the Name of Allah.”

[Al-Quran 22:27-28]

With inner look, reflection and thinking, we can see the bigger picture, and the enormity of Allah's Power and Wisdom about HOW IS HE ORGANIZING everything in Hajj. Is it humanly possible? Is it humanly possible to unite the hearts? Is it possible to humanly keep the momentum of re-animation to continue year after year? Is it humanly possible to increase that level of re-animation every year without dropping? Believer's must not ignore thinking about the inner beauties of Hajj. It will only benefit them, Insha Allah!

Hajj as a divine training

Divine training is extra-ordinary. It does not require normal tools, tutors, training centres, and customized training programs to each individual trainee. Hajj is a universal training, it is holistic, simple, and is fit for all. No creation can come out with a training program without shortcomings except Allah. Allah's training begins with heart and soul and motivates the trainees to believe in the essential things to start with. Once they surrender their minds and souls to the loyalty of Allah, then the same training course benefits all of them. This faith part in training in the unseen, yet the most effective training method. It can be seen only in Allah's divine Hajj training if someone take a deeper look with their heart and soul. That inner beauty in faith training illuminates the heart and soul without harsh pressure.

Let me discuss little more about the Hajj as divine training for our understanding. It trains Muslims to dedicate to Allah fully. In this dedication it includes the following training in Hajj:

- **Strong commitment:** Hajj trains Muslims to be fully committed to serve Allah's code in life. Hajj is a difficult journey, but due to strong commitment from Allah's servants they can perform Hajj. Strong commitment helps them to overcome all the obstacles to make the noble journey. Once a Muslim is committed and tries hard then Allah makes it easy for them. Strong commitment is a fundamental need to be a strong Muslim. Allah loves strong Muslims more than weak Muslims. When a Muslim commits fully to serve Allah in any action in life, Allah makes his or her path smooth. Allah reveals it in the holy Quran:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَى وَأَتَقَى ٥٠ وَصَدَقَ بِالْحُسْنَى ٦٠ فَسَنَسِّرُهُ لِلْيُسْرَى

“So, who gives (in charity) and fears (Allah), and (in all sincerity) accepts (and commits) and follows the best-WE will indeed make smooth for him the path to happiness.”

[Al-Quran 92:5-7]

Therefore, Hajj is a worship that teaches Muslims to commit for the risky, hard journey. If they follow the same strong commitment in their daily duties as Muslims, then success will embrace them without any shadow of doubt.

- **Wholehearted efforts:** For Hajj they need effort with heart and soul. With half-hearted effort one will be disheartened about the hard journey. Hesitation, self-doubt and half-heartedness prevents a Muslim from the hard journey. Unless his or her heart is full of Allah's obedience, the heart is full of Allah's love, and the heart is full of wish for the paradise, then a Muslim cannot dedicate health, wealth and so on for the difficult Hajj journey. Because Hajj journey is not a journey for just pleasure or fun, it is a righteous journey which requires disciplines in mind and heart. For many that discipline is a very hard task. Without wholehearted effort, no one can achieve this discipline. Hajj trains Muslims for that discipline. In general, following Allah's code requires that sincere whole-hearted effort. Without it a Muslim struggles every day in following Allah's code. Obeying Allah is hard for those who do not have wholehearted effort behind the obedience. Allah wants Muslims to be wholehearted and sincere in obeying HIM.

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا أَللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الَّذِينَ حُنَفَاءٌ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَوَةَ
وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيمَةِ ٥٠

“And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship Allah, offering HIM sincere devotion, being true (in faith).”

[Al-Quran 98:5]

Therefore, Hajj is a worship that teaches Muslims to make wholehearted effort to succeed in obeying Allah in day-to-day life.

- **Giving up everything:** Hajj trains Muslims to give up everything if necessary for the sake of Allah. For Hajj, Muslims give up money, sexuality with spouses, comfortable stay, entertainment with sinful events, all sinful actions, families or friends, and even they prepare to give up their lives in their journey. Hajj is a training to give up most beloved things in the path of Allah if necessary. Without the mentality to give up, a Muslim cannot take the difficult Hajj journey. Hajj is a training for Muslims to give up things for the real owner of things (for Allah). If they train themselves with that properly, then they can give up their self, money, comfort or every selfish desire for the pleasure of Allah. To be a true Muslim one must learn that, and one must do that. In general, Allah commands Muslims to give up their self or wealth for Allah to be qualified for the Paradise. Allah says about it in the Holy Quran:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءاْمَنُوا هَلْ أَذْلَكُمْ عَلَى تَجَرَّةٍ تُنْجِيْكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ ١٠ ١٠ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِ ٢٠ وَتُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ ٣٠ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ٤١

“O you who believe! Shall I guide you to a business that will save you from painful penalty, that you believe in Allah and HIS messenger, and that you strive very hard (to

your best) in the cause of Allah, with your property and your persons: That will be best for you, if you only knew!"

[Al-Quran 61:10-11]

Therefore, Hajj is a worship that trains Muslims to give up their property and persons in the path of Allah in their day-to-day life to the obedience of Allah.

➤ **Surrendering to Allah:** Hajj trains Muslims to surrender to Allah with everything. It trains Muslims to surrender their sexual desires to follow Allah's commands. It trains Muslims to surrender their wrong desires to avoid sinful actions to follow Allah's commands. It trains Muslims to surrender their desires for comfort to follow Allah's commands. It trains Muslims to surrender their stinginess to spend a lot of money to follow Allah's commands and so on. To become a true Muslim, one must surrender his or her desires to Allah, his or her wealth to the will of Allah, his or her comfort to the will of Allah, his or her life to the will of Allah. So, a true Muslim is the one who surrenders his or her mind, emotion, desires, wishes, likes and dislikes, his or her choices and hobbies, his or her life and everything to the will of Allah. Hajj is such a worship that requires surrendering to Allah with everything one has in this life. In general, for every Muslim the fundamental requirement is that they must surrender to the will of Allah fully. Allah calls Muslims to do that in the Holy Quran:

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي الْسَّلِيمَ كَافَةً وَلَا تَشْتَعِلُوا عَنْ حُطُوتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ

"O you who believe! Enter Islam fully; and follow not the footsteps of the Satan; for he is to you an avowed enemy."

[Al-Quran 2:208]

Therefore, Hajj is a worship that trains Muslims to surrender everything to the will of Allah, to become complete Muslims for which Allah demands for.

Hajj is a source for motivation

Motivation is essential to move a mass of people. It is an unseen issue yet extremely important for a movement. It requires hard convincing to win people's hearts. When it is made clear to people that a hard training is for their best, then they feel motivated to do it. Often in this world, money, gift, awards, honours or some sort of promotions are used to motivate people to do something. These motivational things can be seen. When it comes about motivation through Hajj, then it is mostly internal, and it finds a deep-seated root in the heart and soul through faith. Faith is also unseen but very sweet (Not with the tongue but with heart and mind) and beautiful for its purity and nobility. Again, one needs to use his/her inner look to enjoy that inner beauty of Hajj.

Every nation celebrates some special occasions to motivate its people. Political parties call for yearly council to motivate its members. Communities celebrate some days to motivate its members. International communities celebrate some special days to motivate people. For example, national days, cultural celebrations, Peace Day, food day or could be anything. Islam has many activities daily or weekly, or yearly basis to motivate Muslims into the worship of Allah. For example:

- Salah daily to motivate Muslims into the worship of Allah,
- Jumma Salah on Friday gathering, to motivate Muslims for the rest of the week,
- Fasting month once a year, to motivate Muslims to be true servant of Allah for the rest of the year,
- Similarly, Hajj takes place every year, to motivate Muslims for serving Allah for the rest of the life.

Between these different worships, the main difference is the scope. For example, Salah has the motivational scope for locality only, fasting has the motivational scope in the wider range, and Hajj has the motivational scope for the world. Islam addresses quite clearly that Mankind is created by one GOD, and mankind should follow the guidance of that one GOD. In worshipping one GOD, Islam calls for world unity not division. In that call, Muslims respond positively. So, all the Muslims in this world, from east to the west believe in one Allah and follow one Allah's guidance. Hajj is there to unite them internationally. Hajj is there to:

- Bring them together every year,
- Show their presence for the same target,
- Revive their unity every year,
- Re-animate Muslims all over the world,
- Unite them in and around the House of Allah,
- Motivate them to be united,
- Motivate them to act as one big Muslim family in this world,
- Motivate them to assist, encourage one another to serve Allah all over the earth,
- To motivate them to cooperate with each other among Muslim countries for progress,
- Motivate them to remove any trace of racism and nationalism among them,
- Motivate them to enjoy the spiritual joy during Hajj season through being in Hajj or sharing with Eid and Qurbani all over the world etc.

Hajj is a powerful motivational source for Muslims. Its spirit centred in the House of Allah, but the ray of that spirit reaches every remote corner in this world. Every year someone is going to Hajj from every place from this world. It is a world event. It is a regular event. It is a fixed event. It does not need any campaigning, any announcements, any posturing or any media advertisements. Allah has fixed this event for every year and HIS servants are taking preparation to do the Hajj every year. This is Allah's arrangement! The biggest arrangement in this world every year. Allahu Akbar!

Just imagine, the following:

- How many million Muslims go for Hajj each year all over the world?
- How much money the Hajj is generating?
- How many hundreds of thousands of people are involved in business, training, visa, air ticket, customs, security, in all over management for the Hajj each year?
- How many places in this earth, Muslims are coming from for Hajj?
- How many more are involved as friends, families, or community members in helping, seeing off and receiving motivation directly or indirectly from those pilgrims?

Allahu Akbar! Allah is great! And HIS plan is great! HIS Hajj prescription is big too. His Hajj is a continuous yearly motivation for Muslims all over the world. There are no such gatherings available in this world in that large scale, in that frequency and in that degree of holiness. Allahu Akbar! Allah made the Holy House and it's surrounding a place for peace and security. Whoever goes in there feels the motivation and then they come back to share and spread that feeling to motivate other Muslims towards it. Allah says about the Holy place in the Quran:

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّي أَجْعُلُ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ عَامِلًا وَأَجْنَبِيَّ وَبَنِيَّ أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَصْنَامَ ٣٥

“And (remember) Ibrahim said: ‘O my Lord! Make this city, one with peace and security: and save me and my sons from praying to idols.’”

[Al-Quran 14:35]

To conclude, one should reflect on the unseen motivation from Hajj, and its source. This motivation no one can see with bare eyes, but with inner look, can feel it, or can think about it. This divine motivation is another inner beauty of Hajj. A wise or understanding person cannot avoid seeing it with inner look.

Hajj is a centre of inspiration for Da'wa

What inspires people? When something is extra-ordinary yet simple enough to win the hearts and mind, then people get inspired about it. Too hard, or too difficult a thing is never good for inspiration because people cannot keep up with it. When people think of inspiring others, they often try without success. Allah All-Wise does things for the success, and guides those who are keen to be inspired and are willing to inspire others. HE has prescribed Hajj for that. It looks simple but with extra-ordinary divine work behind it and with the best results. It inspires the pilgrims to respond to Allah's invitation (Call or Da'wa), and the pilgrims get inspired by it to spread the invitation (Call or Da'wa from Allah) to others. For thousands of years, this is an ongoing inspiration for Da'wa without many efforts. Believers enjoy to the Da'wa from Allah, and they also enjoy passing Allah's Da'wa to others after Hajj. One should see that beautiful inspiration for Da'wa with deeper look to see how beautifully it has been happening with the help of Allah.

Let us discuss more about Da'wa through Hajj. One may ask a simple question about Hajj. The question is, why did Allah prescribe Hajj for Muslims? What is the main purpose of it? The answer for this question, goes along with the answer to the question that why did Allah create mankind? Allah created mankind to worship HIM and Allah prescribed Hajj to help Muslims in worshipping HIM. To teach a community you need a centre for teaching. To teach a nation, you need a national headquarters for teaching. But to teach the whole world you need a headquarter for the entire world. House of Allah in Makkah is that headquarter, and Muslims gather in that headquarter every year to practice worshipping Allah with their health and wealth and even with their lives. Allah says in the Quran about that centre for world Muslims:

وَإِذْ بَوَأْنَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ أَن لَا تُشْرِكُ بِي شَيْئًا

“And (remember) when WE gave the site to Ibrahim for the (sacred) House, (saying): “Do not associate anything (in worship) with ME:”

[Al-Quran 22:26]

In this verse we see a few clear messages:

- Allah gave the site for the Sacred House as a centre,
- Allah gave the purpose of the centre and that is to worship one Allah,
- Allah gave condition that in this centre giving partners to Allah is not allowed,
- Therefore, Allah made the centre for Tawhid (Centre for Allah's oneness),
- Then Allah asked Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) to call Muslims to come to the centre of monotheism,
- So that the pilgrims can take the message of monotheism back to their locality etc.

This is a process of Da'wa. Hajj is, therefore, a gathering to take oath for worshipping one Allah, and then to pass that message as Da'wa to all over the world. That way, every year, the centre will be busy with the worshippers of one Allah, and then they will take the message of Tawhid everywhere. Muslims should use Hajj for effective Da'wa. If 2 million Muslims visit Holy Ka'ba only in Hajj season, and then if they go back to their locality and give Da'wa for tawhid the following ways, then Islam will spread further:

- Each pilgrim can make strong intention to dedicate the rest of his/her life for Da'wa to others about Allah,

- Each one can go back and practice Islam to motivate others, which is also Da'wa,
- Each one can take initiative to continue learning Islam and teaching Islam to their locality. That is also a Da'wa.
- The old and new pilgrims all can work together as a Da'wa team in their locality to encourage Muslims towards Salah, justice, fairness, human rights, halal and harams etc which is also very effective Da'wa,
- The old and new pilgrims can together set up systems to advise, assist, and help other Muslims for Halal business, Halal income and so on. That is also a Da'wa.
- All pilgrims in locality can join in advising for the righteous things and to forbid the wrong things in their locality which is also part of effective Da'wa.

In summary, Allah gave a centre for Tawhid for world Muslims, and they should use this centre for the Da'wa of Tawhid to the mankind. Muslims must think that way. Muslims must look at the Hajj with wisdom to understand the message of it. That inner look is called looking with reflection and wisdom. With wisdom we can see what is beyond the bare look, and we see those enormous hidden treasures and lessons for our guidance in lives. May Allah grant us inner looking ability with wisdom to understand the unlimited benefits of HIS Deen (e.g. Hajj), to find the lessons in Hajj to convey them in our day-to-day lives, and to see the beauty of Islamic worships.

Chapter 3: Some benefits of Hajj

Why is Hajj beneficial?

Beneficial! Maybe it is an understatement. Maybe the proper word would be “Extra-Ordinarily beneficial.” Why am I thinking of extra-ordinarily beneficial? I am thinking of the following reasons:

Scope:

When people think of benefits, they see the immediate benefits. Such as, beneficial for their health, wealth, for relationship, or for peace of mind etc. The benefit generally comes with limitations, and it does not come with holistic benefits. For example, if a tablet is beneficial for headache such as Panadol, its benefit is not extended to the diabetes. We find so many beneficial things in our lives, and we try to take as many as we can for supporting us. When we come to the benefits of Hajj, let us begin with a question, “How far-reaching are the benefits when talking about the Hajj?” Yes, this is a vital question we can ask with many beneficial things in this world to understand its scope. The answer to the question is, the scope of Hajj benefits is not limited to health or wealth only, but it offers the total holistic benefits for the pilgrims. It benefits the soul, the spirit, the mind, the heart, the desires, the guidance for success in this life’s test, the self-control and to walk on the road towards the happy next life. Besides, it offers the benefits in Paradise with all the never-ending benefits for a happy, peaceful, secured and prosperous life under the Guardianship of Allah. That’s why, Hajj benefits are not ordinary but extra-ordinary, and in this chapter, Insha Allah, we shall look at few examples.

Harmless:

In this life, there are so many beneficial things have benefits as well as harms. Until to a certain limit, a thing can be beneficial, but when the limit is exceeded, it can turn to be harmful. Some examples are below:

- Medicine has benefits, but overdosing can have adverse effect, side-effects or even death.
- Sleeping has benefits, but too much sleeping is bad for health. It can make a person feel lazy, and without exercise and fitness, too much sleeping can cause poor health with suffering.
- Food is beneficial and yummy, but overeating is harmful. If someone drinks too much milk, that can cause diarrhoea, or any kind of overeating causes the beneficial foods to turn into poison.
- Love is beneficial, but if it is balanced with wisdom, the one can suffer from lovesickness with the tendency to self-harm or harm to others. Love without discipline can spoil the loved ones, and love without fairness can help the criminals to continue their harm to the society.
- Prayer is very beneficial, but if the prayer is not within the teachings of Allah’s Messenger, then some may lose the balance in their responsibilities such as rights of their families on them or rights of their own health on them, or rights of the other humans on them. Everything needs moderation, or else beneficial thing may turn into the harms.

But the benefit of Hajj has no harm. Of course, Allah prescribed Hajj duties in moderation because every beneficial need in humans is known by All-Knowing Allah. Allah has prescribed Hajj rituals within the limited ability with HIS servants, but for its benefits or rewards, Allah did not place any limitations. Allah made the benefits unlimited with HIS unlimited Mercy, and HE did not leave any harm in the beneficial Hajj. From that point of view, Hajj is with extra-ordinary benefits.

Never loss:

In worldly things, most beneficial thing is profitable business. With good business, one can make quick profit that is not often possible with jobs. Jobs have limited hours of work with limited salary, but

business has enormous scope to become rich if everything goes well. The question now, is there any business in this world without risk of loss? We know that every business is risky. It may go either way, profit or loss, and benefits or harm. There is no guarantee that a business will bring benefits only without worries, stresses, and fear of losses. Then, is there any business that is without loss at all? Yes, there is. That business is doing business with Allah like Hajj. It has no loss, no harms and it has only one side and that is benefit or profits without loss. Any effort made for Hajj is rewarding in this life and in the next life. Even for Hajj, if a pilgrim dies, that is also beneficial because he/she will be taken care of by Allah as HIS Honourable guest. Let us look at an example in the Holy Quran. This example is related to all the worships to Allah including Hajj.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَتَّلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرِّاً وَعَلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ
تِجَارَةً لَّنْ تَبُورَ ٢٩

“Surely those who recite the Book of Allah, establish prayer, and donate from what We have provided for them—secretly and openly—can hope for an exchange that will never fail.”

[Al-Quran 35:29]

“That will never fail” includes that will never have harms, loss, or non-beneficial results. If we only look at the three above examples, we can surely say or accept the fact that Hajj is only beneficial. In other words, Allah has made the Hajj beneficial. Now, let us come to the main question of this chapter. The question is, why is Hajj beneficial? The answer is below:

- **Allah made it beneficial:** The prescriber of Hajj is Allah, and it is HIS prerogative that HE would make the Hajj a beneficial worship in all aspects of life, in this present life and in the next life.
- **Allah's universal rules:** Allah grants only benefit to HIS Servants when they worship HIM. Almighty Allah controls all the benefits, harms and saves HIS servants from loss in worshipping HIM.
- **HAJJ is noble:** Because it is a noble deed prescribed by Allah; it is only beneficial. Whoever does the Hajj is for their best, and all the believers want to perform Hajj for its unlimited benefits. They do Hajj for the pleasure of Allah, and Allah grants the enormous benefits to HIS servants for HIS love for them.

The benefit of Hajj is paradise

Benefits of good things are common in this life. There is reward for all good words and actions. People in every culture understand about the benefits in good morals. That's why, there are good etiquettes in every culture because it is rewarding mentally, emotionally and socially. But which culture (without faith) think of Paradise as a benefit of a certain good deed? It is obvious that if a person does not believe in GOD or in the next life, or in the Paradise, then he/she would never consider the benefit such as Paradise for a good deed. For this reason, in the general concept, many people understand the benefit of any good deeds as return of something good in this life. Hajj benefit is not like that expectation, thus extra-ordinary. Hajj benefits reach the next life and offers the everlasting benefits in the Paradise for the performer. What a wonderful benefit!

Hajj is compulsory on Muslims only once in a lifetime. The Mercy of Allah in it that it is not every day, or every week, or every month, or every year but only once in the life. Besides, this compulsion only applies on those Muslims who can afford it. So, we can see how easy Allah made the Hajj rules for Muslims. Then, a well-off Muslim needs to make sincere sacrifice to perform the Hajj once in their life. It is like just one shot to the target. If that shot is a best shot, then what is he or she getting in return? The return is more than the normal equation. The result or the reward for best performance in Hajj is Allah's abundant Mercy.

What is the Mercy? Let us find the answer from a Hadis. Abu Huraira (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

«وَالْحَجُّ الْمَبْرُورُ لَيْسَ لَهُ جَزَاءٌ إِلَّا جَنَّةً»

“The reward of the accepted Hajj is nothing but paradise”

[Muttafaqun A'laih]

What is an accepted Hajj? I have included in this book in chapter eight on the conditions for accepted Hajj. I recommend the readers to read that for details. But here I would say briefly an accepted Hajj means:

- The Hajj Allah has accepted,
- The Hajj that Allah is pleased with,
- The Hajj was done by a Pilgrim properly,
- The Hajj in which the pilgrim followed the teaching of Allah's messenger,
- The Hajj that was properly done for the sake of Allah and
- The Hajj has changed the Muslim from sinner to righteous and so on.

So, when a Hajj is done properly, and Allah accepts it, then it is called Hajjul Mabroor “Accepted Hajj by Allah”. Only Hajjul Mabroor qualifies for the excellent reward from Merciful Allah. That reward is nothing but Paradise. Allahu Akbar! What an excellent reward! How Merciful Allah is for HIS sincere dedicated servants in Hajj!

The lesson from this reward issue is:

- All Hajj is not accepted,
- Some are accepted and,
- Some Hajjies are not accepted.
- Muslims must not take Hajj for granted,
- They must learn about what makes their Hajj not accepted so they can avoid those actions,
- They must learn what makes a Hajj accepted by Allah so that they can do those things in Hajj.

Again, Muslims must remember that “Accepted Hajj and grant of Paradise for it” is conditional. So, they must fulfil those conditions to be able to perform their Hajj properly. May Allah grant every Muslim right knowledge and the right effort in their Hajj to be accepted by Allah! Also, may Allah forgive the Muslim's shortcomings in their Hajj and accept their Hajj and grant all of them Paradise! Ameen!

To conclude, I would like to highlight that the amount of sacrifice the pilgrims go through to perform Hajj is not equal to the Paradise. Even an inch of a place in Paradise is worth more than the heavens and the earth and beyond or nothing can purchase an inch in Paradise, but Allah grants the Paradise for pilgrims because of HIS Endless Mercy. HE is the Greatest, and HIS gift for HIS servants is also great!

Benefit of Hajj is heart cleansing

Cleaning is a daily issue for people. Everyone does some cleaning. One may do it more than another. A caring mother does the voluntary cleaning for the household more than others. Or wise parents in their parenting list, they keep the teaching of cleaning to their beloved children to prepare them with the best habits. On top of that, some places require extra professional cleaners to keep things clean and tidy. They spend lots of money for that. Therefore, who does not know the benefits of cleansing? Or about the importance of cleansing for health, safety, comfort and good life? But not many people

are aware of spiritual cleansing or cleaning of the heart. One cannot use any chemicals or detergents to clean the heart. No cleaning companies has ever discovered the heart cleaning agents or products. The creator of hearts, mankind and the rest of the creations knows the need for the heart cleaning, and HE has prescribed methods for that cleaning as well. One of the heart cleaning products HE has prescribed is called Hajj.

Here, one can ask, what is in the heart that needs cleaning? The answer is the heart has dirt as the body has. Dirt is disgusting, harmful, and polluting. As we need the cleaning outside the body, we also need the cleaning of disgust inside our hearts. There are so many dirts that pollute our hearts. They are such as, Shirk (Joining in faith others in the worship with Allah), or Kufr (Defiance of Allah), or Bid'ah (Innovations in the name of religion), or worshipping own cravings or desires (Hawa), or all the bad traits like anger, rage, greed, selfishness, cruelty, stinginess, arrogance, envy, unfairness in the heart, or all sorts of traits that are prohibited by Allah. This dirt we cannot see, but they damage our purity in hearts, and unless we clean them, we cannot get a place in Paradise because Paradise has no room for dirt, impurity and uncleanness. In one word, it is called sin that we are required to clean.

What is sin? Sin is the actions that disobey Allah. So whatever people do, say, think or feel, if those actions are prohibited by Allah, then doing it is called sin. For some sins one must directly seek Allah's forgiveness, repent sincerely to Allah and not doing it again. Another type of sin is, violating the rights of Allah's creation that Allah has prescribed. Such as violating human rights that Allah has prescribed, or violating parent's rights, or violating spouse's rights are also major sins. For those sins one must apologise and seek forgiveness both from Allah's creations as well as from Allah. Hajj teaches Muslims to prepare themselves for it. Well before Hajj, they should repent to Allah, they should mend their wrong ways, they should pay any dues to fellow human, they should fix any injustice they had done to another human, they should apologise to Allah and to other humans and seek forgiveness for the wrongdoing etc. Then they should travel for Hajj with sinless mind and actions, with Halal money.

Then in Hajj, they should avoid all the sinful actions as well as whatever actions Allah prohibited for them to attain a pure sinless state. Besides, in Hajj they should learn to reform themselves and they should learn to surrender to Allah completely, and they should perform the Hajj duties properly with begging to Allah for forgiveness of their sins. Then, for them Allah will turn with Great Mercy. Again, that Mercy of Allah has no equation. It is beyond Muslim's deeds in comparison of what they get from Allah. Allah forgives all their sins. Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said in a Hadis, narrated by Abu Huraira (May Allah be pleased with him):

وَعَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مِنْ حَجَّ فَلَمْ يَرْفُثْ وَلَمْ يَفْسُقْ رَجَعَ كَيْوُمْ
«وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ

“Whoever has done Hajj only for the pleasure of Allah, and in Hajj did not do any sexual activities and did not do any sinful activities, he (She) will return from Hajj as sinless as like the newborn (sinless) baby.”

[Muttafaqun A'laih]

The lessons we can learn from the above Hadis are:

- Forgiveness of sins in Hajj is not for granted,
- Forgiveness of sins in Hajj is conditional,
- Forgiveness of sins in Hajj has the primary condition that it must be done for the pleasure of Allah alone. In Hajj the intention for name or fame or selfish desires, or joining partners with Allah, will not qualify for the forgiveness of sins,
- Forgiveness of sins will be granted if a Muslim fully follows the rules and the methods of Hajj properly etc.

So, Muslims must not take the forgiveness of Hajj for granted. They must learn what factors ruin the grant of forgiveness and what factors increase the chance of Allah's forgiveness. Moreover, they must endeavour to perform their Hajj as properly as possible, and they must beg to Allah in Hajj to accept their Hajj and to forgive them. That part is the duty from the Pilgrims, but Allah has Placed duty on HIM to forgive HIS beloved servants who do their best. HE is there to forgive them, and they need to do their best. Allah knows that they are not perfect, and they need HIS Forgiveness. So, from Allah's part, the extreme generosity is there, and with that forgiveness, pilgrim's hearts get cleaned, they regain the state of purity, and they get qualified for Allah's Paradise etc. Is not it a great benefit of Hajj? Is Hajj not a divine cleansing program that cleans the heart and soul in a servant of Allah?

Benefit of Hajj in wealth

What is benefit in wealth? It is opposite to the harm of wealth. Wealth does not necessarily mean beneficial. Wealth may bring troubles as well. Below are a few examples:

- **Obsession:** Wealth may make some people obsessive about it. The more they have the more they will want. If there is no blessing in their wealth and in them, then wealth can motivate them to be stingy, to be crazy to occupy others wealth, to the bloodshed or even to kill people in the name of war to capture their wealth. Therefore, wealth is always not beneficial.
- **Corruption:** Greed for wealth may drive people to take bribe, to earn ill-gotten money, to steal other's money with power and position, to cause inhumane sufferings to many victims, to break the fabric of peace and harmony in the society. Some rich people are causing havoc in the society with their wealth by using their wealth for immoral ways. In this regard, all wealth is not beneficial.
- **Arrogance:** Sometimes wealth makes people arrogant. They lose their humility with wealth, they look other people down, they create rich and poor class to destroy the harmony, they spend money to establish their power over poor people, and their wealth with arrogance removes peace, and security in the society. As a result, victims curse them, pray for their destruction, and one day they face the natural justice and suffer with loss and humiliations. In this case, wealth is also not necessarily beneficial.
- **Loss of faith:** Sometimes wealth makes people feel that they are infallible. They think that they can buy everything with money. They may think that they do not need GOD, or GOD's blessings because they are already wealthy. Qaroon was a classic example in the Holy Quran during the time of Prophet Musa (Peace be upon him). Abu Lahab was another example. His wealth and big force made him to think that he could challenge Allah and HIS Holy Messenger with cruelties, but his wealth could not save him from Allah's punishment. Holy Quran describes it:

تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ ۚ مَا أَغْنَى عَنْهُ مَالُهُ ۖ وَمَا كَسَبَ ۚ

“May the hands of Abu Lahab perish, and he ‘himself’ perish! Neither his wealth nor ‘worldly’ gains will benefit him.”

[Al-Quran 111:1-2]

Furthermore, wealth is from Allah. Sometimes people work hard yet sustenance comes to them with difficulty. Or they fail in their projects and lose more than gaining. Or they earn but some calamity happens, and they lose their money or wealth. What is the main cause for that? The main reason for that is the absence of Allah's blessings in their wealth. But in other times, people gain more with little effort, and they say, “It's my lucky day!” or they earn a little, but it truly brings comfort and removes anxiety in them, or with a little they survive very well without calamities. What is the reason behind that? Again, the main reason behind that is Allah's blessings. When Allah blesses on something then it

brings comfort, it brings satisfaction, it brings the feeling of comfort, and it reduces anxiety and worry or the calamity etc.

Therefore, whatever wealth Muslims have should be blessed by Allah if they want comfort, happiness and rewards in next life. To be qualified for that blessing from Allah, Muslims must earn and spend their wealth in the ways Allah commanded for them. One of those prescriptions for blessing is to do Hajj and Umrah (Explanation of Umrah in chapter eight). One may ask, Hajj and Umrah costs me lots of money, how can they bring benefits in my wealth? If I say, why do you spend money in the business? Your answer will be, "To make more money." Similarly, spending money in the Hajj and Umrah is an investment to make more with the blessings of Allah. Who is the provider of all the sustenance or wealth? WHO controls the wealth to change hands? WHO restricts and extends sustenance for people? WHO controls all the wealth, life, and consumption for HIS Servants? It is Allah, and spending in Hajj and Umrah is like making an investment with Allah. Therefore, Muslims believe without doubt that Allah can bestow benefits and blessing in the wealth of pilgrims with HIS Mercy. Yes, this is the teaching of Islam. Let us look at a Hadis:

Ibn Mas'ud (May Allah be pleased with both) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

وَعَنِ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: تَابِعُوا بَيْنَ الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةِ فَإِنَّهُمَا يُنْفِيَانِ الْفَقْرَ وَالذُّنُوبَ كَمَا يَنْفِي الْكِيرُ خَبْثَ الْحَدِيدِ وَالْذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ

"Perform Hajj and Umrah one with another. Because it removes poverty and sins as bellows removes dirt from gold or silver."

[Tirmidi, Nasaeen]

So, the above Hadis clearly teaches few facts about the rewards of Hajj as following:

- The reward for Hajj is not only limited for the next life,
- The reward for Hajj also in this life like removal of poverty,
- The reward of removal of poverty is due to Allah's blessings,
- The removal of poverty means increase or benefits, or blessings in wealth without losing,
- If a Muslim spends for Hajj and Umrah, then Allah also increases their sustenance without making them poor, etc.

Therefore, Muslims should not worry too much if they spend money for Hajj and Umrah, that they would be poor! If they can afford for Hajj, then they should not delay with the fear of poverty. If they spend for Allah, then Insha Allah! Allah will increase HIS blessings (Barakah) on their income. As a result, the poverty will be removed from them. What an excellent deal! So, the benefits of Hajj in wealth are guaranteed. Allah provides sustenance for humans, and only HE can grant blessings in their wealth to make it beneficial for HIS servants, and HE can also save them from calamities, and losses of the wealth including their mental and emotional sufferings. This extra-ordinary benefit of Hajj is a great gift from Allah to HIS beloved Servants who do Hajj for HIS sake.

To avoid misunderstanding, I am not suggesting that poor people to perform Hajj for blessings in their wealth. This suggestion is only to those who can afford the Hajj journey, and the advice is that they should fear of poverty to spend money for Hajj and Umrah. They believe in the Hadis above, and as they can afford, they should take the journey, and insha Allah, Allah will bless in their wealth to turn beneficial for them. The poor people who can't afford the Hajj journey is not included in this Hadis. In other words, Islam never teaches poor people to become poorer, and that's why, Allah Merciful has made Hajj a compulsion on those who can afford financially.

Benefits in mental strength from Hajj

Mental strength is extremely necessary for everything. Whether success in any project in this present life, or for the success in the next life, mental strength is like a foundation to persevere, to continue, and to reach the desired goal. In education, business, sports, social responsibilities or any other activities, people need mental strength. If they are weak mentally, then everything else collapses. Life is full of challenges. Allah made this life full of challenges and has placed us in it to win over the challenges and for it, mental strength is necessary. Faith in Allah for example, is a challenge because it is tested again and again. Satan challenges it in human minds to bring confusion, doubts to weaken it. To endure with Faith, one needs mental strength to hold onto the faith with strong mind. Allah has created minds in humans, and HE has guided humans about how to keep it healthy and strong. Hajj is one of those divine therapies to train believers to be strong mentally to overcome struggles they face and to win eventually.

Hajj trains Muslims to be strong mentally. Hajj is a hard and risky worship. It requires sacrifice in terms of money, health and even with life. A Muslim with strong mind can take the journey. Muslims with weak mind cannot fulfil this duty. The total submission to Allah in everyday life is also a hard work. So many elements in life try to distract a true Muslim from his or her focus. These distractive things try to weaken the mind. Mind is like the bull's eye. If one can hit the eye, can weaken the beast. Similarly, if a mind of Muslim weakens, then his or her death of Imaan begins.

That's why "an Islamic submission journey" begins from the mind. If the mind submits to Allah, then the rest of the body follows it. After that if the mind is strong in submission, then nothing can resist the person from obeying Allah in daily life. With a strong mind, submission to Allah is live and strong. But without a strong mind, submission to Allah is like a patient dying without oxygen. Therefore, a strong mind is a fundamental need for a true believer, for a true Muslim. Hajj is one of the practices to develop a strong mind. Or the Hajj is a test to check whether a Muslim has strong mind or not. In Islam a weak mind has no value because weak minds cannot stand still when it is tested with trials and tribulations. A Muslim needs a strong mind to be steadfast, to stand straight in the obedience of Allah.

With a strong mind Muslim qualifies for Paradise because with it they can cross the rough road to reach the destination in their life journey. Holy Quran describes about it:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ أَسْتَقْمُوا تَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزُنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا
بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ٣٠

"Verily, in the case of those who say: 'Our Lord is Allah,' and further, (they) stand straight and steadfast, the angels will descend upon them (from time to time and suggest) 'You do not fear! And do not feel sad! But receive to the glad tidings of the Paradise, about which you were

promised."

[Al-Quran 41:30]

It is beyond doubt; to be steadfast, one must have a strong mind with unshaken determination and with a "can do" attitude. So, the trials and tribulations cannot blow away the Faith and conviction to Faith in a Muslim. Hajj is such a worship that helps Muslims to be strong in mind, to rely on Allah, to sacrifice dear things for the love for Allah and for the love for the Paradise. Muslims should think about these benefits of the Hajj, the endless benefits of the Hajj. Allah is All Wise, and in every worship, HE prescribed for Muslims, has huge wisdom behind it. If we try to understand those, then the taste in worship will increase without doubt Insha Allah!

Hajj is not like other worships that can be performed in the comfort zones. Such as 5 times prayers, one does not need to go far with a risky trip, or fasting, it can be done at home safely. Or giving charity,

if one has money, they can give away safely. Hajj is different. It takes a believer out of his/her home to travel far, and the whole travelling is with restrictions, self-control, patience, and with hard work. By all of it, the Hajj generates mental strength in pilgrims, and once they take the risk, with Allah's help they can do it successfully. It gives them confidence that if they follow Allah's commands in their life, with Allah's help they can achieve anything. Then, they can take this life test easily by putting their trust in Allah, and they can pass the test with Allah's help. Therefore, Hajj helps believers in boosting their mental strength to be resolute, hardworking and successful people in life.

In my case, being a complete Paraplegic without ability to stand or walk, confined in wheelchair, was suffering from mental weakness with the question in my mind, "Can I ever perform Hajj physically?" With that doubt, I sent persons twice to do Hajj on my behalf because I could afford financially. But due to the disability, I was not sure about my physical ability if I can practically go there to perform the Hajj. Interestingly, even though I sent persons twice to do the BODOL HAJJ for me, my heart was still not fully satisfied, and I wished if I could go there by myself. In 2022, the chance came. When Saudi authority assured and encouraged me that I must try, I found mental strength to take the journey. Alhamdulillah! Allah helped me with my mental strength and helped me to do so much that I could never have imagined. My Hajj was the biggest lesson for my own mental strength. Allahumma Lakash-Shukr (O Allah thankyou)!

Benefit of Hajj in economy

Hajj is not primarily intended for money but for the pleasure of Allah. But if it is done for the pleasure of Allah, then automatically comes all other necessary and beneficial things for Muslims and for all the mankind as well. Economy is a basic need for human. Allah has created humans with that need. When humans give priority in worshipping Allah unselfishly, then from it comes out pure economy. Worship of Allah is designed to free people from greed, selfishness etc in terms of wealth, finance or economy. Local or world economy is often polluted with greed and selfishness or unfairness. Worship to Allah removes greed and implants generosity and fairness in economy. That's why in Islam every worship, actions, and dealings must be done for the sake of Allah so that pollution will be replaced by fairness, justice, equality, and rights for all as Allah has commanded.

Hajj generates a great cycle of economy. It stimulates money to be distributed all over the world. When Muslims take initiatives for Hajj, it generates income for local Governments, Passport office, shopping centres, transport companies, different travel agencies, different forms of organizations involved in Hajj process, Airlines, Airports with tax provisions and so on. Everyone, every community and every country are directly or indirectly being benefitted from the Hajj as it is the biggest yearly world gathering. Hajj generates income for so many hundreds of thousands of families all over the world. Hajj stimulates money to be distributed among people, without keeping the money in their bank accounts to benefit only few people. Islam is for everyone's benefit because Islam is from the creator of everyone. Islam wants everyone to be better off, not just some people. The economy generated by Hajj is the proof of that. Hajj helps to circulate the money to many levels.

Hajj also teaches the Muslim world to generate economy with Islamic principle and that principle is, Allah's worship in economy is the first and the money is second. That makes sure the fairness, generosity in business, for the fear of Allah's punishment for corruption and unfairness in wealth distributions. Hajj does not teach Muslims to be stoic, to give up necessary wealth and comfortable life. It only encourages Muslims to be legitimate in their income and expenditure. Sustenance for humans is a necessity, and Allah provides the sustenance all around human to earn it, and to spend it in the right way. Right way prevents ill-practices in economic chain and does not give too much advantage over others. The aim for the righteous economy is to establish fair-sharing among people for everyone's benefits. Even in the Hajj, Allah has allowed the business if that is done fairly and in the righteous way. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ

“It is no sin for you to seek the bounty of your Lord (during Hajj).”
[Al-Quran 2:198]

So, Hajj generates a good economy and if Muslims are inspired by Hajj for good and righteous ways of economy then it is best for them in this life and in next life. Allah wants the best for HIS servants in this life and in the next life. So, any worship to Allah does not disadvantage HIS servants from looking for the required sustenance for them. Islam never teaches one way without holistic way. Islam is a balanced way of life which guides humans for their economic and spiritual needs. Islam never teaches people to starve or to suffer for their spiritual needs only. That balance of needs for both life is beautifully present in the guidance of Allah. That's why, Hajj has benefits in the world economy to provide comfort in living, as well as spiritual needs to receive comfort in the next life. This is a wonderful balance in Islamic worship. All the praise to Allah for making the Hajj beneficial in all aspects.

Benefit of Hajj in learning self-control

Self-control is a great strength in a person. It is as required in a person as a car require it. A car without control can be dangerous. It can cause accident killing the driver or passengers. Control is necessary to guide the car in a safe desired speed. Similarly, a person needs self-control to gain safety in his thoughts, feelings, and actions. A mind for example, needs self-control to be safe from over thinking or under thinking, or from wrong thinking to be saved from wrong decision. An emotion needs self-control to be saved from overwhelming un-necessary anger, rage, jealousy, suspicion and cruelty. It requires balance in feeling to be healthy and to bring the healthy outcome without danger. Self-control in behaviour or actions makes a person peaceful, harmonious, and with it he/she earns respect from others. Out of control persons are like out of controlled car that loses its direction causing havoc.

Allah created humans, and HE knows their strength and weaknesses. HE gave them guidance to learn self-control to be balanced and to earn respects in this world and in the next life. In the Sight of Allah, if someone has righteous personality due to self-control, is highly honourable. It tells us, how important the self-control is that Allah wants us to acquire. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْرَبُكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَيْرٌ

“Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware.”

[Al-Quran 49: 13]

Now, self-control is a very important quality in people's life. For it, Allah has provided guidance to train the righteous people to learn self-control. For example, fasting in the month of Ramadan is to train self-control in believers. For greater self-control, Allah has provided Hajj for the believers. In other words, Hajj is not only a mere journey to attain some spiritual qualities but, it has wide range of benefits to train believers for every goodness in their lives. That is the beauty of Allah's guidance. As Allah is All-Knowing, HIS guidance is all-rounder in providing all sorts of benefits.

Therefore, Hajj has another great benefit and that is self-control. This self-control means controlling one's desires from sinful actions. How is it done? It is done through surrendering oneself to the will of Allah and then guide oneself according to the command of Allah. That self-control makes one pious and moral and fit to receive Allah's forgiveness and Mercy. That self-control helps one to achieve Paradise by the Grace of Allah Merciful. Thus, self-control has short-term and long-term benefits. Fasting is also there as I mentioned before, for learning self-control. But Hajj is a more intensive program for learning self-control. Pilgrims practice the self-control to subdue their desires and

temptations by following Allah's order for few days in Hajj. This intensive program includes self-control in all levels such as:

- Self-control in mind,
- Self-control in emotion,
- Self-control in physical needs,
- Self-control in earning,
- Self-control in spending,
- Self-control in manners,
- Self-control in dealings,
- Self-control in worships etc.

Hajj is designed to purify believers from sinful thoughts, emotions or physical wants. It is also a practice of self-control in areas of giving other's rights and maintaining money in the righteous manner. If a Muslim can adopt all self-control that Hajj teaches, then he or she can be a true righteous person. Allah loves those who are righteous. The righteous people are the true representatives of Allah on the earth, and that's why HE loves them. HE loves them because they become blessings for themselves and for others due to their righteousness for their self-control. In other words, if any believer wants to be loved by Allah, must try to be a righteous person with self-control. Allah says about HIS love for the righteous in the Holy Quran:

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ

“Surely, Allah loves those who are Muttaqeen (Righteous through self-control).”

[Al-Quran 3:76]

Therefore, Muslims must learn self-control from Hajj. All the prohibition in Hajj during Ihram is for the training of self-control. These prohibitions are for Muslim's benefits. For example, pilgrims must practice self-control during the Hajj in the following things:

فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثٌ وَلَا فُسُوقٌ وَلَا جَدَالٌ فِي الْحَجَّ

“If anyone undertakes that Hajj duties, should avoid all sexual actions, all sinful actions and all sorts of quarrels.”

[Al-Quran 2:197]

A pilgrim must grab this self-control benefit from Hajj and must practice it in the other aspects in life to receive more benefits and rewards from Allah.

Benefit of humility in Hajj

Humility is a virtue, and everyone knows it. But in Islamic Faith, humility is an essential quality to receive Allah's Paradise. It is such a quality that believers must have in their mind, heart, manner, worship, and human communications. In a word, a servant of Allah must be humble. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هُوَنًا

“The 'true' servants of the Most Compassionate are those who walk on the earth humbly.”

[Al-Quran 25:63]

Even in the 5 times Salah (Prayers), if the servant is humble enough, will receive great success. That is Allah's promise:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَشِعُونَ

“Successful indeed are the believers: those who humble themselves in prayer.”

[Al-Quran 23:1-2]

Therefore, humility in Islam is not only a necessity to be a good person in this life, but it is an essential quality to receive Allah's Mercy. Due to the humility, a servant of Allah surrenders completely to the Will of Allah. Humility to Allah and to Allah's creation is very important, and it must be learned. Allah has provided different programs to learn that humility and Hajj is one of them. Muslims come to Hajj from all sorts of professions. Some are very rich, some are with very high status, some are from wealthy country, and some are from less wealthy country. But in Hajj gathering not one of them comes to display the following:

- His or her profession,
- His or her title,
- His or her country flag,
- His or her amount of money,
- His or her vanity,
- His or her family status,
- His or her power,
- His or her pride etc.

Instead, all of them come to display the following:

- Wear simple clothes,
- Do not display beauty,
- Do not display their race,
- Do not display their agreement,
- Do not display their achievement in this world,
- Do not compete with ego,
- Do not put other down,
- Do not show off their highness,
- Do not show their superiority etc.

In other words, they all gather in the Hajj in a most humble manner. They all blend into one identity and that is they are all most humble servants of Allah. Hajj teaches that humility, or Muslims must learn that humility from the pure Hajj practice. They should wash away their vanity, ego, family pride, pride for social status, competition with pride and so on. Because this false pride is the cause for their unhappiness, disharmony, disunity, chaos and destruction. They should feel as a humble servant of Allah as they perform Hajj in a humble manner. They should follow the Islamic teaching that any achievement or lacking achievement is a test from Allah. They must focus on passing the test without the show down of ego competition.

A person who does Hajj is called Hajji. In Hajj, a Hajji is a humble servant of Allah with uncombed hair and smelly body. A Hajji does Hajj without pride, extravagant dress or posh transport. A Hajji washes away all the pride in Hajj and appears as a truly humble servant of Allah. In a Hadis narrated by Ibn Omar (May Allah be pleased with both) that a man asked holy prophet (Peace be upon him):

«سَأَلَ رَجُلٌ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: مَا الْحَاجُ؟ فَقَالَ: الشَّعْثُ النَّفْلُ»

“O Messenger of Allah! Who is a Hajji?” Holy prophet (s.a.w) said: A person with (Due to Ihram in Hajj) uncombed hair and smelly body (Is a Hajji with humility).”

Therefore, Hajj teaches humility to Hajjies. Humility is a part of Imaan. Arrogance and vanity deprive people from Paradise. Allah loves humble servants. So, a Muslim Hajji must learn humility from Hajj and maintain that humility throughout the life to receive Allah's mercy and paradise. Therefore, Hajj teaches a benefit (Humility) that is essential for the success in both lives.

Benefit of learning brotherhood or sisterhood through Hajj

Why do humans fight with one another? Why do they find excuses to divide themselves in the name of race, culture, nationality and colour? Why do they not look for harmony? Why can't they look for common ground for peace? Before answering these questions, many people ask another question, and that is, "Why should I bother about other human?" They do not see reasons for unity, harmony and peace. They think that they are out there for survival and if their survival requires fighting, killing, eliminating one another, then they need to do it. I think, before convincing people that they need harmony, they need to know why they need harmony, and to do that they need to know who they are and what is their identity. Islam is the guidance from Allah WHO has created humans and the universe, and it is a complete guidance. In it, is the true answer for the question of why a human must care for another. For the answer, let us look at a verse from the holy Quran regarding human identity:

يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَنْكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

"O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may 'get to' know one another. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware."

[Al-Quran 49:13]

In the verse above, below are a few points that need to be highlighted:

- **Similar:** All humans are humans without distinction.
- **Same parents:** All humans are from the same parents (The first man Adam and the first woman EVE]. So, no human is alien to another. They all have same blood flowing in their bodies.
- **Same family:** Because they are from the same parents, they are basically one family. Their different land and nationality do not divide them from single family.
- **Brothers and sisters:** As they are all from the same parents Adam and Eve, they are human brothers and sisters. They must treat one another with care because it is their duty to look after as brother and sister.
- **Competition in best treatment:** The creator has created them to compete with one another with best treatment, with love and care, with kindness and compassion to be rewarded by GOD. If they do not, then they will fail in their life test.
- **Conclusion:** This is the answer why a human must care for another human, because they are bound to. It is not a choice but a compulsory duty to make the world a peaceful place and a harmonious relationship between humans. We find that answer in Islam from the Creator.

This concept of human brothers and sisters is the solution for so many problems in this world. Now, among most people this concept is absent. It is not taught throughout humanity, and it is not publicized well. Humans should know this truth to feel or think that they are not to kill one another but

to save one another. Hatred, fighting and destruction must turn into love, peace and looking after one another due to them being the same large human family. Islamic teaching is training believers to be like that, or to take one another as human brothers and sisters. I was taught that way, and my heart goes out for any human who is suffering. Even though a victim is not directly related with me, but due to the concept of human family, I cry for the victim, and I want to help if I can.

Hajj is a training for that brotherhood and sisterhood. According to Islamic teaching, humans are human brothers and sisters, and Muslims are the brothers and sisters in faith. Muslims are like too many beads in a garland. Holy Ka'ba is their heart, is their centre, is their point of inspiration, and is their point of unity to obey One GOD. That unites their hearts through divine faith. That faith unites them as one nation despite their different language, colour, race and nationality. Hajj is the practical demonstration of that Muslim brotherhood and sisterhood, and it is a successful one because of Allah's guidance and Mercy in it.

Unity in Muslim is a fundamental teaching of Islam. Unity among Muslims is not a choice given by Allah, but it is a compulsion on them. Muslims must feel united, try to be united and endeavour reconciliation if there is a slight sign of disunity. Allah says about Muslim unity in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْرَوْهُ فَأَصْلَحُوْهُ بَيْنَ أَخْوَيْكُمْ وَأَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

“The believers are a single brotherhood. So, make reconciliation between your two brothers: And fear Allah, that you may receive (HIS) Mercy.”

[Al-Quran 49:10]

Hajj is a perfect example of Muslim brotherhood and sisterhood. Muslims come to Hajj from all over the world from different backgrounds but with one identity. The identity is that they are brothers and sisters. For that spirit, millions of Muslims get along in a second, one gives another's right straight away, and one feels loved by another without doubt and so on. Why does it happen like a magic? It happens because of the spirit of Muslim brotherhood and sisterhood. Hajj reminds every year to the millions of Muslims that they are one single family, they are Muslim brothers and sisters. This reminder goes on and on, every year, so that Muslims do not forget. All of them try to be in Paradise. Their motto to be a paradise family.

Therefore, Hajj is very beneficial for Muslims. It teaches them the following things:

- That they must not fight,
- That they should only compete in righteousness,
- That they should not compete with enmity and hatred to become disunited,
- That Allah wants them to be united,
- That Allah made them one single family,
- So, if they disrespect Allah's wish then they will receive Allah's Wrath and Punishment.

May Allah guide world Muslims to follow that teaching to receive unlimited benefits in both lives. Ameen!

Benefit of Hajj in defeating racism

Defeating racism! It is not as simple as it sounds. It requires a masterpiece plan because racism is spread in all veins of every society. Some blessed people are saved from it, but the overwhelming majority people can be dragged into it easily if they do not guard themselves. The tendency of supremacy in different races is the main cause of racism. They dislike other races to prosper over them, and they hate other races if they see their prosperity. Even within a same country, different races may have clash against one another, and they may suffer from either superiority or inferiority

complex. Between different races and nations outside a country can be more intense, and one may try to dominate another. That domination may damage the balance in human relationship, the fair human rights, and can create disparity between nations and races. In this world, some people are having so many facilities, and others are deprived. Why does it happen? What justifies a race to have the super right in food consumption than another race? What justifies a race to waste food when another race is dying with hunger? It is racism from the feeling that my race has more rights on other races.

How can racism be defeated? How successful are the world organizations in defeating racism? How effective measures are in place to stop fighting and killing one race to another? Despite so much positive measures, we see on one hand, many good people are working hard to put out the fire of racism but on the other hand, racism fire is spreading out of control. Racism is one of the reasons for fighting and defence. If there was harmony between races, then there is no need to fight with expensive weapons to kill people. Killing and defending at the present time, is costing nations so much money that the world economy is suffering, the living cost is going out of people's reach, the nutrition that is required by our human brothers and sisters are beyond reach. How can we defeat the racism if we do not fix our attitudes? Until we accept humanity as one large family, and unless we take responsibility for one another, racism will never die. Therefore, to defeat the racism, we need the right education and the right demonstration of brotherhood and sisterhood in our practical lives. Islam provides the right education as well as the right practices through 5 times prayers in congregation and through the largest world assembly of Hajj.

Racism is a disease that is spread all over the world. Satan instigates people to feel nasty against another human. Racism is one of those norms to feel nasty about others. Racism is a feeling that makes one feel his/her race is superior and another race inferior. This feeling is the root of many more evils such as:

- Due to racism one race dishonours another race,
- Due to racism one race gives preference to one race instead of other races,
- Due to it, one race justifies unfair actions against another race,
- Due to racism, one race treats another race very badly or unfairly,
- Due to racism, some racists are extremists, and they are violent to other races,
- Racism removes love between races,
- Racism removes respect between different races,
- Racism promotes abuse, torture, violation of human rights,
- Racism incites hatred between people and ignites fights and destructions,
- Racism destroys harmony and peace among people etc.

Islam acknowledges racism as a spiritual disease due to ignorance. Islam does not give preference to a race over another race based on language, colour or nationality. Islam is the name of peace and Islam teaches peace by removing the racism. Islam only encourages people to compete with righteousness, because the more righteous they are the more peace and best treatment there will be. For example, forgiveness is part of the righteousness. The more people will compete forgiving one another is better for the peace and security for them. Holy Quran teaches mankind not to practice racism with reasons. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

تَبَّأْيَهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارِفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ
اللَّهِ أَتُقْنَعُكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

“O Mankind! WE have created you from a single (pair) of male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another (Not to be racist but to complement). Surely, the most honourable of you, in the Sight of Allah is (He who is) the most righteous of you.”

In this verse above, Allah has made clear that mankind is one family, originated from the same parents. So, how can they be racist against their own blood? How can they be nasty against own family member? People do this out of ignorance. Hajj is a demonstration to eliminate racism. Hajj creates a platform to embrace all colours, all languages, and all nations into one and into the submission of One Allah. What a beautiful phenomenon! What a beautiful yearly reminder! So, Muslims should practice the anti-racism spirit, and they should spread it to all other human beings embracing them as member of the great one human family. Muslims should learn and practice the teaching from Hajj to treat each other with respect. That will benefit everyone.

Benefit of Hajj for resolving world Muslim's problems

When there are problems, there must be the solution. Otherwise, human suffering will grow like wild mushrooms. Like every other human, Muslims are humans too. They are prone to making mistakes, or misguided temporarily by wrong notions, discourse between them, and suffering from many problems. There are over billions of Muslims in this world. Some are in Muslim countries, and some are as minorities in other countries. Some are individuals, or some are with communities, and some are in Muslim counties. As humans they face a few challenges such as, their own wrong desires, or their ignorance, or their mixing up between religion and cultures, or the Satans. Where there are challenges, there are problems. As the world people have problems, Muslims also have problems within.

Are problems a bad thing? Not necessarily. Allah created humans to test them through problems and has guided them to obey HIS guidance to solve their problems. Here is the test whether they follow Allah's guidance in problem solving or not. Allah has placed so many lessons for Muslims in Hajj for their problem solving. For their benefit, they need to ponder about the teachings of Hajj, they need to remind one another to follow those teachings, and they need to practice those in their day to day lives. Hajj offers solutions, not only for Muslim individuals but for the entire Muslim Ummah in this world. The question is, from a vast ocean how many Muslims are taking for solving world Muslim problems. Are they taking few drops, or few cups, or a river size or more than that. Allah is Extremely Generous, and HE Has prescribed Hajj with ocean like lessons for our benefits. If Muslim world takes them, then they can inspire the rest of the humanity in problem solving.

As I mentioned before, in this world selfish desires, Satan and some wicked people are continuously trying to divide Muslims, to create misunderstanding among Muslims, to create fighting among Muslims. Sometimes this division is tried in the name of sects, or in the name of Aqedah, or in the name of nationality and so on. Hajj is playing a great role in minimizing the division. Hajj is helping Satan's plans to be weakened. Hajj is providing fuel of inspiration for Muslim unity. Hajj is encouraging Muslims to forgive one another to reduce disunity. Hajj is uniting families and communities when they say goodbye to their members going to Hajj and so on.

Hajj is like a sticky glue that unites millions of Muslims into the same platform singing the name of same Allah. Hajj is that venue where Muslims do not fight with little difference rather, they unite themselves in the main issues for example:

- They believe in one Allah and that is the main point of unity,
- They believe in next life, and that is another main point of unity,
- They believe in Holy Quran as divine guidance and that is also a main point of unity,
- They believe in Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) as their role model, which is also a main point of unity,
- They all follow the same Ka'ba and that is also a main point of unity,
- They pray 5 times and that is also a main point of unity

- And they gather for Hajj in the same place, which is another point of unity, etc.

So, Hajj teaches Muslims to focus on main issues and to find reasons to be united and not to be disunited. If Muslim world can focus on the training of unity in main issues through the practical lessons from Hajj, then they will progress rapidly such as:

- They can increase co-operation between one another,
- They can increase inter-Muslim business and progress,
- They can fight the poverty in Muslim countries together,
- They can establish Islamic banks to benefit Muslims and non-Muslims all,
- They can unitedly enjoin good and forbid evil in this earth,
- They can together bring lights to the poor people in this world,
- They can assist one another to righteousness and the whole world can be inspired by them, etc.

If we think more about the benefit of Hajj, it blows our mind away finding that how many benefits Allah has put in it for Muslims and for mankind. Allah has made the Holy House a centre of blessing and benefits for all Muslims as well as for the entire mankind. We just need to study about those beneficial lessons of Hajj, and we should practice them in Muslim world to solve problems to achieve benefits in this life and in next life. Holy Quran states:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لِلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَّكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

“Verily, the first House (of worship) appointed for men was that (one) at Makkah: Full of blessing, and of guidance for all beings.”

[Al-Quran 3:96]

Chapter 4: History of Hajj

Allah appointed the first House for Hajj

The Sacred House in Makkah was not accidental. It was according to the plan of All-Wise Allah. As HE planned for the universe, for all the creations, for entire humankind, for this life and for the next life, HE has planned for the Hajj as well. For the Hajj, HE planned to make a Centre in the centre of the Earth, right below the Worship House on 7th heaven for the angels, for the gathering of believers in One God. HE created humans for worshipping HIM, but did not force it upon them, gave them freedom of choice, but provided everything for them as guidance. Hajj is also according to the plan of Allah for guiding the mankind. For Hajj, and for the worship to one Allah, HE decided to build a centre in Makkah, the centre of monotheism, for believers to worship in there, and then will spread the message of One God all over the world.

That centre was so necessary for the purpose of spreading the message of Allah to mankind in every corner of the earth. Allah's plan is always perfect, and the first House of worship in Makkah has been serving the purpose perfectly. That first house was gifted to the mankind with extra-ordinary benefits and specialties from Allah. Holy Quran states:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لِلَّذِي بِبَيْتِهِ مُبَارَّكًا وَهُدًى لِلْعَالَمِينَ ٩٦ فِيهِ عَائِتُ بَيْتٍ مَّقَامٌ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ ٩٧ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ عَامِنًا ٩٨ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا
وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Verily, the first House of (worship) appointed for men was that (one) at Bakkah (Makkah): Full of blessing, and of guidance for all beings. In it are clear Signs; the station of Ibrahim; whoever enters it attains security; Hajj is a duty that men owe to Allah-those who can afford the journey;”

[Al-Quran 3:96-97]

The special aspects about that Sacred House that were gifted by Allah have highlights in the above verse. Such as:

- **It was the first house of worship in this earth.** No human had planned for it, nor imagined the purpose of it. Allah knows the purpose of creating humans (To worship HIM), and HE decided that the first house of worship would be in Makkah. The House and the venue are Allah's choice.
- **Allah has gifted HIS blessing in that Sacred House,** so that it will never have any negative impact in humans, rather only positive impact in faith, well-being, spirituality etc in this life and in the next life. Only Allah can bless, and Allah has blessed HIS House (Baitullah=House of Allah). So, whoever will visit this House, worship in there, will do other duties in there will receive extra blessing from Allah. For example, praying one Rakah Salah in Baitullah in Makkah, the reward is multiplied by 100,000 times.
- **Allah had the Sacred House as a guidance centre for the entire mankind.** The guidance in there is open for all. Allah did not limit the guidance only for a race but has given the freedom to all humans to choose the House of Allah in Makkah for divine guidance. This Sacred House of Allah was set up purely to practice worshipping Allah only. It is built like a heart that will pump blood all over the body. Similarly, this centre will spread the message of worshipping one Allah to all over the world. This is not a centre like a club, office, or game but a centre for true Guidance to be successful in the life test. The guidance to go to Paradise is the biggest need for humans and this Sacred House is placed to serve that biggest service.

- **Allah made this centre to be proof of truth about true faith.** Mankind needs to be united in the true faith without division, but human desires always played a role to create new faith to disunite humanity. This centre was built by Prophet Abraham (Peace be upon him) by Allah's instruction, and his footprint is still there as a proof that Ibrahim (peace be upon him) was a messenger of Allah to teach monotheism, and to build the place of worship for the monotheists including him and his family. Allah kept the proof alive for thousands of years and those who visit there can see that by their own eyes to be assured that they are in the right faith with right guidance.
- **Another extra-ordinary aspect around this Sacred House is that Allah made its surroundings a safe area** in which harming one another, killing one another, or fighting one another is prohibited. This area is with total safety, and in all ages including the days of ignorance people respected that holiness around it. Outside that sacred boundary, people used to loot, rob, fight, kill or harm but within that HARAM (Holy) area, no one dared to do wrong thing. It is possible because the Almighty Allah has made it sacred and made human hearts to respect it.
- **Finally, Allah has made Hajj gathering around that Sacred House, and HE commanded to Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) at first to make the announcement for Hajj to the mankind.** Since then, Hajj gatherings keep going. Allah has put love in numerous hearts to love the Sacred House, and the love to perform the Hajj. That's why we see that millions of pilgrims are circling around the sacred House of Allah in Hajj season, and all year around for Umrah. The Sacred House is not unattended even for a second. That is because of Allah's perfect planning.

Let us address a question here. Why was the city called Bakkah? Some reasons are as below:

- It is the famous name for Makkah.
- In that city tyrant's shoulders used to break and honourable people's head used to bow down,
- In this city people used to be crowded,
- In this city people get mixed up even often women pray in front row and men pray in rows behind etc. *[Ibn Kasir, explanation of 3:96]*

As I mentioned before, in this House, there are special signs available and one of those are Maqam e Ibrahim. Maqam e Ibrahim is a Stone on which Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) stood to build the high walls of the sacred House more than 4000 years ago. So that if anyone can see the proof that he was a Muslim and Muslims are truly following him. Another special sign in that sacred House is, that Allah made it secured since it was built. Allah made prohibited to shed blood in that area or to fight or to harm one another in that respected, safe and secured area. Even in the age of ignorance, people used to respect it as secured place. Even they did not take revenge in this place from the killer of their own father. In this place, not only human is safe and secured, but it is made secured for others as well. For example:

- In there, hunting is not allowed,
- In there, chasing the hunt is not allowed,
- In there, scaring animal is not allowed,
- In there, cutting trees is not allowed,
- In there, cutting grass is not allowed *[Ibn Kasir explanation 3:96]*

People used to fight, rob, and kill outside the secured area but not inside the secured area. It is a miracle that Allah made it sacred and people since then are keeping it sacred, secured and peaceful. Allah reminds mankind about it in the Holy Quran:

﴿ أَوَلَمْ يَرُوا أَنَّا جَعْنَا حَرَمًا عَامِنَا وَيُتَخَطَّفُ الْنَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ ﴾

“Then, do they not see that WE have made a secured sacred place (at Makkah), and that men are being snatched away from all around them?”

[Al-Quran 29:67]

Hajj needed a special sacred Place with divine security, Signs and noble purpose. Humanly no-one can make it possible. Allah has all the power to make it happen. So, for the purpose of the noble Hajj as a noble worship of Allah, Allah made a Sacred centre for worship and gathering. Together as the Sacred House, and the noble action centre made Hajj a special performance. Its dignity and popularity became the highest, and the Hajj (Or Umrah) has become the busiest holiest gatherings of all.

Allah chose prophet Ibrahim to build that House

No human had any idea about building the Sacred House in Makkah. It was humanly impossible to know the purpose of Almighty Allah. Allah knows everything but humans do not. Time to time, Allah has chosen HIS Messengers, sent revelation to them to inform them about Allah's plans, and then commanded them to do certain things as Da'wa (Invitation to worship Allah). Therefore, the first man Adam was a prophet, and the last messenger of Allah was Muhammad (peace be upon him). It was Allah's decision whom HE would honour for building the Sacred House in Makkah. HE chose HIS messenger Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) when his (Ibrahim) family, community and government wanted to humiliate him for worshipping One God, and even they committed the worst cruelty by throwing Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) in the big fire to burn him alive. Allah not only saved HIS prophet from the fire but gave him the high honour in HIS Sight as well as the sight of mankind forever. Allah chose prophet Ibrahim to be the builder of the first Sacred House of worship in Makkah to start the Hajj. Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and his family made the huge contribution to build a new city as Makkah that would be the mother of all cities (Ummul Qura). The Sacred House area never sleeps, and it is busy with worshippers, with those who circle around it in 24 hours a day. May Allah send peace on the family of Ibrahim (peace be upon him), and on Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his family.

Ibrahim (peace be upon him) is a very well-known prophet of Allah in this world. Muslims, Jews and Christians, all know him and respect him. Muslims follow him as a great role model. Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) built the sacred House in Makkah and started the Hajj by the command of Allah. Muslims visit the Sacred House to follow the teachings of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and the teachings of all other messengers of Allah. Allah chose Ibrahim (peace be upon him) to lead the mankind in the teaching of Tawhid (monotheism). His life was extra-ordinary. In building the Holy House and in Hajj duties, his history and his family history are vivid. We shall see that in each duty of Hajj, all the way through the discussion of some duties in this book.

Before choosing Ibrahim, Allah tested him through so many trials. He was pushed out from his own family in Iraq for his faith in one Allah yet went through it happily for Allah's sake. He was thrown into the fire in Iraq by the tyrant Government, yet it did not shake his faith in one Allah and Allah saved him. He left his motherland and was inviting people to worship one Allah around Arab areas. Then in old age, Allah gave him a son named Ishmael and then Allah asked him to drop his wife and baby son in a hill, in a non-populated area in Makkah without food, drink, house and security. Allah provided water, food and drink for them miraculously. Through his family the new city was established, the mother of all cities and that city is called Makkah.

Later, Allah asked him to sacrifice his own son for the sake of Allah, when his son was around 6-8 years old. He attempted with sincerity, but Allah saved his son from it and replaced his son by a ram.

That's how Allah tested Ibrahim (peace be upon him) again and again to promote and prepare him to be the role model leader of monotheism. When he passed all the tests, Allah chose him as the leading role model for Tawhid and to be the founder of the Holy House in Makkah for Hajj, to continue the Hajj in all ages until the doomsday. Allah reveals it in the Holy Quran:

وَإِذْ أَبْتَأَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَاتَّمَهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا

“And (remember) when, Ibrahim was tried by his Lord with Certain Commands; those he fulfilled.

HE (his Lord) said: I will make you an Imam (guide or example) to the nations.”

[Al-Quran 2:124]

Allah chose Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and his older son Ismael (peace be upon him) to be the honourable founders of the Historical House of Allah in Makkah, around which millions of Muslims gather for Hajj every year. Allah reveals it in the Holy Quran:

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ

“And (remember) when Ibrahim and Ismael raised the foundation of the House----.”

[Al-Quran 2:127]

Allah saved one of the founders with HIS Divine power

When human power ends, they cry to Allah for HIS Power. Allah's power has no end and no limit, but human power has end and limit. The way Allah can save, no human can do it. Allah controls the heavens and the earth, and every creation is HIS servants, and they obey HIM willingly or unwillingly. So, if HE commands for something, it happens. For humans that sort of happening is beyond their capacity, and we call it miraculous. The story of Allah's messenger is to give lessons to the mankind. The challenges Allah's messengers go through in life is to teach the power of Allah, and how Allah is the ultimate guardian of humans, and why humans must surrender their wills to Allah for their ultimate salvation, peace, safety, and comfort.

Allah chose two founders for building the Holy House in Makkah. One was Ibrahim (Peace be upon him), and another was his beloved son Ismail (peace be upon him). Ismael was young when he helped his father build the Sacred house, and he received prophethood later. He was also commanded by Allah to take care of Allah's House during his lifetime, and he did. When Ismael was a baby, his mother and him went through a special test. His dear father was also tested by Allah to leave baby Ismael and his Hon Mother Hajjera (Peace be upon her) in the desert without food, water, companions etc. Baby Ismael was struggling without water, and his mother was struggling to find water. In that extra-ordinary situation, when there was no help available from any human, Allah Almighty saved baby Ismael with HIS Divine power, so that baby Ismael would grow up as a young man to help his dear father to build the Sacred House of Allah. Everything was going ahead according to Allah's plan, but with trials and tribulations and with solutions Allah has provided lessons for the mankind.

The story is, Hon Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) brought out his wife Hazera and baby son Ismael according to Allah's order to a hill, where Baitullah (House of Allah) was built later. It was desert land, no people used to live there. The hill was of Jungle. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) left his wife and baby with a few dates and a little water. Wife Hazera asked him when she saw him going, “O Allah's friend! Where are you going, leaving us in scary desert area, where we have no friends or companions?” Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) did not answer. Then again Hon Hazera asked: “O beloved one of Allah! With whose protection are you leaving us here?” Ibrahim (peace be upon him) then answered: “With the protection of Allah.” Then Hon Hazera asked: “O friend of Allah! Is it an order on you from Allah?” Then Ibrahim (peace be upon him) said: “Yes! It is an order on me from Allah.” Hearing the answer

Hon Hazera said: "Ok then! You go! Allah will never destroy us. We rely on HIM and HE is our source of protection." Hon Hazera sat alone holding her beloved baby. [Tafsir Ibn Kasir explanation of 2:127]

After going out of the sight of Hon Hazera, Ibrahim (peace be upon him) made supplication to Allah for food and drink for his family. Then he left them with Allah's care. Few dates and water finished soon. She was too hungry and thirsty, but her baby Ismael was in serious condition without water or milk. She began to search for water desperately. She climbed mount Safa then mount Marwa looking for water without giving up. During her running for searching water, she was making Dua to Allah for saving them from the danger. Then she heard a sound from Angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) beside where the Zamzam well situated. Angel asked her: Who are you? She answered: I am Hazera, Mother of Ibrahim's son Ismael. Angel asked again: With whom Ibrahim (peace be upon him) left you in this un-inhabited Jungle? She said: With Allah. Angel said: In that case, Allah is enough. Then Hon Hazera (peace be upon her) said: O unseen person! I have heard your sound, but will it help me anyway?

Angel Jibrael rubbed the land with his heel and soon came out water like a spring. Hon Hazera filled up her water container quickly. She then quickly made soil wall around the water to make sure water did not run like a river. She made it like a well. That well is the Zamzam well. Millions of pilgrims drink the blessed water from that well every year. Holy prophet (peace be upon him) said:

May Allah be kind on Ismael's mother! If she did not put wall around, then the spring could have turn into a river. [Tafsir Ibn Kasir, explanation of 2:127]

Then she drank from it and made her baby Ismael drink from that as well. Then she milked her baby as well. Angel also told her: 'You be sure! Allah will not destroy you! Allah will appoint this baby and his father to build a sacred House here.' [Tafsir Ibn Kasir, explanation of 2:127]

This is the brief story of how miraculously Allah provided water for Ibrahim's family in a place, where there was no sign of water and if Allah did not save them, no one could save them. Allah saved them to build a history for the mankind to learn lessons from it.

Allah guided how to build the house

Baitullah means Allah's House. The first House in Makkah was built for the special purpose. It was built to last forever without changing the site or location. Due to the changes in time, the House was not going to be shifted. The Sacred House had other aspects with it as well such as safety and blessings of Allah. It required certainty, exactness, regulations around it to serve the purpose of Allah in all ages. It had the certain target and purpose to suit the original plan of Allah All-Wise. That's why, Allah did not leave the Sacred House building in the hands of people, but HE guided them all the way through. Allah revealed to his Messenger Ibrahim (peace be upon him) about what to do, when to do, and how to do. When Allah directly guides for HIS Sacred House, imagine how HE blesses in it. HIS full blessing in that Sacred House has made it a powerful magnet of winning hearts and guiding hearts with illuminated light from HIM. That's why, whoever goes there, finds peace in their heart.

Let us go through, in this short section about the story of Allah's guidance to HIS prophet Ibrahim how to build the Sacred House. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) came from Syria to join his son Ismael in Makkah.

Father said to his son: "**O Ismael! There is an order on me from Allah.**"

Ismael said: "**Perform that order that you are commanded by Allah, my Dad!**"

Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) said: "**But you have to be with me in it my son!**"

The son said: "**Labbaik O Father!**"

Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) said: "**In this place we have to build a House of Allah.**"

The son said: "**Very well O father!**" [Tafsir Ibn Kasir, explanation of 2:127]

In the conversation above, between the father and son, we find a few excellent manners. It is good to highlight them for our inspiration. They are as following:

- Prophet Ibrahim did not do anything from his own, but he was doing things according to Allah's commands. HIS loyalty to Allah is an inspiration, and all believers should obey Allah.
- Both Father and Son were obedient servants to Allah. They had no questions or hesitations in obeying Allah's commands. That is called completely surrendered Muslims, and all Muslims must be like them obedient to Allah's commands in everything in life.
- Father did not force the idea to his son. That is another inspiration that instead of forcing, there should be practice of mutual consultation. Father consulted with his son, and the son responded to it positively. So, even though it is Allah's order, we should consult with our family or friends and do the action together as it is OUR combined duty. That etiquette unites our hearts in a positive way.
- The polite words from the father and son are heart touching. They were doing their duties ordained by Allah with love between them. Lovely father was inspirational for his excellent etiquette and the son had admirable manner towards his dear father with love and respect. That is how a believer's manner should be. Allah is most gentle, and HE loves gentleness in our manner.

So, Allah guided HIS messenger in miraculous ways in building the Holy House. For example:

- **Boundary of the house:** Allah sent cloud over Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and a sound instructed him saying:
“O Ibrahim! As much the shade of the cloud is spread, that much land you take for the boundary of the Holy House.” [Tafsir Ibn Kasir, explanation of 2:127]
- **The black Stone in the corner:** Son Ismael went to look for a good Stone as his father instructed him. He brought a good Stone, but he found that his father already placed a Stone in there. The son asked:
‘Father! Who brought this Stone?’ Ibrahim (peace be upon him) said: **Angel Jibreel (peace be upon him) has brought it from the heaven as Allah ordered him.’** [Tafsir Ibn Kasir, explanation of 2:127]

So, the House was built according to Allah's plan. Allah guided his messenger Ibrahim (peace be upon him) to do the job. Everything went by Allah's plan. Allah wanted it so that Hajj would begin for the world Muslims. So that place would be full of benefits and virtues. Therefore, it makes a very important issue clear, and that issue is: Holy Ka'ba or Hajj was not an invention of any human. Makkah was not a discovery by men like many cities or countries. Makkah, Holy House and Hajj all were Allah's special plan and Allah guided HIS messenger all the way through. Therefore, the whole process was divine, holy and a materialization of Allah's order. That's why the Holy Ka'ba and Hajj has been maintained as Holy for the blessings of Allah Almighty.

Supplications of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him)

Supplications to Allah is a necessity for humans. The main reason for it is that humans need help, and Allah has Power to give. Humans are made with limitations, and Allah has the power to fulfil their limitations. So, this seeking help from Allah and receiving help from Allah is an essential part of human life. Allah sends holy prophets to bring this issue out, to highlight it to their community that they should accept Allah as their provider, and they should obey Allah for their success, and they should seek Allah's help for guidance as well as for all other needs. Often, people are misguided

about unseen Allah, and they turn to other false gods for help instead of asking Allah for help. Holy messengers of Allah teach people to seek help from the true GOD Allah. In the Quranic stories about the messengers of Allah, their supplication to Allah is a permanent feature to lessons. The same with Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) that he made supplication to Allah, and Allah has accepted his supplications. His acceptance of supplications is a true manifestation that Allah is the true grantor of supplications (Dua), and humans should make dua only to Allah as HE is the Only True GOD with full capacity to fulfil any need of HIS creations. In this chapter, we shall look at some supplications that Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) made to Allah, and how Allah accepted his supplications and has provided what Ibrahim asked in his dua. These supplications and acceptance are recorded in the True Quranic stories for the guidance of mankind. Let us look at few examples.

Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) was a messenger of Allah. He supplicated before and during building the Holy House and Allah accepted his supplications. Let us see a few supplications from him that has been quoted in the Holy Quran.

Supplication for food, drink and company:

He left his wife and baby son alone in the Jungle surrounded by desert land where no food or drink was available. He prayed to Allah as following:

**رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ
فَاجْعُلْ أَفْدَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ تَهُوَى إِلَيْهِمْ وَأَرْزُقْهُمْ مِنَ الشَّمَرِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ**
٣٧

“O our Lord! I have made some of my children to live in the valley without (any) cultivation, to be near YOUR sacred House (Ka’ba); so that, our Lord, they may establish regular Prayer: So, fill the hearts of some from among men with love towards them, and feed them with fruits: so that they may offer thanks (to YOU).”

[Al-Quran 14:37]

Due to his supplication, the immediate provision was Zamzam water. Then Allah brought some families from Yemen to live with his family as a community. Those families were businesspeople. Allah provided for them good sustenance. Meat from hunting, fruits from trade, water from Zamzam well etc. For his supplication and acceptance by Allah, still now, the Stoney Makkah city is full of sustenance with good economy. Allah is the provider of sustenance, and we should ask HIM to grant us the best provisions as prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon his) did.

Supplication for his family:

When he was putting foundation of Holy House in Makkah with his son, he supplicated for him and for his family to be good Muslims. Allah accepted that supplication as well. His son Ismael was chosen as messenger of Allah by Allah. The supplication is as following in the Holy Quran:

**وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ
١٢٧ رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أَمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ**

“And (remember) when Ibrahim and Ismael raised the foundation of the House (with this prayer): ‘Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us; Truly, YOU are the All Hearing, the All Knowing.’ “Our Lord! Make of us Muslims, bowing to YOUR (will); And of our children a Muslim people, bowing to YOUR (will);”

[Al-Quran 2:127-128]

Allah accepted his supplications. His older son Ismael (peace be upon him) was made a prophet, his younger son Ishaq (Isaak) was made a prophet, his grandson Yaqoub (Jacob) was made a prophet, his

great grandson Yusuf (Joseph) was made a prophet and that tradition continued until the last prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was from the progeny of prophet Ismael (Peace be upon him).

Supplication for the last prophet:

When he was building the Holy House with his son Ismael, he prayed for particularly a prophet from that city, from that community, in their language, to come and complete his mission, his da'wa for Islam, and to worship Allah alone without joining partners to HIM. That specific prayer also came true. Allah made his older son Ismael (peace be upon him) a prophet and from the family of Ismael (peace be upon him), Allah sent Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a messenger from his progeny, from Makkah city with the language of people in Makkah. The supplication is quoted in the Holy Quran:

رَبَّنَا وَأَبْعَثْتُ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَنْذِلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَذَابًا وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ ۝
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝ ١٢٩

“Our Lord! Send among them a messenger of their own, who shall rehearse YOUR Signs to them and instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom, (cleanse) and provide relief for them; Truly, For YOU are the Almighty, the All Wise.”

[Al-Quran 2:129]

Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **“I am the result of the supplication of my father** (spiritual role model of Tawhid-Monotheism) **Ibrahim** (peace be upon him), **the good news given by Hon Isa** (Jesus. peace be upon him), **and the true dream of my mother.”** [Cited in Tafsir ibn Kasir, explanation of 2:129]

Supplication for making the city safe and secured:

He prayed to Allah to make the city as “baladan aamenah” a city with peace and security. Allah accepted his supplication and made the city peaceful and secured. Allah made an area which include Holy House and some surrounding as “Harem” secured. In this area killing, blood shedding, robbing, fighting etc are not allowed. Even in the age of ignorance people used to respect the harem and everyone used to enjoy peace and security in that area. Even now, the one enters the harem area is safe. The supplication was as following:

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيْ أَجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ عَامِنًا ۝ ۳۵

“And (remember) Ibrahim said: ‘O my Lord! Make this city (Makkah), one with Peace and security.”

[Al-Quran 14:35]

Supplication to be saved from idol worshipping:

In the same supplication as above for safety, Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) included supplication for saving him and his children from idol worshipping. He was against idol worshipping all along in his life. He experienced how people in his birthplace, Idol worshipping has misguided the nation including his dear father and other family members. With this supplication, the lesson is that righteous Muslims must make supplication to Allah for the guidance of their family members along with their efforts to educate their children. Because without Allah's help, no efforts can be successful. The supplication was as below, quoted in the Holy Quran:

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيْ أَجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ عَامِنًا وَاجْبُنِي وَبَنِي أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَصْنَامَ ۝ ۳۵ رَبِّ إِنَّهُنَّ
أَضْلَلْنَ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ

“And Ibrahim said: ‘O my Lord! Make this city, one with Peace and Security; and save me and my sons from praying to Idols. O my Lord! They (Idols) have truly led many among mankind astray:”
[Al-Quran: 14:35-36]

Allah accepted this dua too. Allah made his children prophets who would teach mankind that idol worshipping was wrong. May Allah bless on Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and his progeny, Ameen!

Dua for the Hajj duties

Dua is the beautiful thing for communication between Allah and HIS servants. Allah loves Dua from HIS Servants and HE loves to grant Dua. If HIS servants do not make dua to HIM HE dislikes. Dua for everything is the teaching of Islam. What does it demonstrate? It demonstrates that we are seeking Allah’s guidance, and blessings in everything. It is a Sign of total submission to Allah. Dua teaches us that we must always depend on Allah’s guidance and help. It also teaches us that receiving Allah’s guidance through dua brings success and saves us from the failure. Allah’s messengers are examples of making dua to Allah for everything. Even though they knew that Allah was going to guide them, yet they made dua for it. It is an excellent etiquette every Muslim must have.

Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) was also a perfect example of making dua. He prayed to Allah, and Allah has mentioned some of the examples of Ibrahim’s (Peace be upon him) dua in the Holy Quran for the lessons for mankind. Dua also represents the love between the servant and the Lord. Servant loves to keep asking for things, and the Lord loves to respond with love. In this life, even the loving parents get annoyed sometimes if their children ask for too many things from them. They get annoyed for their limitation in giving but Allah loves giving. Allah doesn’t have any limitation, and Allah has more love for HIS Servants. Allah loves to give every good thing for HIS creations. So, in the life of Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) we see more and more dua to Allah, and here we are discussing about his dua to Allah for the guidance about the Hajj that should be performed. He wanted to learn how exactly Allah loves the Hajj to be done. Hajj is for Allah, and for Allah’s pleasure, and it is ALLAH Who could guide the way as HE liked.

So, the foundation was placed, and the wall had been built to make the Holy House. Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) and his son (Ismail), both were making supplication to Allah. What a style! What an etiquette! No other way of celebrating, no other way of enjoyment for the great accomplishment, but to pray to Allah to accept their deed and to grant more righteous things for attaining everlasting happiness in Paradise! They were doing their jobs when they were making their supplications. They did not just sit down doing nothing and asking Allah to get things done through angels, but they showed the proper etiquettes of dua, and that is, “Work hard along with dua.” The best dua is making effort and asking for Allah’s help and guidance. Holy Quran describes their dua about the guidance of how Hajj duties should be performed:

وَأَرْنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَثُبْ عَلَيْنَا ۝ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْتَّوَابُ الْرَّحِيمُ

“(Our Lord!) And show us our places for the celebration of (due) rights (of Hajj) and turn to us (in Mercy); Verily, YOU are the One WHO Accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.”

[Al-Quran 2:128]

In the dua, we notice some extra requests. This is another etiquette in Dua to Allah. Let me highlight a few of them for our reminder:

- 1. Main request:** Notice the main request, and that is very precise and to the point. Allah loves straightforwardness from HIS beloved servants. The straightforward request from Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) was in simple term, “(Our Lord) Show us How to Do the Hajj.”

2. **Asking for Allah's Mercy:** This is additional. Allah loves to give more so why not ask for more. Asking for more to a Loving, Merciful Allah is a good etiquette. Therefore, in dua why should the seeker stop without asking for more? Again, it is good habit to ask Allah to grant more, and it is also good as communication with loving Allah from the loving servants. So, Ibrahim (peace be upon him) added the request to Allah and asked for HIS Mercy.
3. **Praising for Allah's qualities:** It is another etiquette that Islam teaches that when you ask something from someone, appreciate their generosity with their true qualities. Allah has complete qualities in HIM, and for HIS qualities HE does everything for HIS servants. For example, HE loves to forgive those who ask for it, and HE does forgive due to HIS Compassion and Love for HIS servants. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) did not forget to celebrate the praises of Allah with HIS True qualities. On one hand, it is a best etiquette from Allah's servant, and on the other hand, Allah loves that HIS servants appreciate Allah's qualities.

Tafsir Ibn Kasir includes the following facts in the explanation of 2:128:

Ibrahim (peace be upon him) prayed o Allah to teach him the duties of Hajj. After completion of the building Ka'ba, Angel Jibreel came and took Ibrahim (peace be upon him) to Safa and Marwa mountains and said to him: "**These are Allah's Signs.**"

Then angel took him towards the place called Mina. There was Satan standing beside a tree in the place called U'qbah. Angel asked him to throw a pebble on Satan saying "**Allahu Akbar**". Satan then ran away from that place and stood beside Jamra-e-U'qbah. In there he also threw a pebble on Satan. This series of throwing pebbles on Satan made Satan hopeless. In another narration, he threw pebbles on Satan 3 times. Satan wanted to do a few confusing things in the process of Hajj duties, but he failed totally.

From there, angel Jibreel took him to a place called "Mash-aril-haram". Then took him to the field of A'rafah. (Jibreel showed him how to perform Hajj duties) and asked Ibrahim (peace be upon him) 3 times, "**Tell me, have you understood?**" he said: "**Yes! I did.**"

To conclude, we find two main aspects above. One aspect is the Dua from Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) for showing the Hajj duties, and another one is the exactness in Hajj duties guided by Allah. It confirms that Hajj duties are not designed by any human, but it is showed by Allah. Another point is that Satan could not create any confusion in the Hajj process. He tried but ended up with bitter failure. Allah protected the Hajj duties from the Satanic confusion. Allah made Satan a total failure and gave total success to the Pilgrims from HIS own Mercy according to the dua of Ibrahim (Peace be upon him). The beautiful aspect in Prophet Ibrahim's (Peace be upon him) takes my heart away, and that is he prayed to be showed practically. What a well guided brilliant way of asking! He did not pray to send the theoretical instructions to him about how to perform Hajj, nor he asked for a speech, but he asked for showing how the Hajj to be performed practically. Practical demonstrations made it easier. When people can see what to do and how to do, they find it easier to follow. May Allah bless prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) for his sincere work for us, Ameen!

Prayer for the attracting the hearts

When does a servant of Allah pray to Allah? Or why is there an option for prayer? The main reason is that the servant asks Allah to help because he can't himself. People pray for the following reasons:

- They admit that they have limitations,
- They accept the fact that they must depend on the higher authority,
- They surrender their ego or arrogance to the higher authority, and lower themselves to beg,
- They believe that the higher authority has power to help them or to provide them with what they need,

- They believe that the higher authority listens to their prayer, and answers their prayer, and can fulfil their needs etc.

Praying to Allah comes with the beliefs above. We believe that Allah is the most powerful Lord, HE listens to the dua, and HE rescues HIS servants from hardship, and HE has All-Power to provide all the support to HIS servants. Believers always ask Allah for things that they cannot help themselves or anyone else cannot help them. For example, can anyone have power to persuade another heart towards him? We do not have any power over other people's hearts to attack them towards certain things. Only Allah has the power to change people's hearts. Holy prophet (Peace be upon him) used to say in his dua, "**YA MUQALLIBAL QULUB... (O (Allah, the) Controller of the hearts!)**" Ibrahim (peace be upon him) had done what he could do physically such as building the wall of the Sacred house, and learnt the duties of Hajj, but could he receive Allah's acceptance, or Allah's Mercy without the dua to Allah? Again, after building the Sacred House, did he have power to persuade people's hearts towards the HOUSE OF ALLAH for Hajj? No, he did not have that power. That's why, he had to turn to Allah Almighty through Dua to attract people's hearts towards the Sacred House, and the Hajj. He made his dua, and Allah accepted his dua, and placed love in the hearts of the people. That's why, millions of pilgrims want to go to Hajj because their hearts are filled with the love for it.

Then, Ibrahim (peace be upon him) built the centre of Monotheism, learnt how to do Hajj from Angel Jibrael (peace be upon him). Again, that history is very valuable. Why? Because that history proves that Hajj was not a human invention. In this world there are many types of gatherings that came from human ideas. But Hajj gathering is different. Hajj is Allah's idea. Hajj is Allah's creation. Allah taught HIS messenger Ibrahim (peace be upon him) through HIS Honourable angel Jibrael. So, every duty that is performed in Hajj has been ordered by Allah Almighty. Therefore, in Hajj duties there are so many blessings from Allah. Why that wouldn't be? Hajj actions are Allah's choice, Allah loves it and that's why Allah rewards very highly for it. Alhamdulillah!

Look at again! Allah then inspired HIS messenger to supplicate the proper supplication. The supplication that was necessary. The supplication was quoted in the Holy Quran:

فَاجْعَلْ أَفْدَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِمْ

“(Our Lord!) Fill the hearts from some from among men with love towards them.”

[Al-Quran 14:37]

Why this supplication was necessary? It was necessary because Ibrahim (peace be upon him) as a human had no power to attract men with love to come and perform Hajj duties. Only Allah has the power to change people's hearts. Only Allah has the power to send love into the hearts to be attracted to Hajj. That's why it was necessary for Ibrahim (peace be upon him) to supplicate to Allah, to the controller of hearts to put love in people's hearts for Hajj. That way, mankind also could learn the fact that it is ALLAH WHO is the controller of hearts. Allah accepted that supplication and that's why all these times people came to Hajj running. It is as if some very super powerful magnet is pulling their hearts towards the Hajj despite difficulties. Look at these days, how many millions of people want to go for Hajj, but the authority must control the number for safety. The place would not have been that busy if it was not Allah's work. Allahu Akbar!

Notice again, in his dua, Ibrahim (peace be upon him) kept it specific. He did not make dua for general mankind, but he prayed, "**Some of from among men**". With that he specified the group of men who will be voluntary submitting to Allah as Muslims and there won't be compulsion on anyone. That's why Muslim's hearts are connected to the Ka'ba. Every day for their prayer they face the Ka'ba from all over the world. For that supplication, a true Muslim loves Holy Ka'ba and loves to do Hajj even though he or she cannot afford. The attraction in the heart is always present for every true Muslim. Due to Allah's

will, Hajj is a very busy celebration. This celebration includes all the Muslims in this world directly or indirectly in the Hajj season.

Job to look after the Sacred House

The Holy House was built and the invitation for Hajj was made. People started visiting the House of Allah. Allah made Ibrahim and Ismael (peace be on them) responsible to take care of the House in their times. That House needed managing in two main aspects:

1. **Keeping it clean from wrong faith:** Holy Ka'ba was built with a specific purpose. The main purpose was to teach, practice and invite for the worship to One Allah. So, Ibrahim and Ismael (peace be on them) were responsible to make sure that the Holy House was free from idol worshipping, free from sinful activities, and free from any disbelief etc. Their duty was to maintain the Holy Place according to the guidance of Allah. This is the same purpose in managing any Mosque in this world. The Mosque is the place to worship Allah, not to worship one's desires, name or fame, nor to worship any culture or anything else. Mosque must be maintained as it is prescribed by Allah and showed practically by Allah's messenger (Peace be upon him).
2. **Keeping it clean from dirt:** The other aspect is to keep Holy Ka'ba clean and pure from impurities, dirt, smell etc. When many people visit it, pray in there, make Tawaf (circling) around it, do I'teqaf in the Masjid ul Haram, obviously it requires cleaning, and tidiness etc. This is the same rule for any Mosque in the world. It needs cleaning. Allah is clean, angels are clean, and Allah's servants need cleaning for attending in prayer to Allah. So, Muslims must keep the place of worship very clean.

So, being caretakers of Holy Ka'ba they were responsible for both spiritual and physical cleansing. We find their responsibility is mentioned in the Holy Quran:

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَأَتَخْذُوا مِنْ مَقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلَّى ۖ وَعَهْدَنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنْ طَهَرَا بَيْتَنَا لِلظَّاهِرِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكُعَ السُّجُودَ ۖ ۱۲۵

“And (remember) when WE made the House (Ka'ba) a place of assembly for men and a place of safety; and you take the House of Ibrahim as a place of prayer; And WE took the promise from Ibrahim and Ismael, that they should cleanse (and purify) MY House for those who circle around it, or use it as a retreat, or bow, or prostrate themselves (in there in prayer.)”

[Al-Quran 2:125]

From this story, we also learn that looking after Allah's House is an honourable job in the Sight of Allah. That's why Allah made HIS Holy Messengers responsible to do that job. Therefore, keeping Masjid clean and looking after it, is a very rewarding job indeed!

Why is managing the Sacred Masjid an honourable job? And why did Allah make that job for HIS Honourable messengers? The answer is simple. Allah made HIS messengers the Imam (Role models) for the mankind. They are assigned to do the role modelling with teachings, talks, manners, characters and actions. Allah has chosen HIS Messengers to look after the Masjid as a House of Allah (Baitullah), so that their followers will see, hear, read and learn about it in the later generations to follow it. Another lesson is that Holy Messengers set the examples that only offering advice is not enough, but the adviser himself/herself must practice it. For example, Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) could advise to look after the Masjid, but he advised and did it to show that believers must advise and act according to the advice.

Why did Allah mention prophet's Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) dua, his actions, and the outcome of many dua in the Holy Quran? The answer is to preserve the true history. Allah knows that over time, people may turn and twist the facts and can change the true history to borrow misguidance. Allah made Islam the final religion with Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the final messenger. So, Allah decided to preserve the true history through Quran stories of earlier prophets, their faith, practices, and invitations to make the lesson permanent that all messengers served one Allah and invited humanity to serve one Allah.

Gradual loss of true duties in Hajj

If we study the history in general, we find that humanity gradually changed their practices from original to new. Why does it happen? It happens mainly for two reasons. One reason is that people start forgetting the original practice as time goes by. Life is so busy, and people become busy with their life affairs, and most of them lose the original information about a thing. As time passes, some original past becomes isolated in the book, or in the library with old books, or in the history book. The history book often is not 100% accurate because the information is collected later, and the describers might have forgotten the exact truth, or the historian may be biased.

Another reason is that people tend to be innovative. They want to innovate new things by adding bit by bit with the original teachings to feed their ego, desires, power, position, culture and traditions. Those innovations become prominent and becomes part of faith wrongly. That innovation corrupts the originality and purity of the teaching. Regarding Hajj, because it is from Allah, and whatever comes from Allah comes with accuracy that lasts forever, did not need to be added with innovations to corrupt it. But without Allah's permission, it was people, who brought innovations in Hajj to change the original teaching of Hajj gradually.

Why in the history did some teachings change gradually? The answer is as following:

- Allah did not decide to preserve it. That allowed the room for misunderstanding, confusion, debate, and desire for new normal etc.
- Allah did not decide to save HIS Message from previous prophet from the Satan's conspiracy. That allowed room for differences in opinions, and differences in teachings to divide people from the main purpose of life.
- There were no human strict efforts to save the original teachings of prophets. The time went by and changes occurred because the teaching was collected hundreds of years after the prophets left.
- The message was for a certain community by a certain messenger, and it was not a universal summary of all teachings to suit all needs for human guidance. So, when the messenger left, the teachings left as well.
- Allah tested people. HE gave them guidance and granted them freedom to choose original or innovations. That way some failed in the test, and some won.
- The same thing happens with the Hajj teaching of prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him). It was not preserved fully, and people after him brought their own ideas, desires, cultures etc to innovate things. People polluted the pure Hajj gradually.

To rescue that purity and originality, Allah sent the last messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Makkah and decided to protect the religion from innovation and corruption such as in Hajj, and made the teaching a universal summary of all prophets' true teachings for the mankind. That's why, the

teaching of the Last Messenger can never be polluted because Allah took responsibility to protect it from being poisoned.

After Hon Ibrahim (peace be upon him), Allah made his older son Ismael (peace be upon him) a prophet too and made him in charge for Hajj too. Hon Ismael (peace be upon him) was performing the Hajj duties in the proper way as his father did. Then he taught his progeny to follow the right Hajj duties. But after his time, (Allah knows exactly how long after) people were misguided by Satan through innovation. Gradually they changed the pure form of Hajj duties, and they added new things to corrupt the Hajj method. Some of the new things they invented are mentioned below:

- **Polytheism:** They borrowed polytheism from other nations. They began idol worshipping instead of worshipping one Allah. Allah established a Sacred Masjid by their predecessor to worship Allah only in there, but they changed that main teaching misusing their power and positions. It was not only a disrespect to their previous generation, but it was a defiance to Allah. Besides, it was a blasphemy against Allah because Allah never had any children, father or helper as He is the True GOD, but based on their presumption they invented lie against Allah placing idol in the Hajj area to teach people that Allah has partners.
- **Idol worshipping:** They made huge number of idols namely Lat, Manat, Hubal, Yagus, Ujja, Asaf, and Naila and so on. They were worshipping those idols. They placed many idols in and around the Holy House for worshipping them. That was their invention without any evidence or proof from Allah Almighty. Ibrahim and Ismael (Peace be upon him) did not teach them to worship idol. Rather Ibrahim (peace be upon him) went through so many trials to prove that he worshipped one Allah Who is the True GOD, and that he was never an idol worshipper.
- **Worshipping heavenly bodies:** They began worshipping the Moon, stars etc. Anything that they saw had some power, they surrendered their heads to it. For example, the Sun has the power of excruciating heat. So, they imagined the Sun as a mini god, and they began worshipping the Sun without getting any benefits. Did they follow any reasons? No, they did not. Their power and ego drove them to do whatever they wanted to do.
- **Worshipping dead:** They used to worship Ghost, Spirit, and dead souls of previous people etc. Again, that was from wrong faith. Instead of believing Allah as Almighty, provider and protector, they surrendered their high heads to weak dead, those who have no power even to save themselves.
- **Worshipping Stones:** If they did not find any idol of their own tribe then they used to worship coloured Stones while on journey. What can a Stone do? They realized Stone is hard and can be used as a weapon. So, they took the Stones as their gods too. They lost one True GOD to find many false gods.
- **Worshipping handmade idols:** If they did not find Stone, then they used to make idol out of soil and water mixture and they used to sprinkle milk on it. Then they used to worship that handmade idol. Ignorance and father's wrong traditions blinded them, and Satan made those wrong worships nice to them.
- **Worshipping their priests:** They made their priest like gods and used to follow whatever their priests advised them. It became a business for the priests. Ignorance made them blind followers which is dangerous. Would you take a dangerous guide in your tour?
- **Worshipping ego:** They used to organize fairs once a year in Makkah. In the fair they used to read poems praising the glory of their tribe, men to boast their ego and status all over the Arabs and nearby areas. They also used to slaughter camels after camel to compete between

tribes to spread their names all over. Their Hajj duty was full of self-praises instead of praising Allah.

- **Worshipping cultures:** They used to organise dance, music, indecent activities with drinking, adultery and so on. Culture was their most beloved activities without even questioning whether those activities were right, beneficial or reasonable? Many people even today, love their culture more than they love Allah. So, they obstinately follow their father's traditions, and if anyone wants to advise them about it, they become angry and defensive.
- **Worshipping naked:** They used to circle around the Holy Ka'ba naked and used to say that they wanted to meet Allah in the state of nakedness as they were given birth by their mothers etc. They knew that it was not the teaching of Prophet Ibrahim and Ismael (Peace be upon them), but it was their innovation.
- **Clapping, whistling during Tawaf:** They used to clap and whistle during Tawaf. They invented that to make it a fun. They mixed up their singing, dancing, clapping in their cultural functions with the Holy Hajj. They felt like it due to their wrong mind set, whereas Ibrahim and Ismael (Peace be upon them) never did it in the Hajj.
- **Wrong Talbia:** In their Talbia they added lines to join their gods with Allah. They used to say, "I am present O Allah I am present! YOU have no partners except who is your partners. YOU are his (partner god's) owner and the owner of his belongings."
- **Wrong Sacrifice:** They used to paint the blood of slaughtered animal on Ka'ba walls, and they used to leave Qurbani meat at the Ka'ba door. They used to believe that, that blood and meat of Qurbani reaches to Allah.
- **They used to change honourable months:** 4 months in a year were honourable months in which fighting was prohibited. But they used to shift those months around according to their suitability.
- **Begging in Hajj:** They started another bad practice which was begging for Hajj or begging in Hajj. They used to say that they were relying on Allah, yet they used to beg once they came to Hajj.
- **Dumb Hajj:** They invented dumb Hajj in which they were not allowed to speak.

These are some examples how they invented so many wrong practices in the duties of Hajj. They totally changed the practice of worshipping one Allah for which it was built by their forefather Hon Ibrahim (peace be upon him). So, gradually their ignorance reached its peak which lasted around 2000 years before the last prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) came. Then the time came for last prophet to come because of the supplication made by Hon Ibrahim (peace be upon him). In that supplication, he prayed to Allah to send a messenger from Makkah, with same language, to rectify the wrong doings in and around the Holy Ka'ba. That dua was as following:

رَبَّنَا وَأَبْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابٌ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

"Our Lord! Send among them a messenger of their own, who shall rehearse YOUR Signs to them and instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom, (cleanse) and provide relief for them; Truly, For YOU are the Almighty, the All Wise."

[Al-Quran 2:129]

Finally, Allah sent HIS last prophet in Makkah with Arabic language and sent the proper teachings of Hajj to re-establish true Hajj practice, according to Allah's true guidance. He (peace be upon him) did that. *Allahumma Salli A'laih Muhammad, Allahumma baarik A'laih. (Oh Allah, grant peace on Muhammad, Oh Allah grant blessings on Muhammad)*

Muhammad (peace be upon him) re-established the correct Hajj

The wrong could not go on forever. Falsehood and truth always are opposite to one another. When falsehood spreads or gets established, it takes its time as much as it can to spread and practice, but eventually the truth wins. The truth never comes easily, but it comes through hard work, with right education, and with dedication of many. Allah sent HIS Last Messenger to lead for the change, to re-establish the true method of Hajj with true belief, and his dedicated companions helped him in his mission. Their sacrifice for establishing the truth is immortal. May Allah bless them.

Falsehood and truth are like trees with roots. They grow on roots. The difference is how strong the root is. Falsehood is like weeds. Even though they look like there are too many, and they grow quickly, but they do not have strong roots. Strong wind or strong storm uproots them. Strong people can pull them out. On the other hand, the truth tree has the strongest root. It is established in the land firmly, and it can stand against challenges, bad weather, and calamities. Eventually, the truth tree survives. The same thing happened with the corrupted Hajj. The followers of falsehood tried their best to continue the false Hajj method, but they could not continue it forever. The change had to be done. For some people, the rest of the believers should not be deprived from the true Hajj. Alhamdulillah! The believers got the true Hajj method established, and no one can misguide them anymore.

After a long time with corrupted Hajj practice, the time of sending the last prophet came. Allah sent a messenger in the progeny of Ibrahim (peace be upon him). The messenger was from the family tree of Prophet Ismael (peace be upon him). Prophet Ismael (peace be upon him) was the older son of prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him), who assisted his father in building the Sacred House, and he was made a prophet as well. Who was that last Messenger of Allah? He is Muhammad (peace be upon him). Everything happened according to Allah's plan. Allah sent the last prophet to rectify the wrongdoings in Hajj and to restart the Ibrahimi Hajj.

There are some similarities between Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and Muhammad (peace be upon him). Some of those similarities are:

- **Idol worshipping family/Tribe:** Ibrahim (peace be upon him) was born in an idol worshipping family and Muhammad (peace be upon him) was also born in an idol worshipping tribe. Both were leaders in idol worshipping. They had high position in their society, and people used to follow them as their leaders.
- **Priest family:** The family of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) was a priest family with high respect and power in that society. Similarly, Muhammad (peace be upon him) was born in a priest family as well. His family was very honourable for being the custodian of the Holy Mosque and the Hajj. People used to look up at them, respect them, and followed them as their social and religious guides.
- **Torture from family:** The family of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) abandoned him, disowned him, threatened him, and then conspired to kill him. They assisted, advised, and motivated the society and the Government to kill Ibrahim (peace be upon him). All they wanted was to kill him to kill the mission of monotheism. The same way the tribe of Muhammad (peace be upon him) gave him pain and hurt, gave him harsh and cruel non-cooperation and cooperated with others to torture him, to torture his followers and even plotted to kill him. They imposed wars

against him, and holy messenger with his followers had to defend themselves with their lives. His own uncle Abu Lahab was his worst enemy.

- **Peaceful revolution from within:** Ibrahim (peace be upon him) disagreed with idol worshipping peacefully, kept educating them, and showed them signs, and explained to them with logics. Muhammad (peace be upon him) took it even further. He also explained to his people why idol worshipping was wrong. He did his work peacefully, but when they imposed tortures, persecution and killing on the worshippers of One Allah, holy messenger of Allah was given permission by Allah to defend. Allah helped him and his followers to win, to regain control on Hajj, and to re-establish the Hajj method originally Ibrahim (peace be upon you) started. The victory over Makkah was without bloodshed, and holy messenger offered the enemies forgiveness to embrace them as brothers and sisters.
- **Establishing the worship for one Allah:** Ibrahim (peace be upon him) built the Sacred house with Allah's commands to establish it as a main centre for Monotheism in this world. After a few thousand years when people removed the true worship of Allah in the centre, Muhammad (peace be upon him) re-established the true worship of Allah in the centre again and he called the believers in this world to come to the centre and to perform Hajj for Allah according to the teachings of Allah's messenger. He called (Invited for Hajj) as prophet Ibrahim did thousand years ago. Ibrahim and Muhammad (peace be upon them) had the same message as Allah commanded them to pass to the mankind. Holy Quran states:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لِلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِلْعَالَمِينَ ۖ فِيهِ عَائِلَةُ بَيْتِ مَقْدُومٍ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۖ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ عَامِنًا ۖ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۖ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِّيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ۗ

“Surely the first House ‘of worship’ established for humanity is the one at Bakkah—a blessed sanctuary and a guide for ‘all’ people. In it are clear signs and the standing-place of Abraham. Whoever enters it should be safe. Pilgrimage to this House is an obligation by Allah upon whoever is able among the people.¹ And whoever disbelieves, then surely

Allah is not in need of ‘any of His’ creation.”

[Al-Quran 3:96-97]

Resistance from Idol worshippers

Falling in love with the culture! Yes, when people use their emotion much more than their reasoning in mind, then the emotion predominates the mind. Emotion does not follow logic. For example, a teenager falling in love without thinking about pros and cons, about social obligations, about the financial independence, and about the future. One thing is dominated in their mind is the “Love” from emotional desire. Lots of teenagers suffer in life for following their emotional demands without having a balance between the emotion and intellect. Similarly, many people become emotionally attached with their cultures and traditions. They become over attached, and they fall in love with their father's way and the culture that their society has developed over the decades. They simply love to continue it. Due to their one sidedness with emotion within reasoning, if they face any criticism against their culture, they take it seriously. They consider the criticiser as their enemy, and they try to eliminate their enemy as quickly as possible. In this process they kill, and they are being killed sometimes.

If they used their reasoning, weighed the good or bad in future from the criticism, then they could use their emotion and energy in a positive way, and without bloodshed they could work together for the prosperity. Unfortunately, most people due to their excessive love for their culture, they shut down their reasoning, and they take the destructive path. The same thing happened with the Idol

worshipping custodians of the Sacred House in Makkah and the Hajj. Over the decades, they did not realize how they allowed the pure worship to be poisoned due to their ignorance and negligence. They did not practice any self-assessment method to see if they did something wrong. So, they thought they were only doing the right thing, their forefathers did the right thing, and no one had right to bring any correction about it. When Muhammad (peace be upon him) invited them to the Guidance of Allah for their best in this life and in the next life, instead of welcoming it as friendly advice, they took it the wrong way. They considered Allah's Messenger as their enemy, they rejected Allah's invitation to them to the right guidance, and they waged torture and cruelty to Allah's messenger and his few followers.

They measured their material power, their manpower, their wealth and influence in the society, and they became arrogant with the notion that they would win in keeping their idol worshipping system alive. They did not take the message of Allah that Allah is the Most Powerful GOD, and no arrogant creation of Allah can stand against Allah's power. They ignored all the good thinking, and they wanted to eliminate Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his followers to save their traditional, and cultural idol worshipping and their way of performing Hajj.

Holy prophet (peace be upon him) began his invitation to worship one Allah from Makkah with his community first. When he was preaching, his family and community were leading people in Makkah. They were very honourable in the eyes of others around Makkah because they were looking after Hajj celebration every year. As a result, they had honour, power, wealth, good business opportunities etc. When Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) invited them to give up worshipping idols, in that time they had 360 idols around Holy Ka'ba. They were in love with idol worshipping, very used to idol worshipping, very dedicated to idol worshipping, and they were very used to the idol worshipping culture. So, when they realised, if Holy Prophet's mission was successful then their customs and tradition would die, then they desperately wanted Muhammad (peace be upon him) to die to keep their tradition alive.

Besides, their Hajj system became a big avenue for business, earning name and fame even though it was wrong. So, their survival as leaders, being in power, and maintaining their control were totally dependent on to defend their wrong ways and to destroy the new mission of Muhammad (peace be upon him). That's why they took the mission of Tawhid (Monotheism) as a great threat for their system and the whole community, and their leaders took firm stand against the Da'wa of Allah. They initially thought that mocking, criticising and occasional threat or punishment would be enough to scare Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), but it did not work at all because prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) invitation was deep rooted truth that nothing could or can pull it out. Instead of failure, young people from idol worshipping families started joining the mission of worshipping one Allah because it made sense to them. They were clever and were brave to question the message of Muhammad (peace be upon him) and their father's traditions, and they realized that their fathers were obstinately trying to hold on to their vanity and wrong customs. Then idol worshipping leaders began torturing, abusing, punishing as many ways as possible to eliminate with the wrong notion that they would win by force. Their arrogance blinded them to realise the true reality.

As a result, so many new Muslims were tortured, left businesses, kicked out of houses, were under embargo for 3 years and were forced to survive on leaves from trees and so on. They killed many Muslims. They plotted conspiracy after conspiracy. Muslims began to migrate here and there to escape from the idol worshipper's cruelty. Finally, they plotted to kill Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) but Allah saved him and guided him to migrate to Madinah. In there, by the grace of Allah, people came to Islam and established an Islamic society. But idol worshippers did not stop there. Instead, their arrogance drove to attack Madinah by imposing war on the small community to take off the light of Islam. They continued to force wars after wars until they had no more energy to fight.

Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) came to perform Umrah Hajj all the way from Madinah towards Makkah in 6th Hijri (Migration year) with 1400 hundred followers. They came only for the Umrah Hajj without any weapons to fight. The universal rule was that if anyone came to Hajj with proper dress, Qurbani animal and no weapons to fight, then they should be allowed to perform Hajj. But Quraish leaders broke the universal law and resisted Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) with companions in a place called Hudaibiya. Their illegal resistance was their desperate move to block true Islamic Hajj that Ibrahim (peace be upon him) established. Holy prophet (peace be upon him) took the peaceful approach without any fight despite being wronged. He (peace be upon him) made a peace treaty with them and went away back to Madinah without performing Umrah Hajj. But not much later, they broke the treaty and exceeded all the fair limits for their arrogance and obstinacy. Allah revealed the message on HIS Holy Messenger that it was time to push back fairly, peacefully, and actively to bring back the Sacred House and the Hajj, back to the way as Allah wanted to re-establish the true worship of Allah and the true form of Hajj for which Allah established the centre in the first place. Idol worshippers had no right to forcefully establish wrong worshipping and Hajj in a place that they did not establish.

After giving them chance after chance to come to the true term, when they misused all chances and committed terrible unfair actions, Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) came to Makkah with tens of thousands of companions in 8th Hijri and idol worshippers just collapsed with exhaustion. They lost all their force, power and energy to fight for wrong reasons anymore. Allah made them failure all together and the Sacred House since then, came under the control of Monotheism without war or bloodshed. See how Allah's plan works! Finally, Allah's messenger removed 360 idols from the centre of monotheism, and meanwhile he was reciting:

وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَرَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ ۝ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا ۝ ۸۱

“Truth has come through and lies are dead: Surely, lies are bound to die.”
[Al-Quran 17:81]

Proper Ibrahimi Hajj started again

What a victory! It was a victory for truth, and the truth is always the greatest gifts of all for mankind. Why truth is the greatest gift? Truth directs the mankind towards the light and eternal success, and falsehood misguides people towards the darkness, failure and sufferings. Truth needed to come. So many true servants of Allah were waiting for it. It came with blessing, and with devotion of Allah's messenger and for his devoted followers. For their tremendous sacrifice, today millions of believers can perform the Hajj in the right way as Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) taught and started. We are so thankful to Allah for availing the true Hajj for us, and for making the Sacred House of HIM in Makkah as an inspiration for us. May Allah send peace on HIS Beloved Messenger, his family and his companions, Ameen!

Hajj began again properly. Hajj with innovations, which lasted around 2000 years ended. Here I shall give a brief rundown about some of the main changes in Hajj after the days of ignorance below:

- **In Allah's method:** Allah ordained in the Holy Quran to perform Hajj exactly as Allah guided through Holy Prophet (peace be upon him):

وَأَذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَيْكُمْ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

“And celebrate HIS Praises (Worship, Hajj duties) as HE has directed you, even though before this you went astray.”
[Al-Quran 2:198]

- **Prohibited all wrong activities:** Allah prohibited all adultery, sexual actions, indecency, alcoholism, cheating, fight and quarrels and so on:

فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جَدَالَ فِي الْحَجَّ

“If anyone undertakes Hajj duties, not allowed sexual activities, sinful actions or fights during Hajj.”

[Al-Quran 2:197]

- **Stopping fair for pride:** Allah prohibited their fair for feeding, poem reading to promote each tribe's name and fame and all those wrong activities were replaced by Praises of Allah, not anyone's family, father, tribe or nation:

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكُكُمْ فَلَاذْكُرُوا أَلَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ إِبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا فَمَنْ أَنْاسٍ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا إِاتَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ

“So, when you have finished your duties of Hajj, celebrate the Praises of Allah, as you used to celebrate the praises of your fathers, yes, with much more (feelings), heart and soul.”

[Al-Quran 2:200]

- **Showing off and wasting food was prohibited:** Before they used to slaughter camel after camel to compete between tribes and they used to show off to impress the pilgrims about their father's name and fame. They used to waste meat, food because they were desperate for the name only. All these were stopped:

وَكُلُوا وَأْشَرِبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

“Eat and drink, but do not waste by excess: Allah does not like the wasters.”

[Al-Quran 7:31]

- **Animal sacrifice only in the name of Allah:** They used to sacrifice animals in the name of idols. That was prohibited and only in the name of Allah animal sacrifice was allowed in Hajj:

فَلَاذْكُرُوا أَسْمَ أَلَّهِ عَلَيْهَا صَوَافَ فَإِذَا وَجَبَتْ جُنُوبُهَا فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا الْقَانِعَ وَالْمُعْتَرَ كَذِلِكَ سَخَرْنَاهَا لَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

“Then pronounce the Name of Allah over them as they line up (for sacrifice): Then when they are down on their sides (after the slaughter), you eat there from and feed those who live in contentment (But who do not beg) and those who beg with due humility. Thus, we have made animals at your command, so that you may be thankful.”

[Al-Quran 22:36]

- **No longer blood and meat on Ka'ba:** They used to paint blood of sacrificed animals on Ka'ba walls and meat on the Ka'ba door. That was made prohibited:

لَنْ يَنَالَ أَلَّهُ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ أَنْتَقُوئِي مِنْكُمْ

“It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah: It is your devotion (To Allah) that reaches HIM.”

[Al-Quran 22:37]

- **Naked circling was stopped:** Before they used to make Tawaf naked, but it was made haram:

يَابْنَىٰ عَادَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ... قُلْ مَنْ حَرَمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ
لِعِبَادِهِ وَالْطَّيْبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ

“O children of Adam! Put on your beautiful clothing at every time and place of prayer ... say: ‘Who has forbidden the beautiful (gifts like dress) of Allah, which HE has made for HIS servants, and clean and pure things HE provided for living?’”

[Al-Quran 7:31-32]

- **No more changes in Haram months were allowed:** They used to change honourable months for their own suitability for fighting. That was made prohibited too:

إِنَّمَا النَّسِيَّعُ زِيَادَةً فِي الْكُفْرِ ۖ يُضَلُّ بِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أُبْلِغُونَهُ عَامًا وَيُحَرِّمُونَهُ
عَامًا لِيُوَاطِّلُوا عِدَّةً مَا حَرَمَ اللَّهُ فَيُحِلُّوْا مَا حَرَمَ اللَّهُ

“Surely, the delaying (of the sacred months) adds to the disbelief: The disbelievers are led to wrong by it: because they make it a lawful (month) one year, and a forbidden (month) another year, to adjust (against) the number of months forbidden by Allah and make such forbidden ones lawful.”

[Al-Quran 9:37]

- **Begging in Hajj was prohibited:** They used to go to Hajj empty handed and beg from people once they were there. Allah made that Haram as well:

وَتَرَوَدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَاتَّقُونِ يَأْتُوا لِلْأَبَابِ

“And take a provision (with you) for the Journey, but the best of provision is right conduct. So, fear ME, O! You, who are wise.”

[Al-Quran 2:197]

- **Talbia was rectified:** In Talbia they used to join partners with Allah which was extremely wrong and sinful blasphemy against Allah in HIS Holy House. Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) taught the correct Talbia as following:

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

(Labbaika Allahumma Labbaik. Labbaika laa shareeka laka Labbaik. Innal Hamda wan-ni'mata laka wal-Mulk. Laa shareeka lak.) “I am present O Allah I am present to YOUR service. YOU have no partners; I am present to YOU. All the Praises and blessings are for YOU and the sovereignty is YOURS. YOU have no partners.”

[Bukhari and Muslim]

Holy Prophet's last Hajj

In 6th Hijri Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and his 1400 hundred companions were sent back without being allowed to perform Umrah Hajj (Explanation of Umrah Hajj is coming later in this book). Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) went away that year and returned to Makkah in 7th Hijri, to perform the missed Umrah Hajj (Qada Hajj). In 8th Hijri in the Fasting Month Ka'ba came under his control. He (peace be upon him) appointed Hon Attab ibn Aseed (May Allah be pleased with him) as Governor of Makkah.

In 8th Hijri Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) appointed the same Governor as Ameerul Hajj (Leader for Hajj affair). By next year, in 9th Hijri, Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) sent Hon Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) from Madinah as Ameerul Hajj. In 10th Hijri Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) performed Hajj for himself. That Hajj for Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was his first and his last Hajj in his life. Over hundred thousand Muslims joined him in that Hajj. In that Hajj he (peace be upon him) gave a final message to his followers. Because that Hajj was his last Hajj, that Hajj is also called Hujjatul Widaa' (the goodbye Hajj).

His (peace be upon him) Hajj is recorded in a long Hadis narrated by Hon Jabir ibn Abdullah (May Allah be pleased with him). I shall just mention the first bit in below:

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَكَثَ بِالْمَدِينَةِ تِسْعَ سِنِينَ لَمْ يَحْجُجْ ثُمَّ أَذْنَ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجَّ فِي الْعَاشِرَةِ : أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَاجٌ فَقَدِمَ الْمَدِينَةَ بَشَرٌ كَثِيرٌ فَخَرَجْنَا مَعَهُ.....

Hon Jabir ibn Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: **Holy Prophet (s.a.w) spent 9 years in Madinah. In those 9 years he (peace be upon him) did not perform Hajj (Main Hajj not Umrah). Then in 10th Hijri the announcement was made that in that year Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) would go to Hajj. So many people came into Madinah (to join him). Then we set our journey for Hajj (until the end).**

[Muslim]

In that Hajj, Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) showed his followers how to perform the Hajj according to the prescribed method of Allah. Alhamdulillah! His teachings are recorded in Hadis. So, the Muslims in later time would not be unaware about how to perform Hajj properly. His (peace be upon him) teaching has been alive for the last 1400+ years and it will be alive until this world exists.

Millions of Muslims all over the world are teaching and learning about the proper method of Hajj from Holy Prophet's Hajj. Moreover, millions of Muslims are performing Hajj every year and once they perform Hajj, they never forget the method of it. They pass their extra-ordinary experience to others. That's how the teaching of Hajj keeps going with the help of Allah Almighty. So, this is the brief history of Hajj in this chapter about how it started, how it went on, how it was corrupted and then, how it was corrected by the last prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). May Allah bless and mercy on HIS prophet and his followers, Ameen!

The history of the Hajj is very important because history can be written by wrong people with bad motives. That's why, some history is written to glorify one side, and often power and position can be used to influence the minds of later generations. If the religion's history is biased, or contaminated, then that becomes a sad thing because the wrong history would be repeated generation after generation. Wrong history motivates people to take wrong direction. Allah did not allow the wrong history to misguide people. HE revealed the message with history to make the true history clear to the humanity. Holy Quran in that sense, is a true history holy book, and storyteller in the Holy Quran is Allah All-knowing HIMSELF.

Then, the history of the Holy Prophet's Hajj is recorded to set the record straight. His companions saw, listened, observed and followed Allah's messenger inch by inch, and then these actions were recorded in the Hadis, and there are volumes and volumes. We find every detail from the actions of Holy Messenger of Allah. These details are not limited to Hajj but in every aspect of Holy messenger's life. Allah made HIS Messenger's history protected as well to keep the truth alive forever. For example, Holy Messenger's Hajj is recorded in detail, as lessons to follow inch by inch. For the mankind, Allah

made HIS Messenger a perfect role model to be followed by those who believe that they will meet Allah in the next life to give their accounts of their actions in this life. Allah says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

“Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often.”

[Al-Quran 33:21]

Chapter 5: Some lessons from Hajj

Why do we need to learn lessons?

Hajj is a divine prescription of worship. It is from All-Wise Allah. It is to teach Muslims how to lead their life. Every duty or action in Hajj is full of lessons. Muslims need thinking about the wisdom behind each action in Hajj. Their thinking will help them with some of the following:

- How vast benefits are in each action prescribed by Allah!
- How vast teachings are in all actions prescribed by Allah!
- How each action guides them to be fully surrender to Allah!
- How each action trains them to develop right attitudes towards life and its objective!
- How each action prepares them to be Allah's true servants to gain Paradise etc!

Therefore, we need more discussions, more analysis, more research about Hajj and its duties:

- To learn,
- To feed our Faith,
- To nourish our Imaan,
- To strengthen our Imaan,
- To practice righteously and
- To motivate ourselves to serve Allah all the time.

Keeping those points in mind, I decided to give some examples of lessons to be learnt from Hajj actions. So that, these examples can motivate us to think more and to learn more for our own benefits Insha Allah!

We have two options about learning. One option is not learning, or to neglect the learning, or to keep learning in the bottom of priority list, or to procrastinate about learning DEEN. This is a terrible option. It makes the believers as blind followers of faith without knowledge. Allah wants believers to read, learn, and ponder about HIS Holy Message in the Holy Quran. In the holy Quran, Allah encouraged believers with terms like "IQRA = Read, or "ILM = Knowledge" or "Tadabbor = Reflection / research / deeper study" etc. The learners find huge taste and benefits from learning Allah's Deen such as:

- They feel joy from the learning about their faith. The more they acquire knowledge, the deeper their faith finds place in their hearts to supply continuous joy.
- They find motivation or fuel for continuing their faith and actions. Knowledge gives them boost in confidence, and they become the stronger believers.
- They save themselves from the suffering of confusion, indecisions, and uncertainty. When they face questions, mocking, challenges in the society for their faith, they do not suffer from doubts. Their sound knowledge helps them with clarity of mind, and they feel content with their faith and actions.
- Satan cannot deceive them. Satan fears one knowledgeable believer more than 1000 ignorant believers. Satan cannot deceive the knowledgeable believers, and in case, one is deceived, he/she repents to Allah quickly, and as a result Allah forgives the believer and grant promotion. Seeing that, Satan becomes more hopeless.

Another option is to be keen on learning Allah's Deen. Without only following as tradition, we can learn more about Islam, and about Islamic practices. This action is the best because Allah wants us to learn, reflect, and to study hard. When we read a verse, we can read quickly without thinking much

about it. If we do that, we cannot learn more. Similarly, if we only look at the Hajj duties as only rituals, then we cannot learn from it. I try to take a pen and paper, read an action, and ask few questions around it and then I look for the answers. For example, if I am reading about Tawaf, I try to write as many questions as possible such as:

1. What is Tawaf?
2. What is it for?
3. Why in Tawaf pilgrims go from right to left?
4. Why 7 times in Tawaf?
5. What is the main lesson from tawaf?
6. How Tawaf is related with my daily life?
7. What are the lessons from Tawaf I can relate with my daily life?
8. Is there any lesson for me to take home from Tawaf, or I leave everything in Makkah after my Hajj?
9. What are the rewards for Tawaf?
10. What are the things I must avoid in Tawaf?
11. What are the best things I must do during Tawaf?
12. And what are the things I must avoid in Tawaf etc.?

I gave only 12 questions, but often number of questions could be more. Now, I look at my questions and then I look for the answers. If I can help myself through Quran and Hadis, then good or else I seek knowledge from the learned Muslims by asking them. With this process of learning, I believe that I can keep myself busy in learning until I die. Every bit of learning will be like adding oxygen to my lung to be health. In other words, learning is the oxygen for the healthy Imaan.

Lesson from Ihram and death dress:

Ihram! The first compulsory action in Hajj. It has a very important role in Hajj. If a pilgrim has a deeper understanding about it, his knowledge will influence his heart deeply and positively. He/she will experience the Ihram and Hajj from the deeper chamber of the heart, will enjoy more, and will submit to Allah more willingly. His feeling, and thinking will be amazed with the higher degree of faith due to his/her understanding. He/she can be able to engage his/her heart and soul to the blessing of Allah and can find their hearts filled with thanks to Allah. On the other hand, a pilgrim with shallow knowledge cannot reach to the level of other knowledgeable ones.

As I mentioned some questions around each Hajj pillar or action, I can ask the similar questions about Ihram for my understanding. Such as:

1. What is Ihram?
2. Why do I need to do it?
3. What are the rules involving in it?
4. What keeps my Ihram and what breaks my Ihram?
5. What are the special duties in Ihram and why?
6. What lesson can I learn from Ihram?
7. Can Ihram lesson relate to my day-to-day life?
8. Why makes Ihram to be the first duty in Hajj?
9. Where can I find answers to my questions?
10. Why should I study about Ihram thoroughly etc.

I can go on in each item in Hajj with many questions and answers, but this book is to stimulate us to find our own ways of asking questions to learn. It requires time and efforts, perseverance and dedication. Reading in a book and trying by ourselves is different, and the best method of learning is to make each one of us our efforts. That's why, without repeating the same questions and answers, I am

taking the path of encouraging us with tips. So, we can put our own efforts in learning. Therefore, I shall only highlight one or two points to remind us about questioning and learning Insha Allah!

Ihram is a Fard (compulsory) action in Hajj. What is Ihram then? Ihram means making something Haram for you. With Ihram the pilgrims make a few things prohibited (haram) for them such as, Intimacy with wives, haircut, nail cut, using scent etc. Because they make few things Haram for them, that's why it is called Ihram. Ihram also means making intention for Hajj with Talbia (With Labbaika).

Lesson from Ihram:

Once a Hajji makes intention for Hajj, he or she makes a few things prohibited on him or on her. Even though, those things are Halal in normal day to day life but for Ihram they must avoid such things. They avoid those things to obey the commands of Allah. Once a Hajji makes Ihram, he or she is called "Muhrim." For Muhrim a few things that are normally allowed become prohibited. Let us look at a Hadis below:

Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that a person asked Holy Prophet (peace be upon him):

سَأَلَ رَجُلٌ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ :مَا الْحَاجُ؟ فَقَالَ :الشَّعْثُ النَّفْلُ . «فَقَامَ آخَرُ

"A person asked Holy Messenger of Allah: "Who is a Hajji (Pilgrim)? He said: "A person (Pilgrim due to Ihram) uncombed hair, and scentless body."

[IBN MAZAH]

Besides, during Ihram, a pilgrim is not allowed to wear expensive clothes despite his wealth, or not allowed to wear shoes despite financial ability, or cannot do hairstyle despite desires, or not allowed to cut nails etc. Due to Hajj, no Muslims complain about these prohibitions. Why not? The answer is that they do not question about Ihram rules because they have learnt to surrender to Allah without questioning and fussing. This is the main lesson in Ihram rules.

Now, Muslims should widen this attitude to every action in their life to be a full Muslim. Like Ihram rules, if they follow Allah's codes in their daily life without fuss, questions, complaint, or procrastination, then they have really understood the training of Ihram in Hajj. Then, they have truly got the lesson from Ihram in Hajj. Once the main lesson is engraved in their minds, and their will is surrender to the WILL of Allah, then they find it easier to follow the Ihram lessons in their day-to-day life. Then, they will find that their habits, manners, attitudes, dealings, characters, worships, human relationships, and their actions are aligned in the same line without contradictions. They run everything in their lives in the same direction, and that direction is "Obeying Allah in everything as they obeyed Allah during their Ihram."

But if they do not try to understand the lessons from Ihram, then in their attitudes and action during Ihram and after Ihram will have contradictions. If that happens, then it is a big problem. Suppose during Ihram no fighting is allowed, and a pilgrim follows that. But after returning from Hajj, that pilgrim fights with his neighbours, occupies their piece of land by force, abuses the rights of neighbours, then we see the obvious contradictions. What has gone wrong with that Pilgrim? The answer is simple. This pilgrim has done Hajj duties such as Ihram just as a ritual without understanding the lessons from it, and now he thinks he is a good Hajji despite his actions against the teachings of Islam or in Hajj. We must not be included in these kinds of ignorant pilgrims if there are any. I hope, no pilgrim is like the example I have given. I gave the example for our understanding.

Lesson from Ihram dress:

Ihram dress for men is simple. 2 pieces of white cloth without any sewing, to be wrapped around their upper and lower part of the body. Why is it? Is it just a fashion? Or is it just a tradition? Or is it for training the Muslim's mind for greater things? Why Pilgrims dress like death dress? After Muslim's death, their bodies are washed with respect, and then white unsewed cloth is wrapped around for the burial. During Ihram, it looks alike that all men pilgrims are wearing death like dress, and it looks like as if they are making a holy procession towards death to meet their LORD Allah.

We know, dress signifies people's status, position, and their level of pride and vanity. You will see certain dress is for the prince or the princes, rulers or the kings or queens, imams or the priests etc. Every dress speaks about something. It is an unspoken expression through dress, and the people understand that. A uniform for example for the students or the nurses or the doctors is also an unspoken expression. Similarly, Hajj dress during Ihram also from a philosophy with certain expressions. Muslims need to understand that, and they need to keep asking questions to develop their understanding. Muslims do not ask questions in following Allah's rules that is taught by Allah's messenger, but they ask questions to increase their knowledge about their DEEN.

Let us look at few lessons that we can learn as pilgrims about the dressing during Ihram in Hajj. Dressing like a dead person is to train Muslim minds for greater things such as:

- To remind them about the reality of life that they must die one day,
- To remind them that one day they must go back to Allah through death,
- To train them to dress humbly,
- To remind them that their funeral dress will be the same and simple like Ihram dress, without extravagance, and it should remind them to dress humbly in this life,
- To train them about that Allah loves righteous dress not otherwise,
- To train them to remember death, so they won't be too attached to this life only and so on.

Ihram and dressing in Hajj are totally unique in Hajj. In no journey or celebration, one can see these extra-ordinary methods. What lessons does it give to Muslims? Again, the lesson is: Muslims must wear the righteous dress in life, and they should remember that one day they will be buried with righteous dress like the dress in Ihram, and they should lead a humble life as a servant of Allah.

Lesson from Tawaf:

What is Tawaf? It is another Hajj duty. It means, circling around the Sacred House of Allah during Hajj. It is one of the main pillars of Hajj. It must be done, and without doing it, Hajj is not valid. Considering its importance, one can get the signal that Tawaf must be a must duty for very important reason. Otherwise, if it was not very important, then it could have been made an optional duty. Why is it so important? Another point is an important duty is to teach and train an important lesson for the pilgrims. What is that important lesson? Or what are the important lessons from this important pillar of Hajj? Again, as I gave example before, we can make a list of at least 10 questions around Tawaf, then we can seek for answers to improve our understanding, and satisfaction with our Imaan. Here, I am not going to go through many questions. I am suggesting to the readers to do that in their own time and pace. To give idea, I shall try to highlight one or two points to learn as examples Insha Allah!

In Hajj Muslims must circle around the Sacred House of Allah. This circling is called Tawaf. One may wonder why this Tawaf was prescribed in Hajj. Allah knows the best answer. It is worth asking this question for deepening our understanding. The question here is that what can we learn from Tawaf? Some of the lessons we can learn as below:

1. **Centre:** Everything has a centre. In our body the heart is the centre. The blood goes in and out of the heart as centre. Any object has a centre. This earth circling around a centre. The stars,

galaxies and so on are circling around the centre. The Sacred House of Allah in Makkah is also a centre. The Holy House is a symbol of centre. Then what is the centre for everything? The centre for everything is Allah! So, the first lesson from Tawaf is to realise that Allah is the centre of everything. Our life is rounding around Allah whether we want it or not. So, as Muslims we should also dedicate our life circling around Allah's obedience as we circle around the Ka'ba to obey Allah. Allah calls believers for total devotion to the obedience to Allah in the Holy Quran:

فُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Say, my Salah and my sacrifice, and my life and my death, all dedicated to the Lord of the Universe.”

[Al-Quran 6:162]

2. **Times and motion vs eternity:** In Tawaf the House in the centre stands still but the people around it comes and goes. It teaches the eternity of Allah and the temporariness of Humans and every creation of Allah. It teaches Muslims not to be too dedicated about their temporary testing period in this life rather they must round around their entire life to the obedience of eternal Lord, the Allah Almighty. They should remember, as they go around the Sacred House of Allah, the same way after some time in this life, they will return to Allah. Whatever freedom they receive is respite, but they are always tied up with Allah's rope, and as soon as that rope will be pulled, they will die from this life to meet their Lord, Allah. Before their birth, they were created as souls by Allah, after their life they will die as Allah's plan and angel will take their souls away by Allah's order, and then after their death, they will return to Allah. Therefore, their life and death are resembling the tawaf which is going around Allah's House to obey Allah's order.

Therefore, Tawaf, reminds them about the reality of life that they are only circling around in this life around Allah's plans and decisions, and whenever Allah decides for them to return to HIM, then again, they will circle around Allah's plan. Therefore, why not they circle around Allah's obedience in their life always to receive HIS Mercy, Blessings, and Love to be close to HIM in Paradise, as they are close to Allah's House during circling. All the temporary things in this life will perish, but Allah will remain and that's why circling around Allah's obedience is the only safety. Allah confirms it in the Holy Quran:

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ۖ وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَلِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

“All that is on earth will perish: But will remain (alive forever), the Face of your Lord, Full of Majesty, Bounty and Honour.”

[Al-Quran 55:26-27]

Therefore, Tawaf means a lot in a Muslim's life. Tawaf is not just a meaningless circling around for fun. But it is there to imprint the right feelings and attitudes in Muslims about Allah. Muslim is the one who surrenders to Allah for all the time, obey Allah's orders in life, love Allah so much so that he/she feels connected with Allah and to deepen that connection prays 5 times daily as divine therapy. Their life and their efforts all are circling around Allah, and Tawaf is a further reminder for that. May Allah grant us the correct understanding. Allah knows best.

Lesson from Talbia:

What is Talbia? Talbia is the supplication (Dua) recited by the Hajji during Ihram period. Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with both) said that he heard Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) saying (In Hajj):

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

Labbaika Allahumma Labbaik; Labbaika laa shareeka laka labbaik; Innal Hamda wan-ni'mata laka wal-Mulk; Laa shareeka lak.

(I am present to YOU, O Allah! I am present to YOUR service; YOU have no partners. I am present in YOUR service. All the praises, all blessings and sovereignty are YOURS; YOU have no partners.)
[Muttafaqun A'laih].

What is the lesson can we learn from this Talbia? Some of them are as following:

- **Responding to the call of Allah:** More than 4000 years ago Ibrahim (peace be upon him) called Muslims to go to Hajj for Allah and since then, when true believers attended in there, they responded to that call saying as if, “O Allah! YOU called, and I am present to YOUR service. I will now do whatever you want me to do. I shall avoid now whatever YOU prohibit for me to do.” Labbaik is like a response from a student when his name is called in the class. When his name is pronounced, he says, “I am present.” Allah called us for Hajj, and upon our arrival in Hajj we say like the roll call, “I am present O Allah.” With this understanding, when I intended for my Hajj, and my first Labbaika I wanted to say, I became emotional. Tears rolled down on my cheek, my voice was shaken, my thoughts were about thanking Allah, and my heart was filled with Allah’s love and reverence. It was such a sweet experience that no words can describe. Alhamdulillah, and all the thanks to Allah for allowing me to arrive in there to say, Labbaika Allahumma Labbaik.”
- **Surrendering everything:** In this response one surrenders his wishes, desires, choices, culture, father’s ways and so on. Pilgrims leave everything behind to say Labbaika to Allah. They leave their loved ones, they cry when they leave, but they find more love for Allah in their hearts than their loved ones. They leave their business, wealth and jobs behind and they focus on the one-way street, and that street is to go forward to be around the Sacred House of Allah to say Labbaik. What a love for Allah, and for the obedience of Allah. Their money, family, business cannot keep them away from Allah’s call, HIS Mercy and forgiveness. This is the reality for the believers in their daily lives. They do their worldly duties, but their main duty is that they take as worshipping Allah for HIS love and for HIS Paradise. Labbaika is another demonstration for that. The same way a Muslim should lead his or her life. A Muslim must surrender all their selfish desires, choices, greed, and wants to Allah’s guidance, and must follow only Allah’s command for passing the test in this life for Paradise.
- **Learn to respond to Allah’s daily call:** Labbaik is responding to Allah’s call with so much sacrifice. Good on Muslims. Does that mean that we ignore Allah’s daily call, and give importance to Hajj call once in life? After that, we forget again about Allah’s call every day. How many times Allah called the believers in the Holy Quran? Whenever Allah says, “YA AIYYUHALLASEENA AAMANU - O you who believe!” is a call to give the believers commandments to do for their best or to avoid for their best. How many believers go through those calls in the Holy Quran to make a list, and then follow them in life? For example, Allah calls for 5 times prayers, and do believers respond to that call regularly? Labbaika is a great reminder that believers must respond to all calls from Allah as they responded to the Hajj call. Therefore, the point is, Labbaika or any other Hajj duties are not separate, disjointed actions

from our life. No, everything Allah asks believers to do is all connected to one another. Every action is designed to have harmony with other actions to build believer's life as harmonious among actions as holistic. Allah knows best.

So, Talbia should be a part of every Muslim's life. Every day Muslims should learn to say, O Allah! I am present to serve YOU in every action in my life. If we look at the teaching of Talbia in the life of Ibrahim (peace be upon him), we can see the same theme. When Allah called him to leave his country for Da'wa he responded to that. When Allah called him to build HIS house, he responded to that. When Allah called him to leave his wife and baby in Makkah in an inhabited land, he did respond to that as well. When Allah asked him to sacrifice his beloved son, he responded to that call without any hesitation. These are the practicalities of Talbia in every Muslims' life. That's why from Hajj Muslims must take necessary lessons. If they take Hajj and duties as rituals, then it will be their great loss.

Lesson from kissing the black Stone:

The black Stone is placed in a corner of the Sacred House. Pilgrims try to kiss it directly or they try to touch it, or they try to touch it with stick and then kiss on the stick. Some pilgrims try very hard to kiss it because their life-dream has been to kiss it one day during Hajj. Some weak people do not approach it to avoid accident. Disabled pilgrims are not allowed in these days to go to the ground anyway because of their safety. I did my Tawaf on the 2nd floor, and it was a bigger circumference, more pushing on wheelchair was necessary, and when I approached the green light that shows the BlackStone corner, I leaned forward. So, the good thing is that one does not have to kiss it and can do the ritual from far with safety with signal. So, the obvious question one may ask about the lesson from it.

First, I should address another question to remove the confusion. Some people wonder who do not know details about Islamic practices, they question if the kissing of the Black Stone is a worship. Islam prohibits worshipping anything else except Allah, and if pilgrims' worship the Black Stone, then it contradicts against the main teaching of Islam. Some people asked me this question and I always welcome questions because it gives me an opportunity to explain the true teaching about Islam. Yes, it is true that Islam teaches to worship Allah only, and it prohibits worshipping anything else, and with that Faith, pilgrims do not worship the BlackStone. They lean forward towards the Stone not for worship. Allow me to highlight few points to explain more about it in the following:

- **It is not considered a god:** Muslims do not believe this Stone as God or part of God. On the other hand, Stone worshippers believe a certain Stone as their god. Muslims believe that Allah is One God and HE has no partners. So, the main reason for kissing the Black Stone is not to kiss a god.
- **Not worship:** A Stone worshipper believes a certain Stone is God therefore he or she worships that Stone asking help from it. Whereas Muslims do not believe the Black Stone is a God. So, they do not worship the Black Stone, and they do not seek any help from that Stone, nor they believe that the Stone has any power over them as GOD has. Muslims do not even believe that the Stone can request to Allah for anything. So, kissing the Black Stone by Muslims has another reason, not the reason related to worship.
- **Not for any gain from it:** A Stone worshipper believes that the Stone has some power to help him or to harm him. Muslims do not believe the same about the Black Stone. Therefore, kissing the Black Stone has nothing to do with worship. We can look at an example from the Holy Prophet's best companion Hon Omar (May Allah be pleased with him). A'bis ibn Rabia'h (May Allah be pleased with him) said: I have seen Hon Omar (May Allah be pleased with him) kissing the black Stone and heard him saying:

وَعَنْ عَابِسِ بْنِ رَبِيعَةَ قَالَ: رَأَيْتُ عَمْرَ يَقْبِلُ الْحَجَرَ وَيَقُولُ: وَإِنِّي لَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ حَجَرٌ مَا تَنْفَعُ وَلَا تَضُرُّ وَلَوْلَا أَنِّي رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقْبِلُ مَا قَبَّلَتِكَ

“I know for sure that, you are such a Stone which can not cause any gain or loss, if I did not see Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) kissing you then I would not kiss you at all.”

[Muttafaqun A'laih]

Now, let us find out the main reasons for kissing the Black Stone. It has good reasons and none of the reason is related to worshipping the Stone. Below I shall try to highlight a few reasons and with lessons from it.

- **Love of the things from Paradise:** The kissing is purely to show that Muslims love for a Stone that was sent from paradise. Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: نَزَّلَ الْحَجَرَ الْأَسْوَدَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَهُوَ أَشَدُّ بَيَاضًا مِنَ الْبَنِ فَسَوَّدَتْهُ خَطَايَا بَنِي آدَمَ

“When Hazru Aswad (Black Stone) was sent from the Paradise, it was whiter than milk. Then sins of Adams children made it black.”

[Ahmed. Tirmidi]

According to the above Hadis, the black Stone was not from the earth, but it was sent down from the Paradise. Therefore, it is a special gift for the pilgrims from Allah. A gift never becomes a god, but a gift from Allah should be loved and appreciated. Our life, children, wealth, happiness, nature, fruits, foods etc are gifts from Allah. Don't we love them? Don't we love ourselves, our children, and our happiness? Don't we kiss our babies with love? Do we kiss them as gods? No, that is not the case. When we know that a Stone was sent from the Paradise, we have more love for it to show our appreciation and thanks to Allah. The lesson from it is, we need to love and appreciate more to Allah's blessings. We must not take Allah's gifts for granted, but we should show our thanks to Allah for them. Like the Black Stone, we should be loving people towards all Allah's blessings like family, children, relatives, fellow humans and beautiful nature.

- **Obedience of Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him):** Holy Messenger of Allah spent his entire life to teach about One Allah. Allah made him the best example to follow. Sometimes, he had time to explain, but other times he simply said, “Follow me” and he was followed without questions. In the Holy Quran, we find the command from Allah to follow HIS Messenger:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبِّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۖ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

“Say, ‘O Prophet, ‘If you ‘sincerely’ love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins. For Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.’”

[Al-Quran 3:31]

Therefore, kissing the Black Stone is to follow the practice of Holy Messenger of Allah. The comment from Hon Omar (may Allah be pleased with him) explains it all. A'bis ibn Rabia'h (May Allah be pleased with him) said:

وَعَنْ عَابِسِ بْنِ رَبِيعَةَ قَالَ: رَأَيْتُ عَمْرَ يَقْبِلُ الْحَجَرَ وَيَقُولُ: وَإِنِّي لَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ حَجَرٌ مَا تَنْفَعُ وَلَا تَضُرُّ وَلَوْلَا أَنِّي رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقْبِلُ مَا قَبَّلَتِكَ

I have seen Omar (May Allah be pleased with him) kissing the black Stone and heard him saying, “**I know for sure that, you are such a Stone which can not cause any gain or loss, if I did not see Holy Prophet (s.a.w) kissing you then I would not kiss you at all.**”
 [Muttafaqun A’laih]

The lesson from here is that Muslims must follow the teachings of Muhammad (peace be upon him), whether they understand it or not because Allah has commanded to follow HIS Messenger to receive HIS love, Mercy and Forgiveness. Muslims follow Allah’s messenger and kissing the Black Stone over thousand years is the proof for it.

- **For the removal of sins:** Allah sent the Black Stone for a special reason, and HE made the Stone to suction the sins from pilgrims. The Stone has a job to do because Allah has appointed it to do that specific duty. By kissing, the pilgrims allow the Stone to do its duty. Therefore, kissing has nothing to do with worshipping, rather following Allah’s command to allow the Stone to do its job. We can see it in the same Hadis mentioned above. Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

**قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ» :نَزَّلَ الْحَجَرُ الْأَسْوَدُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَهُوَ أَشَدُّ
بَيَاضًا مِنَ الْلَّبَنِ فَسَوَّدَتْهُ خَطَايَا بَنِي آدَمَ**

“When Hazru Aswad (BlackStone) was sent from the Paradise, it was whiter than milk.
 Then sins of Adam children made it black.”

[Ahmed. Tirmidi]

- **Greatness of Allah on kissing:** Stone worshippers proclaim the greatness of the Stone when they offer their worship to the Stone. But that is not the case with kissing the Black Stone. At the kissing, or at the hinting towards the Black Stone from far, a pilgrim says, “Allahu Akbar.” What does it mean? It means Allah is the greatest Only God, and we only worship Allah. Proclaiming Allah’s greatness as The Only One GOD is not a sign of worshipping the Stone. Not at all. Holy Messenger of Allah said, “Allahu Akbar” in his Hajj. Abdullah Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with both) narrated that:

**أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ طَافَ بِالْبَيْتِ عَلَى بَعِيرٍ كُلَّمَا أَتَى عَلَى الرُّكْنِ
أَشَارَ إِلَيْهِ بِشَيْءٍ فِي يَدِهِ وَكَبَّرَ . رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ**

“Holy Messenger of Allah did his Tawaf sitting on the Camel, and whenever he arrived at the Black Stone, he signalled at the Black Stone with his stick and said ALLAHU AKBAR.”

[Bukhari]

The lesson is, whatever Allah decides as the method of worship, and HIS messenger taught it, believers follow them without question. That characteristic is the part of total submission to Allah. Kissing the Black Stone is not joining any partners with Allah, and it is a part of worshipping Allah.

Lesson from Sa’ee:

Running between Safa and Marwa is called Sa’ee. A Hajji must run 7 times. To understand some lessons from it we should go back to the history of it briefly. Hon Hazera (may Allah be pleased with her), wife of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) was desperate to find water to save her baby’s life. Baby Ismael was weak and in serious condition without both water and mother’s milk. In that desperate time, she decided to look for water. She climbed on the Safa Mountain at first praying and seeking for the water. She was hoping that she would find any water spot, but she did not find any. Then she

climbed down to the valley, ran across the plane land, and climbed again on the other side of the mountain named Marwa. In this way, she made 7 rounds. Then Angel Jibrael (peace be upon him) hit the ground with heel and water came out. Pilgrims are still drinking from the water spring called Zamzam well.

Now, in her running what are the significant lessons do we see? Some of them are below:

- **Positive attitude:** She did not give up hope. Hope motivated her to try hard. Trial and tribulation are part of believer's life because Allah wants to test them whether they are still obedient servants to Allah or not. Allah has promised that HE would test the believers to find out who is true believer. To pass all the tests positive attitude is necessary. Allah says:

أَحَسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُشْرِكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا إِنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ۚ وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ ۗ

“Do people think once they say, “We believe,” that they will be left without being put to the test? We certainly tested those before them. And ‘in this way’ Allah will clearly distinguish between those who are truthful and those who are liars.”

[Al-Quran 29:1-2]

- **Hope in Allah:** She had strong hope in Allah. That was her main strength. Keeping up hope in Allah's Mercy is a best quality every Muslim must have in their day-to-day challenges. They will be tested whether they put their trust in Allah or not. Muslims must acquire this quality because Allah does not allow believers to be hopeless. Holy Quran states:

وَلَا تَأْيُسُوا مِنْ رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهُ لَا يَأْيُسُ مِنْ رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

“And do not lose hope in the mercy of Allah, for no one loses hope in Allah's mercy except those with no faith.”

[Al-Quran 12:87]

- **Hard effort:** She did not sit down doing nothing. She did her best. She tried her utmost. Some people wrongly think that they will do nothing and will put their trust in Allah, but the trust in Allah means doing one's best, praying to Allah for the success and accepting Allah's decision whatever it is. For believers, the lesson is from her that they must work hard to achieve good things. They should not think that Paradise will come easy without effort, or success will come without effort. Allah gives success to those who work hard as Hon Hazera did:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبْلَنَا ۖ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“As for those who struggle in Our cause, We will surely guide them along Our Way. And Allah is certainly with the good doers.”

[Al-Quran 29:69]

- **Supplication:** She did not only try, but with trying, she also made supplication to Allah for help. Islam teaches Muslims to ask Allah for everything good. Allah is happy if they ask HIM. Supplication is necessary in good times and in bad times, but in bad times it is essential because a true believer needs to turn to Allah in calamity or challenges. Supplication gives hope, gives belonging, relieves pain, and brings Allah's Mercy. For example, Prophet Yunus (Peace be upon him) was swallowed by a large fish, and then from the dark belly of the fish, he cried to Allah, and Allah rescued him. Allah has the power to rescue HIS servants from any serious situation, and Hon Hazera knew that and practiced her dua in her adverse situation. The lesson is, Muslims should ask Allah for the best things all the time. This is HIS command:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ أَذْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

“Your Lord has proclaimed, “Call upon Me, I will respond to you.”
[Al-Quran 40:60]

Did Allah answer her dua? Yes, Allah did. Her faith in Allah, reliability on Allah, utmost effort and supplication all was the right course of actions. Allah mercifully solved her problem. In Hajj, the running between Safa and Marwa is according to Hon Hazera's tradition. So, in Sa'ee pilgrims must learn from her doings that Allah loved it so much and recommended to keep it alive in the duties of Hajj. These positive attitudes that we see in her are necessary in worship, in good deeds, in facing challenges and to be successful in best things in this life and in achieving Paradise in next life. That's why, Allah has kept her righteous efforts alive for the pilgrims to come and remind themselves to practice in their daily lives.

Lesson from gathering in the A'rafah field:

Gathering in the field of A'rafah in Hajj is a compulsion. Millions of Muslims come in A'rafah with uncombed hair, with dusty faces, with simple clothes and with praises of Allah in their lips. It is an amazing scene. There are no fights, no quarrels, no competition to be famous, no comparisons of high or low status, no race as an issue, but with only one focus that all Muslims in there are Allah's humble servants. They are the believing brothers and sisters. They stay in there without envy, or worldly gains, but they focus on reaping the fruits for their next life. The fruits are forgiveness from Allah, blessings from Allah and the acceptance of dua etc. They dedicate their time and effort to gain the priceless things that money or wealth cannot buy.

That gathering in A'rafah brings Muslims very close to Allah's Mercy and Forgiveness. We find that fact from a Hadis. Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

وَعَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ : إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ : مَا مِنْ يَوْمٍ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ أَنْ يُعْتَقَ
الَّهُ فِيهِ عَبْدًا مِنْ النَّارِ مِنْ يَوْمٍ عَرَفَةَ وَإِنَّهُ لَيَدْنُو ثُمَّ يُبَاهِي بِهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ فَيَقُولُ : مَا أَرَادَ
هُوَ لَاءُ . رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ

“There is not a day than the day of A'rafah in which Allah relieves more servants from the Fire of Hell. HE comes very close to them and expresses HIS pride for HIS servants with Angels, and HE says, “Tell ME what they want? (I will give them what they want from ME).

[Muslim]

SO, what are the lessons we can learn from the Gathering in A'rafah? Some are below:

- **Gathering on the Day of Judgment:** It reminds Muslims that they have to gather before Allah on the Day of Judgment in a larger scale like the gathering in A'rafah. On that Day, Allah will gather the entire mankind for reckoning. Muslims always should remember about the Day of Judgment, because it will remind them to avoid sinful actions that Allah has prohibited and will encourage them to do good actions to receive rewards from Allah. The one remembers this issue most, is the best Muslim.
- **To be ready for the Day of Judgment:** The Day of Judgment will be the point of no return. No worships, no repents or no seeking forgiveness will be allowed on the Day of gathering in next life. But the Hajj gathering on the day of A'rafah, is a chance for Muslims to repent, to be corrected and to receive forgiveness from Allah. So, A'rafah gathering encourages Muslims to seek forgiveness desperately, to be saved on the gathering in the Day of Judgment. After the

Hajj when they return to their homes, they should be practicing the same practice as they did in A'rafah.

- **Best safety:** In Hajj gathering Muslims supplicate to Allah to be saved from all the sufferings in this life and in next life. It gives them the lesson that Allah is the best source of safety for Muslims. They should stay connected with Allah through their 5 times prayers, remembrance of Allah, and for their regular obedience to Allah's commandments.
- **Muslim unity:** Millions of Muslims gather as one united family in the gathering of A'rafah. It teaches them that, in A'rafah gathering they enjoy peace and security through unity in Faith and Unity in the loyalty to Allah. If they follow the same faith and loyalty of Allah at home or in this world, then Muslims will be united, and they will progress peacefully and happily.
- **Fear of the Day of Judgment:** Hajj gathering in A'rafah reminds Muslims about the Day of Judgment. If they can hold on to that fear and avoid sins, then Allah will save them from the troubles on the Day of Judgment and Allah will admit them into Paradise Insha Allah!

Therefore, the takeaways lesson from it is to practice in daily lives of Muslims. Muslims should focus on learnings from the Hajj, and not just on the rituals. May Allah help us!

Lesson from stoning (Throwing pebbles) on pillars:

What is the story behind this stoning or throwing pebbles on the pillars? According to a narration, Adam (peace be upon him) arrived in Mina, then Satan came near him. He threw stone on Satan and Satan ran away. Like this Ibrahim (peace be upon him) came to sacrifice his son (Ismael) in Mina, Satan arrived in there to discourage him from sacrificing. He also threw stone on Satan and Satan ran away. Later, the exact place, where they stoned Satan was built pillars to identify the place. These pillars are called "Jamrah". There are 3 Jamrah as following:

1. **Jamrah Ulaa:** From Makkah side it is the first pillar near Masjid Khaief.
2. **Jamrah Usta:** The 2nd one.
3. **Jamrah Aqabah or Jamaratul Qubra:** (Returning from A'rafah stoning begins from this one)

Some people think that the STONE is thrown. It is not Stone. It is pebbles. Stones are bigger in size, and pebbles are very small sized stones. So, one must remember, one should not throw a stone on pillars to avoid any injury. Also, some people may misunderstand that the pebbles are thrown to Satan. No! Not to Satan, because Satan is not physically present in there. Then, on what do they throw the Pebbles? They throw pebbles on a symbol of Satan. This pebbles throwing is for learning lessons, or for reminder, or for motivations etc. Therefore, pilgrims should focus on the lessons from there. They should ask questions to increase the knowledge around pebbles throwing such as, why is it, or what is the purpose of it, or what does it remind me, or what motivation I should learn from it, or what can I take away from it? While they are in Hajj, it is the best time to ask the learned people. Learning about Islam and increasing knowledge about Islam is the best form of Zikr during Hajj. When pilgrims are not busy, they should make their camp as study circle instead of talking about lesser important thinks. I shall highlight a few take aways from pebbles throwing just to stimulate the ideas, and I expect the readers will study more insha Allah! Some take aways are below:

- **Following Sunnah:** First, throwing pebbles on the pillars is Sunnah (Prophet's teaching). Sunnah is what was practically done by the prophet of Allah, Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him), and since then it has become a tradition. Muhammad (peace be upon him) had done that as to finalise this tradition. Pilgrims do it to follow the same Sunnah. So, the lesson is that Muslims follow the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger in Hajj by throwing pebbles and the same way, they will follow all Sunnah of Allah's messenger in their day-to-day life. They will take

away that spirit, and in their worship, manner, character, dealings, and actions they will learn what was prophet's Sunnah, and they will take the Sunnah as their standard.

- **Disgust to Satan:** Satan hates humans and works hard to deviate them from Allah's guidance to take them in the Hell Fire with him. Satan is sent away from Allah's Mercy due to his defiance, disobedience and arrogance, and the same way he wants to inspire humans to be like him to receive failures and sufferings. Allah informed about Satan's mission in the Holy Quran and advised believers to know about their enemy Satan who humiliated their original parents (Adam and Hawa) in Paradise by deceiving them. Throwing pebbles is the symbol of expressing believers disgust to Satan. The lesson from it is that Satan wanted to misguide Ibrahim (Peace be upon him), and Allah guided Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) to take Allah's refuge and drive the Satan away. Similarly, pilgrims will go back to their daily lives, and they will drive Satan away from everything they do. They will be careful about which inspiration from Satan, and they will follow Allah's guidance taught by HIS Messenger. The way they show their disgust to Satan by throwing pebbles, the same way they will maintain distance from Satanic works, will never take Satan as their friends but as enemy, and by doing that they will receive Allah's Mercy.
- **Expression of enmity:** No one throws Stones to a friend or to a stranger until one is sure that the visitor is his extreme enemy. The biggest enemy of mankind is Satan, and most people do not know about it. A considerable amount of information in the Holy Quran is about Satan and his tactics, and with examples how much damage he did to Allah's vicegerents. So, Allah has warned the humans to take their enemy Satan as enemy, not to take any chance to be deceived by Satan. But in practical life, Satan takes chance from people's ignorance, and carelessness and in many ways manages to deceive people, misguides them and take them away from Allah's Path. In Hajj, Allah wants the believers to throw pebbles to give them a practical lesson to take home. The lesson is, they must be careful about their enemy Satan, and to be saved from his deception they should turn to Allah. They must follow Allah's guidance that Allah's messenger has taught completely (100%) to be saved from Satan.
- **To be sure that Satan is defeated:** Would you stone someone who is innocent and free from any crime? You would not. But if someone is proven guilty for a horrendous crime, then in some country the law permits to stone them, or in other words to punish them. Throwing pebbles to Satan (Symbol) is a practical example that Satan is proven guilty as a criminal by the Judgment of Allah, and in Hajj, pilgrims join in by punishing him. Satan's crime was not against one individual, but his crime was and is against the entire humanity. That's why, in throwing pebbles every year millions of pilgrims participate. The lesson from it is that eventually Satan is only a deceiver without power, and Allah is Almighty and if we take Satan's inspiration to lead our lives, Allah will punish us with Satan, and we will be defeated. Like Satan has no power against Allah, similarly, if we follow Satan we have no power against Allah. Or if we carry on doing sinful actions for Satan's inspiration, we will be defeated, and we will be punished as Satan is punished. If all the pilgrims take away those lessons, inshallah they will be the best servants of Allah deserving the best rewards from Allah.

Again, what does it mean in our daily lives if we practice our disgust, enmity, and disconnection with Satan by throwing pebbles at him during Hajj? It means, we can do good actions in our daily lives that Satan discourages us from doing, such as we can be regular in 5 times Salah, we can connect ourselves with the Holy Quran in learning, teaching and practicing according to it, we can practice fairness and justice in all levels, we can respect and give human rights as Allah guided, we can practice best manners and characters as Allah's Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) has taught us, and we can be the best people. Satan wants all the opposite things from us, and if we truly

feel disgust about Satan, then we must show disgust to all Satanic actions in our lives. Holy Quran guides the believers with a valuable advice, and that is:

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًا ۝ إِنَّمَا يَدْعُوا حِزْبَهُ لِيَكُونُوا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ

“Surely, Satan is an enemy to you: So, treat him like an enemy. He only calls to his followers, so that they may (also) be companions of the blazing Fire.”

[Al-Quran 35:6]

Lesson from sacrificing animals:

Sacrificing animals in the name of Allah is called Qurbani. Hon Ayesha (May Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ "مَا عَمِلَ آدَمِيٌّ مِّنْ عَمَلٍ يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ أَحَبَّ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ إِهْرَاقِ الدَّمِ إِنَّهَا لَتَأْتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِقُرُونِهَا وَأَشْعَارِهَا وَأَظْلَافِهَا وَإِنَّ الدَّمَ لَيَقُ౰ مِنَ اللَّهِ بِمَكَانٍ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَقْعُ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ فَطِبِّعُوا بِهَا نَفْسًا

“That the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "A human does no other action from the actions on the day of Nahr more beloved to Allah then spilling blood (of sacrificial animals). On the Day of Judgement, it will appear with its horns, and hair, and hooves, and indeed the blood will be accepted by Allah from where it is received before it even falls upon earth, so let your heart delight in it.”

[Tirmidi]

Allah tested Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) to see whether he surrendered to Allah fully or not. To test that Allah asked him to sacrifice his own beloved child Ismael. When Ibrahim (peace be upon him) was going to slaughter his own son, Allah called him to stop. Allah was pleased on him and on his son and replaced his son with a Ram. Since then, Qurbani became a tradition to sacrifice an animal as a symbol of sacrificing oneself totally for the sake of Allah. Today, Qurbani is a well-known phenomenon, and people from all walks of life know about it. Some want to know why it is, or what is the purpose of it, or what is to learn from it in our daily lives. Many people from different faiths ask me these questions, and I feel honoured to be asked because I can see their genuine eagerness to learn about my religion, and I feel honoured to answer them.

Muslims are the first people who should ask these questions again and again to remind ourselves about the lessons from Qurbani because we have voluntarily accepted this religion, submitted to Allah and we renew our promise to Allah at least 17 times daily that we shall only worship (Obey, follow the lessons that comes from Allah) Allah. In 5 times Salah we renew our contract with Allah by saying:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝

“You ‘alone’ we worship and You ‘alone’ we ask for help.”

[Al-Quran 1: 5]

Qurbani is a worship, and Allah has commanded pilgrims to do it, and pilgrims should do it, and they should increase their understanding about the wisdom of doing it and about learning the lessons from it for greater benefits in their lives. Doing a good thing is a good thing, but doing it with understanding is a better thing, and doing it with understanding to learn lessons to practice those lessons in life is the best action. Which action believers must take? The good one, or the better one or the best one? We

should target for the best option to compete in righteousness because Allah loves those who are righteous.

Now, let me highlight a few lessons from the Qurbani. Those lessons should be part of our daily lives for our own success insha Allah!

- **WHOM must we love most:** Allah tested prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) about the love. The test was whether he loved his son more than Allah. He proved that he loved Allah more than his beloved son. This is the lesson for us. We must love Allah more than anything because to Allah we belong and to HIM is our return. Our life, wealth, children, and happiness are all Allah's gifts. Sometimes we forget that Allah gave us gifts and HE can take it away. We forget that we should thank Allah for those gifts, and when Allah takes away some of HIS gifts, we should be happy with HIS decisions. Instead, some become possessive with those gifts, become arrogant and proud, and do not love Allah by obeying Allah's commands in daily lives.
- **WHOM must we obey at all times:** Shall we obey Allah only when we find it easy, or when it is suitable for our selfish desires, or in our good times, or when we have nothing much to lose, and disobey Allah in calamity, in sacrificing loved things, or in giving money as charity, or going through hardship to obey Allah all the time? Qurbani was the test for that lesson, and Ibrahim (peace be upon him) obeyed Allah without question because he proved to be the sincere servant of Allah. If some Muslims divide their loyalty based on suitability, greed and selfish desires, then they will probe themselves as conditional Muslims, not the complete 100% Muslims. Hajj is the symbol of sacrifice in general for the pleasure of Allah, and Qurbani is also an additional reminder that Muslims must obey Allah in any situation.
- **What to sacrifice for Allah:** Is sacrificing the animal enough lesson from the Qurbani? If someone thinks that during Qurbani season, he shall sacrifice a big animal without sacrificing selfishness or greed in himself, will it be a sufficient lesson from the Qurbani? If he thinks that way, then he did not understand the pure lesson from the Qurbani. He must remember, Allah ordered the Qurbani on the humans (Son of Ibrahim peace be upon him), and he wanted total giving, or total surrendering with life? When the father and son surrendered their life to Allah, then Allah ransomed his son with a ram, but tradition alive to teach believers that they must sacrifice their ego, arrogance, selfishness, envy, cruelty, inhuman action, oppression, unfairness to abuse human right, their bad manners and character, their haram cravings, their haram belief such as SHIRK, and their haram consumption and actions. Therefore, from Qurbani, Muslims must learn to sacrifice all the Haram things, and to adhere to all the Halal things. That is part of Taqwa, and Allah wants believers to learn the lesson of Taqwa from Qurbani.
- **To remember the owner:** When believers slaughter an animal in the name of Allah by the praises of Allah's Glory, "Allahu Akbar," what does it remind them? It reminds them that Allah is the real owner of the animals, not any other untrue gods. Every slaughter is a reminder that we are beggars of Allah's bounties, and we must not dedicate our sacrifice to false gods. This lesson is very important because it sets the tone of believer's mindset. They always remember that they are living every second of their lives in Allah's Mercy, and they do not own anything, and Allah provides for everything. That spirit saves them from SHIRK (Joining partners with One Allah) and keeps their soul pure. Therefore, Qurbani is a declaration of TAWHID (Oneness of Allah), and this beautiful tradition (Reminder) began from Prophet Ibrahim (Peace upon him). Again, the lesson from Qurbani includes humility to Allah without arrogance, and always to worship Allah with humility.
- **To thank Allah:** We must take Allah's name when we do the Qurbani. It reminds us that Allah has provided for us meat, wool, skin and bones of animals, and all are for our benefit. Without

Allah's provisions, we cannot survive for a second. So many people are enjoying the food, drinks, fruit etc in this life without pondering Who gave it? Or did all of it come from nowhere? Whom should we give thanks to for all these provisions? Islam teaches the believers to remember that Allah has given the provisions, and that's why, they must always give thanks to Allah. Qurbani reminds Muslims that their hearts should be filled with thanks to Allah, and for it, Allah will increase more bounties for them.

➤ **To learn compassion:** Qurbani meat is blessed because it is done in the name of Allah, with the thanks to Allah, and to follow Allah's messenger's tradition for the holy intention. In the Qurbani, gaining name or fame, or showing off, or pride and arrogance, or selfish intentions, or the greedy desires has no room. Instead, Qurbani teaches to share and care. For example, Allah recommends that Qurbani meat to be eaten by the Qurbani giver as well as the those who are poor. What is the main lesson in the sharing with poor and others? This is the lesson to be compassionate, to be kind and to look after one another as humans. Islam has given rights of families, relatives, friends, neighbours, communities and fellow humans. We must take care of one another for the pleasure of Allah, and Qurbani teaches us to be compassionate.

In conclusion, Qurbani teaches us the total submission to Allah by sacrificing all the harmful things inside us. Allah has guided mankind with comprehensive, holistic, and complete guidance to sacrifice bad things, and to adhere good things in every aspect of our life. The true spirit of Qurbani is to give up all the bad things and to do all the best things. Holy Quran summarized this concept in a verse:

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Say: my Salah, my sacrifice, my life and my death all are dedicated in the obedience to Allah, the Lord of the universe.”

[Al-Quran 6:162]

Lesson from Holy Prophet's sermon in Hajj:

Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) delivered a brief sermon, but full of lessons, in the Hajjatul Widaa (goodbye Hajj). His every word is full of lessons for the Muslims as well as for the whole mankind. I shall point out a few points only briefly to keep the size of the chapter short. His short yet valuable speech (Sermon) is recorded in Hadis's. One of those Hadis is recorded in Sahih Muslim, and the Hadis is narrated by Hon Jabir ibn Abdullah (May Allah be pleased with him) briefly below.

Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) reminded very important aspects for the peace and harmony, fairness and human rights and for the guidance to pass the life test for the Paradise in the next life. From this Hadis, I shall put the highlighted points below:

إِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ حَرَامٌ كُحْرَمَةٌ يَوْمَكُمْ هَذَا فِي شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا

“Your life and wealth are honourable to each other as this Day, this month, and this city is honourable.”

أَلَا كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مِّنْ أَمْرِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ تَحْتَ قَدَمِي مَوْضُوعٌ وَدِمَاءُ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ مَوْضُوعَةٌ وَإِنَّ أَوَّلَ دَمَ أَضَعُّ مِنْ دَمَائِنَا دَمُ ابْنِ رَبِيعَةَ بْنِ الْحَارِثِ وَكَانَ مُسْتَرْضِعًا فِي بَنِي سَعْدٍ فَقَتَلَهُ هُدَيْلٌ

“All bad deeds from the days of ignorance are cancelled, the blood revenge of ignorance age is cancelled, and I am cancelling the blood revenge of Ibn Rabia ibn Haris (From my tribe) ...”

بِالْجَاهِلِيَّةِ مَوْضُوعٌ وَأَوْلُ رِبًا أَضَعُ مِنْ رِبَّاتِ رِبَّاتِ عَبَّاسِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ فَإِنَّهُ مَوْضُوعٌ
كُلُّهُ

“The complex interest from the days of ignorance is cancelled and I am cancelling the complex interest of my uncle Abbas ibn Abdul Muttalib.”

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فِي النِّسَاءِ فَإِنَّكُمْ أَخْذَنُمُوهُنَّ بِأَمَانِ اللَّهِ

“You must fear Allah about your wives, you have taken them as trust from Allah.”

وَقَدْ تَرَكْتُ فِيمُّ مَا لَنْ تَضَلُّوا بَعْدَهُ إِنِّي أَعْتَصِمُ بِهِ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ

“I am leaving the Book of Allah with you, if you hold on to it, you won’t be misguided.”

وَأَنْتُمْ [ص] [تُسْأَلُونَ عَنِّي فَمَا أَنْتُمْ قَائِلُونَ؟] «قَالُوا: نَشْهُدُ أَنَّكَ قَدْ بَلَغْتَ وَأَدَيْتَ وَنَصَحْتَ.
فَقَالَ بِإِصْبَاعِهِ السَّبَابَةِ يَرْفَعُهَا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَيَنْكُثُهَا إِلَى النَّاسِ»: اللَّهُمَّ اشْهُدْ اللَّهُمَّ اشْهُدْ

“When you will be questioned by Allah about me, what would you say? In response the audience said: We shall witness that you have passed Allah’s message to us, you have performed your duties, and you have wanted best for us. Then he (peace be upon him) pointed his finger towards heaven and said 3 times, “O Allah! YOU be witness”

[MUSLIM]

Now, from the above sermon we can extract a few lessons:

- **Cancellation of hatred and harm:** He (peace be upon him) made killing, and robbing etc prohibited. Before him in the ignorance age, people were harming and hating one another, and they were after revenge, bloodshed and had no peace and harmony. In his historical sermon he blocked the deeds that bring unhappiness. This policy of respecting another’s life and belongings are a mercy is not only for Muslims but for the entire mankind. The extra-ordinary thing is after receiving so much injury, hurt, and persecution from the Quraish cruelty, here he is standing before 100,000 people, and instead of motivating them to take revenge, kill and dishonour, he is inspiring believers to take the path of peace, to break the chain of vendetta, and to forgive to receive healing and to establish a harmonious relationship between humans by respecting and honouring one another’s life and property. The lesson for Muslim is that they should learn this extra-ordinary quality of honouring people’s life, property and honour and they should lead humanity by example.
- **Cancellation of economic slavery:** Complex interest system was making few people rich and others poor. He (peace be upon him) brought a fair economy based on profit and loss sharing in his historical sermon. This fair economic policy is not only beneficial for Muslims but beneficial for entire mankind. After so much suffering, and oppression from others, he showed that he came to build a better world with fairness. His aim was never to be rich, to accumulate lots of wealth. No, he took the path towards mercy for the mankind. He stood up for the disadvantaged and vulnerable, abolished the usury to remove economic oppression. Economic oppression is a big problem in this world. It creates disparity between humans, some become too rich to act like gods, it creates class system by making some humans better than others to cause suffering. The lesson for Muslims in this; is that they must follow the fair Islamic economic system, pay the poor due to share the wealth around, follow the profit & loss sharing business to establish fair system to give equal space for everyone to grow etc.

- **Advice and pioneering in action:** He (peace be upon him) did not just cancel the wrong tradition or did not give order for others to follow. Many leaders advise others without practicing it. He (Peace be upon him) led by example. He was always first to practice encouraging others to follow him. He (peace be upon him) taught that Allah dislikes people who advise others to do the good things when they themselves do not practice it. He (Peace be upon him) was an ideal role model appointed by Allah. So, we see the example here that he offered forgiveness on behalf of his tribe, and then he cancelled usury from his family member. This is extra-ordinary character, and most people cannot be an ideal exemplar like him (Peace be upon him). The lesson for Muslims is that they must practice what they preach.
- **Rights of family members:** Happiness for a society has got to start from the family because family is the main unit in the society. Happiness in families comes when both husband and wife respect each other's right by discharging their duties. Happiness comes if both are with best moral character and Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed that key point for the spouses. Again, rights and responsibilities between spouses is not only beneficial for Muslims but for the entire mankind. The important aspect here is that he began his advice with, "Fear Allah about your wives," and "You have taken them as trust from Allah." These two points are exceptional in Islamic marriage philosophy. Islamic marriage is between a male and female keeping Allah as witness and exchanging vows in the name of Allah. That makes the vows a holy vow with responsibility. It means, in the name of Allah, when they take one another as spouse, they take an Amaanah (Trust) in Allah's name. For it, they will be accountable in Allah's Court on the Day of Judgment in the next life. For this philosophy, Islamic marriage comes with responsibility to one another with accountability. The lesson for Muslims here is that they must take their marriage responsibly with the fear of accountability to Allah. If they do that, their marriage will have more endurance, they can give each other's rights, they can earn rewards, and they can find unity in marriage to be happy and to work together to be happy in the Paradise forever.
- **Book of guidance:** With other prophets when they passed away, their teachings also disappeared gradually, or people later mixed up the real teaching with their cultures, traditions and what their desire wanted. Often, due to the suitability of rulers, they asked scholars to bring changes in the holy scriptures. That is not the case with the Holy Quran. Allah sent the Holy Quran as the final masterpiece that summarized all the teachings of all the prophets. Then, because no other messenger is going to come, Allah protected the holy Quran from corruption. That's why, he (Peace be upon him) could say confidently that he would go one day, but the divine guidance Al-Quran will stay always as pure. Therefore, the guidance will be there, and one needs to follow it. The lesson here for Muslims is that they must hold on to the Quran to be successful. Therefore, they must read, understand, and follow Quranic guidance in their talks, gestures, manners, behaviours, actions, dealings, human relations, economics, enjoyments, human rights, justice and fairness etc.
- **Feedback:** Seeking for feedback is a sign of sincerity, honesty, courage, confidence, caring and high responsibility. He (Peace be upon him) had all of them in his personality. He was a messenger of Allah, Allah has certified him about his high moral character, and Allah has offered HIS unconditional forgiveness for him. So, he (peace be upon him) did not need to ask people to say whether he had done his duties. But he (peace be upon him) did that. The question is why did he do that or what was the wisdom behind it? The answer is that he (Peace be upon him) wanted to teach believers (And mankind) about taking the feedback. Taking feedback will remove arrogance in them, will be an assessment about their performances, will teach them where they are weak or strong (He, peace be upon him, was perfect), and they could fix if there were any mistakes before appearing to Allah's court. Therefore, husbands,

wives, brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers, teachers, students, leaders or followers, all should practice taking feedback. Feedback increases confidence, removes misunderstanding, allows to learn and correct before being questioned by Allah on the Day of Judgment in HIS Court.

- **Humility and love:** Try to feel holy prophet's sermon and reflect on it. I tried it, and I felt the selflessness, love and caring for others in him. I did not find anything that he asked from others. I can't hear anything that asked for power, or money, or position despite his dedicated followers were ready to anything for him. Did he ask any special favour for his family, for any race or group? No, his speech was on universal needs, and he represented all mankind. He was so selfless, and his only concern was how humanity will benefit, will prosper, will be saved from sufferings and discriminations. The lesson for Muslims here is that they should take care of Allah's creations, and Allah will take care of them. They should be kind to others, and Allah will be kind to them. May Allah bestow peace and mercy on Muhammad (Peace be upon him), his family, and companions, Ameen!

In conclusion, Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent as a messenger of Allah for the entire mankind. That's why in his message one can find policies to benefit people, not just a group but for all. His message has universality.

Chapter 6: Some terms used in Hajj

Hajj:

Hajj is pilgrimage to Makkah for the sake of Allah to do certain duties. It is Fard (Compulsory) on Muslims once in their lifetime for those who can afford the journey. Some aspects of Hajj are:

- Hajj intention must be made during Hajj season. The season is about 2 and half months which is (as Islamic calendar) Shawal, Julqada and up to 10th of Julhijj.
- Hajj must be done during Hajj days and that is from 8th Julhijj to 13th Julhijj.
- Hajj is compulsory once in lifetime for those who can afford but a Muslim can perform Hajj more than once. Extra Hajj will be considered as voluntary Hajj.
- Hajj has duties in different places such as (mainly) in Ka'ba area for Tawaf, In between Safa and Marwa, Mina town, A'rafah field, Muzdalifa area.
- Hajj has extra duties than Umrah such as staying in A'rafah, staying in Muzdalifa, staying in Mina, stoning on Jamrah, Qurbani etc.
- If a Muslim does not perform Hajj despite ability will commit grievous sin.

Three types of Hajjs:

Ifrad Hajj: Doing only Hajj in Hajj time, without Umrah Hajj with it, is called Ifrad Hajj. In this type of Hajj, Qurbani is not necessary. The Hajji who performs Ifrad Hajj is called Mufrid. In this Hajj, pilgrims need one Ihram (One intention) from the beginning to the end.

Tamattu Hajj: In Hajj Month, performing Umrah first, then having a break and then performing Hajj is called Tamattu Hajj. In Tamattu Hajj 2 Ihram (Intention with Labbaika and dress for Ihram) necessary. Firstly, one will make Ihram for Umrah Hajj. After finishing Umrah Hajj the pilgrim will break the Ihram and will become normal and will be away from Ihram obligations. Then the pilgrim will wait until the start of Hajj. He or she will make 2nd Ihram for main Hajj and complete all the Hajj duties. The person who does Tamattu Hajj is called Mutammatti. In this Hajj Qurbani is necessary.

Qiran Hajj: This Hajj is done in one Ihram both Umrah and Hajj. It is the hardest form of Hajj because in it, after Umrah no break of Ihram. It means not free from Ihram obligation. So, with one Ihram, one would do the Umrah Hajj first and then without breaking the Ihram would continue main Hajj duties until it ends. Whoever does this Hajj is called Qaren. It is the hardest option of Hajj and the reward for it is highest as well.

Umrah Hajj:

Umrah Hajj is bit different than main Hajj. Some differences are:

- Umrah Hajj is not Fard (Compulsory) according to Imam Abu Hanifa (May Allah send mercy on him). He says, it is Sunnah but if someone makes intention for it or begins doing it, then to complete it becomes a Fard (Compulsion). The exception is, Imam Shafi says that it is also Fard on those who can afford, and he depends on the evidence in the Quran where Allah says:

وَأَتِمُوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ

“And complete the Hajj and Umrah in the service of Allah.”

[Al-Quran 2:196].

Allah knows best.

- Umrah duties are lesser than Hajj duties. Such as, it does not include duties in A'rafah, Muzdalifa or in Mina.
- For Umrah, the places are limited too such as Ka'ba, Mount Safa and Marwah.
- Umrah can be done any time. The timing is not fixed as Hajj.
- Umrah can be done with Hajj too.
- Umrah does not include Qurbani.

Meekat:

Meekat is the boundary for making Ihram. For outsiders (not from Makkah) they must make Ihram (Ihram and Labbaika) from the selected places. Whenever they will cross those boundaries whether in land transport, or in ship or airlines they must make Ihram on those Meekat. But for those who come from within these boundaries, they must make Ihram from their own house. These boundaries are fixed by the teachings of Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). We find it in a Hadis below:

وَعَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: وَقَتَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِأَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ ذَذَا الْحُلُيْفَةِ
 وَلِأَهْلِ الشَّامِ: الْجُحْفَةَ وَلِأَهْلِ نَجْدٍ: قَرْنَ الْمَنَازِلِ وَلِأَهْلِ الْيَمَنِ: يَلْمَلَمَ فَهُنَّ لَهُنَّ وَلَمَنْ أَتَى
 عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِنَّ لِمَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ فَمَنْ كَانَ دُونَهُنَّ فَمُهَلَّهُ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ
 وَكَذَّاكَ وَكَذَّاكَ حَتَّى أَهْلَ مَكَّةَ يَهْلُونَ مِنْهَا

“Holy Messenger (peace be upon him) has determined Meekat for Pilgrims from Madinah Julhulaifa, from Syria side Juhfah, for Nazd side pilgrims Qarnul Manaajil, and for Yemen side pilgrims Yalamlam. Pilgrims from all over the world should come from these 4 Meekat for Hajj or Umrah. Those who live inside those Meekat, they should make intention from their homes, or the nearer ones will make Ihram from Makkah city.”
 [Muttafaqun A'laih]

If we breakdown the Hadis for easier understanding, then we can find the following as useful:

- **Julhulaifa:** For people from Madinah side,
- **Juhfa:** For the pilgrims from Syria side,
- **Qarnul Manaajil:** For the pilgrims from Nazd side,
- **Yalamlam:** For the pilgrims coming from Yemen side.

Pilgrims from all over the world will come through one of those borders and they must use those Meekat for Ihram as they come in. But those who comes from inside these boundaries should make their Ihram in their own houses. Even Makkan pilgrims will make Ihram from Makkah.

Ihram:

Ihram is making intention either for Hajj or for Umrah, for intention and saying Talbia (Labbaika Allahumma Labbaik). In intention they will say, Labbaika Hajjan or Labbaika Umrantan. Ihram is the first Fard action (compulsory action) in Hajj. The significance of Fard action is, because it is a compulsory action, if anyone misses it, then Hajj won't be accepted. That's why in Hajj or Umrah a Hajj must not miss any Fard actions. That also reminds Muslims that they must learn about the rules of Hajj before they set upon their journey, to make sure that they are not missing any compulsory actions or anything else necessary. Once a Hajji makes Ihram, he/she is called Muhrim. Muhrim is prohibited to do quite a few things during his or her Ihram period, such as sleeping with spouse, cutting nails or hair, cutting grass in that Hajj area or hunting and so on. So, pilgrims must learn all these well before they take the trip for Umrah or Hajj.

Talbia:

Talbia is a dua (Supplication) or a glorification to the praises of Allah, or a kind of responsive words to the Highness of Allah. It is a part of Ihram, and it must be said by pilgrims' lots and lots. The Talbia is as following taught by Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him).

Abdullah ibn Umar (May Allah be pleased with both) said, "I heard Holy prophet (Peace be upon him) with uncombed hair saying:

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

(Labbaika Allahumma Labbaik, Labbaika laa shareeka laka Labbaik. Innal Hamda wan-ni'mata laka wal-Mulk. Laa shareeka lak.)

"I am present O Allah! I am present to YOUR service O Allah! YOU have no partners. Surely, all the Praises and blessing are YOURS and the total sovereignty is YOURS. YOU have no partners.)"
[Muttafaqun A'laih]

Tawaf:

Tawaf means circling around something. In Islamic terms it means, circling around the Sacred House in a certain manner. Beginning from the corner of the Black Stone going around the Sacred House and coming back to the black Stone is called one "Showth." Such 7 Showth makes one Tawaf. The circling is on the left meaning anticlockwise. It begins from the Black Stone and ends at the Black Stone. To make a Tawaf, pilgrims must go around the Sacred House 7 times. For outsider pilgrims, they are recommended to do 3 times Tawaf all together in their Hajj as following:

1. **Tawaaful Qudum:** When they enter Makkah from journey, they make this Tawaf. This Tawaf is Sunnah. Sunnah Tawaf is very rewarding, but one can skip if there is essential reason.
2. **Tawaaful Ifada:** 2nd time in 10th of Julhijj, they come from Mina to do this Tawaf. It is also called Tawwfuj-Jiaraah. THIS TAWAF IS FARD duty of the Hajj. It must be done to complete the Hajj. Failing to do that Hajj will not be completed.
3. **Tawaaful Wedah:** It is called the Goodbye Tawaf to end the Hajj. This Tawaf is Wajib. Very essential.

Romol:

In Tawaf, brisk walking or walking a bit fast is called Romol. Romol is done in the first 3 circling around the Sacred House of Allah. In last 4 circling it is not necessary. Holy prophet (peace be upon him) did Romol. Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said that Holy prophet (Peace be upon him) and his companions did Romol in the first 3 circling of Tawaf.

وَعَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَصْحَابِهِ اعْتَمَرُوا مِنَ الْجُعْرَانَةِ فَرَمَلُوا بِالْبَيْتِ ثَلَاثًا وَجَعَلُوا أَرْدِيَّتَهُمْ تَحْتَ آبَاطِهِمْ ثُمَّ قَذَفُوهَا عَلَى عَوَاتِقِهِمُ الْيُسْرَى . رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاؤُد

"Ibn Abbass (may Allah be pleased with both) narrated that Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) and his companions did UMRAH from J'RANAH. He (peace be upon him) walked faster 3 times during circling HOUSE OF ALLAH."

[Abu Dawood]

Sa'ee:

Sa'ee is, going between the two mountains of Safa and Marwah as Hon Hazera (may Allah be pleased with her) did for searching for water for her thirsty son. This is with walking and running (for men) which is 7 times all together. Holy prophet (peace be upon him) did Sa'ee in his Hajj. It is mentioned in a long Hadis, and I shall write here the relevant part only. Jabir ibn Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

فَبَدَا بِالصَّفَا فَرَقِي عَلَيْهِ حَتَّى رَأَى الْبَيْتَ فَأَسْتَقَبَ الْقِبْلَةَ فَوَحَّدَ اللَّهَ وَكَبَرَهُ

“He (peace be upon him) started from Mount Safa side, climbed the top of the Safa Mountain, did supplication then came down and ran towards the Marwa Mountain and then climbed it gently to the top and made supplication.”

[Muslim]

Uqfu A'rafah:

Staying in the field of A'rafah is called Uqfu A'rafah. It is also one of the Fard action in Hajj. The rule is, if a Hajji stays in A'rafah even for a second between after mid-day of 9th Julhijj till before Fajr of 10th Julhijj, then this Fard duty will be done and accepted. But staying in A'rafah from after mid-day of 9th Julhijj until sunset is Sunnah. A'rafah is the name of a vast field. It stands between Makkah and Muzdalifa. In this field, servants of Allah do special worship to get closer to Allah and Allah also forgives HIS servants in A'rafah field lavishly. A'mor ibn Shuaib has narrated through his father from his grandfather that Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

وَعَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ شَعِيبٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ جَدِّهِ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: خَيْرُ الدُّعَاءِ دُعَاءُ يَوْمِ عَرْفَةَ وَخَيْرُ مَا قُلْتُ أَنَا وَالنَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ قَبْلِي: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ. رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ

“The best supplications of all supplications are the supplication in the in the Day of A'rafah. And whatever Zikr (Remembering Allah with HIS praises) I did and other prophets before me did, among those Zikr, the best Zikr is: Laa Ilaaha illallahu wahdahu laa shareeka lahu, Lahul mulku walahu hamdu wa hua a'laa kulli shaien qadeer

(There are no gods but Allah, HE has no partners, for HIM all the praises and Sovereignty, and HE is Almighty over all things).”

[Tirmidi]

Zamra:

Zamra is the pillars built to identify the place where Adam (peace be upon him), Ibrahim (peace be upon him) threw Stones on Satan to drive him away. Satan came to confuse or discourage their duties. But with stoning he failed and ran away. These spots are kept alive as a sign. So that with Allah's help, believers can defeat Satan in their life duties. There are 3 Zamra as following:

1. **Zamratul Ulaa:** From Makkah the first one.
2. **Zamratul Usta:** Zamra between Ulaa and Kubra.
3. **Zamratul Qubra:** The biggest one found coming from A'rafah to Mina.

Why Pilgrims throw pebbles on those pillars? Hon Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

وَعَنْ عَائِشَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: إِنَّمَا جَعَلَ رَمْيُ الْجِمَارِ وَالسَّعْيُ بَيْنِ الصَّفَّا وَالْمَرْوَةِ لِإِقَامَةِ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

“**Throwing pebbles (at Zamra) and Sa’ee between Safa and Marwa are to establish the Zikr of Allah.**”

[Tirmidi, Daremy]

What does Zikr mean here? The meaning of Zikr here is, doing a duty to obey Allah without questioning. Whether we understand or not, as Muslims we are required to follow Allah’s commands and to follow HIS messenger’s teachings. Pilgrims do exactly that in throwing Stones. Allah asked them to take Satan as their enemy because Satan is their open enemy. Throwing pebbles at the symbol is the expression of enmity towards Satan. (Allah knows best).

Hady:

This word indicates to animals for Qurbani and these animals are sent into the Harem of Makkah for sacrifice as part of their Hajj. In the age of idol worshipping, before the last prophet (peace be upon him), they also used to send animals to Makkah for Qurbani. To prevent from loss or theft or robbery, they used to put two kinds of marks on Qurbani animals:

- Scratch on top behind neck:** They used to put a scratch mark on the top part of animal behind the neck and before the back.
- Shoes-garland:** They also used to hang shoes garland on the animal neck. So, everyone used to respect Qurbani animals for Hajj.

Even, this rule is prescribed in the Holy Quran:

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُحْلِّوْا شَعِيرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَّادِ

“**O you who believe! Do not change the holiness of the (sacred) Symbols of Allah, nor of the Sacred Month of Ramadan, nor of the animals (Hady) brought for sacrifice, nor of the garlands (for such animals) ...”**

[Al-Quran 5:2]

Halq:

Shaving head for pilgrims or shortening hair of the pilgrims is called Halq. It is also part of the Hajj. It is Wajib. Wajib is like semi compulsory so it must be done. If one misses it, then penalty will apply for the acceptance of Hajj. In both Umrah and Hajj, Halq is essential. The difference is:

- **In Umrah:** It must be done after Sa’ee between Safa and Marwa,
- **In Hajj:** It must be done in Mina after Qurbani in 10th of Julhijj.
- **In Umrah and Hajj:** If a Hajj does Umrah first then breaks the Ihram to wait for the Hajj for next Ihram again, then shortening hair is better to keep some hair for shaving after the Hajj.

For female, shortening of hair is the necessity, not shaving. After Hajj, for male shaving hair is the best option because the Messenger of Allah made dua for them twice and made dua once for those who shortened their hair. Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with both) narrated that Hadis:

وَعَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ : أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ فِي حَجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ : اللَّهُمَّ ارْحَمْ الْمُحَلَّقِينَ . قَالُوا : وَالْمُقَصِّرِينَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ؟ قَالَ : اللَّهُمَّ ارْحَمْ الْمُحَلَّقِينَ . قَالُوا : وَالْمُقَصِّرِينَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ؟ قَالَ : وَالْمُقَصِّرِينَ

“Holy Messenger of Allah said in his Hajj: O Allah send YOUR mercy on those shaved their hair on the head. Companions asked, O messenger of Allah, those who shortened their hair. He (peace be upon him) said: O Allah send YOUR mercy on those shaved their hair on the head. Companions asked, O messenger of Allah, those who shortened their hair. Then Messenger of Allah said: on them those who shortened their hair.”

[Bukhari and Muslim]

Ahsar:

Ahsar means to be prevented from Hajj. For example, Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was prevented from Umrah Hajj in 6th Hijri by Quraish. People can be prevented by many reasons such as:

- From sickness,
- Airplane troubles,
- Transport troubles,
- Enemies,
- Wars,
- Visa troubles etc.

The rule is, if some pilgrims, after making Ihram is prevented from doing the Hajj, then they should:

- Do sacrifice of the Qurbani animal,
- Shave the hair,
- Break the Ihram,
- And do Qada (make up) of the Hajj later. [Mishqat]

Allah says in the holy Quran:

فَإِنْ أَخْصَرْتُمْ فَمَا أَسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَذِيلِ

“And complete the Hajj or Umrah in the service of Allah. But if you are prevented (from completing it), send an offering for sacrifice, what you may find (afford).”

[Al-Quran 2:196]

Last Sermon of the Prophet (peace be upon him)

This sermon was delivered on the Ninth day of Dhul-Hijjah, 10 A.H. (623AD) in the Uranah valley of Mount Arafat in Mecca. It was the occasion of annual rites of Hajj. It is also known as the Farewell Pilgrimage.

After praising and thanking Allah the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) began with the words:

“O People! Lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore, listen carefully to what I am saying and take these words to those who could not be present here today.”

“O People! just as you regard this month, this day, this city as sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that he will indeed reckon your deeds.”

"Allah has forbidden you to take usury, therefore all interest obligation shall henceforth be waived. Your capital is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequality. Allah has judged that there shall be no interest and that all interest due to Abbas ibn 'Aal-Muttalib be waived."

"Every right arising out of homicide in pre-Islamic days is henceforth waived and the first such right that I waive is that arising from the murder of Rabiah ibni al-Harithiah."

"O men! the unbelievers indulge in tampering with the calendar in order to make permissible that which Allah forbade, and to prohibit what Allah has made permissible. With Allah the months are twelve in number. Four of them are holy, there are successive and one occurs singly between the months of Jumada and Shaban."

"Beware of Satan, for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hope that he will be able to lead you astray in big things so beware of following him in small things."

"O People it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under Allah's trust and with His permission. If they abide by your right, then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with any one of whom you do not approve, as well never to be unchaste."

"O People! listen to me in earnest, worship Allah, say your five daily prayers, fast during month of Ramadan, and give your wealth in Zakat. Perform Haj if you can afford it."

"All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also, a White has no superiority over a Black nor a Black has any superiority over a White except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly."

"Do not therefore do injustice to yourselves. Remember one day you will meet Allah and answer your deeds. So beware, do not astray from the path of righteousness after I am gone."

"O People! No Prophet or apostle will come after me and no new faith will be born. Reason well, therefore O People! and understand words that I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the Quran and the Sunnah and if you follow these you will never go astray."

"All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly."

"O Allah, be my witness, that I have conveyed your message to Your people."

As part of this sermon, the prophet recited to them a revelation from Allah, which he had just received, and which completed the Quran, for it was the last passage to be revealed:

This day the disbeliever's despair of prevailing against your religion, so fear them not, but fear Me (Allah)! This day have I perfected for you, your religion and fulfilled My favor unto you, and it hath been My good pleasure to choose Islam for you as your religion. (Surah 5, Ayah 3)

The sermon was repeated sentence by sentence by Safwan's brother Rabiah (RA), who had powerful voice, at the request of the Prophet and he faithfully, proclaimed to over ten thousand gathered on the occasion. Towards the end of his sermon, the Prophet asked, "O people, have I faithfully delivered unto you, my message?" A powerful murmur of assents "O Allah! yes!" arose from thousands of pilgrims and the vibrant words "Allahumma Na'm," rolled like thunder throughout the valley. The Prophet raised his forefinger and said: "O Allah bear witness that I have conveyed your message to your people."

Chapter 7: Preparation for Hajj

Why preparation?

Preparation is a basic need before any journey. Whether it is a brief journey, or long journey, people take preparation according to the nature of the journey. If someone is invited to present a lecture in a conference, that person prepares with enough study, or if another one is going to perform sports, also prepares well to do better. When we visit a market for shopping, we go with preparation (such as with money, transport, helpers etc). Preparation is the first step to make the journey go according to the plan to achieve success. Every journey has a goal, and the preparation is around that goal to avoid failure. That's why, before Hajj journey, pilgrims need full preparation considering its goal, aim, and ultimate success. This journey has special specifications, and not depending on the pilgrim's wishes, but the specifications from Allah Almighty, and it requires special preparation to meet all the requirements to fulfil the rites of Hajj and to receive the highest goal from it.

Hajj is not a fun trip that one can go as he or she wishes. Hajj has totally different objective. What is that objective? Why would one like to go for Hajj? The objectives of Hajj are mainly three:

1. **To respond to Allah's call:** A Muslim must obey Allah. When Allah calls him/her, must respond. Therefore, Allah calls for Hajj, a Muslim must obey Allah's command. So, a Muslim goes for Hajj when he/she can afford to obey Allah or to response to the call of Allah. What do we do when we are invited to meet the King of a country? Do we make proper plan for it? Do we take full preparation for it? Or we go carelessly? Now, Allah is the RULER of the mankind, RULER of the Universe. When HE calls us to Hajj as HIS guests, don't we take all the best preparation for it? We need preparation to present ourselves in the proper manner. Allah knows how pilgrims prepare themselves, and if they prepare properly, HE grants rewards for their preparation.
2. **To receive forgiveness:** A Muslim obeys Allah with the belief that Allah will forgive, reward and grant Paradise for him or her. So, a Muslim performs Hajj for receiving Allah's forgiveness, blessings and mercy. Again, if we go to a court to plea for forgiveness, do we go without preparation? No, before we go, we learn the proper protocols, because we want the wishful outcome. Similarly, before going to Hajj to get forgiven by Allah, do we not need preparation by learning every rite of Hajj, which dua to say, where the dua to say, and how to say etc. Surely, we need to do all the required learning, state of mind and intention, and ways to perform all the duties as per the teaching of Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him). Insha Allah! With our best intention and preparation, we can receive Allah's Mercy and forgiveness in Hajj.
3. **To mend ways of life:** Hajj trains a Muslim how to fully surrender his/her mind, emotion, desires to the will of Allah. It also trains Muslims to dedicate their life and wealth for the sake of Allah as well. The objective for this is to mend their life from wrong ways to direct their lives in Allah's ways. Mending lives cannot be achieved overnight. If we practice wrong thing every day, every month, every year for whole life, and go to Hajj for few days once in life and expect to be changed in a few days to come back from Hajj like a newborn to start a new life, is that possible. No, that is not possible because after the Hajj we return to the old setting of our life and actions, and we follow the old habits without much change. That's why, preparation for change must start before Hajj to set up the right habits in life and then perform Hajj to renew the promise strongly to be returned to the righteous habits after Hajj.

There is a saying, "Well prepared is half done," and it is true in Hajj preparation as well. Pilgrims must aim for the best preparation for Hajj for the main following reasons:

1. **To do everything right:** They get one chance in life (most of them), because most of the pilgrims cannot afford to perform Hajj every now and then. Most of them, with their life savings can afford once in life. So, they need to make sure, in their preparation, they understand the right ways for Hajj, they learn the correct knowledge, they rehearse many of their learnings to make sure they do not forget, and they prepare their heart and soul rightly to reap the rewards from the Hajj.
2. **To avoid mistakes:** After all the sacrifices, when they take their holy journey to Hajj, and they make mistakes due to their lack of preparation, then is it fair? It is not. They had their whole life, or before Hajj a few months, to take intensive preparation to learn, to understand well, and to be confident with all rites and purposes. If they do not prepare themselves properly, they will make mistakes when they are overwhelmed in the Hajj. Some pilgrims make big mistakes by using their preparation time with lesser important things (Such as shopping, gatherings, feeding relatives), and leave the most important thing for the last minute (Such as learning all the rules of Hajj). They think that Hajj lessons are easy to master in a few days, but it is a big mistake. Hajj lessons must be the priority in best preparation to avoid mistakes in Hajj. Some mistakes are fatal, such as missing a Fard action costs the Hajj as it is not accepted at all. For missing Wajib actions they must sacrifice animal to remedy it. So, to avoid mistakes and risks, Hajj preparation is essential.
3. **To achieve the goal:** After all the hard work, sending money, and using energy, what does a pilgrim expect? Failure or success? An accepted Hajj or a rejected Hajj? Forgiveness and rewards from Hajj or the punishment. Hajj is like a double-edged sword. Hajj in right way is earning Allah's mercy, and Hajj in defiant way earns Allah's wrath. For example, a pilgrim uses ill-gotten (Haram) money for Hajj, and then commit Haram actions during Hajj, then he is going to earn sins not the rewards. That point makes Hajj preparation very important to achieve the desired goal which is accepted Hajj for Allah's Mercy.
4. **To change life to be righteous:** Allah's Paradise is conditional. To receive it, two main things are required. One is sincere faith, and another is righteous actions. Before Hajj, a pilgrim needs to start preparation to be righteous, then take the inspiration during the Hajj in righteous actions, and then after returning to carry on righteous actions. That continuity in righteousness is the key to gain Paradise from Allah, Insha Allah. To bring the righteous habits, attitudes, hearts and minds, actions and dealings, preparations is required without ceasing efforts.

To conclude, Hajj should be a blessing for Muslims, and for that they also should be prepared for it to follow its teachings in life. Preparation should include the basic questions such as, what is Hajj for me, what should I do in Hajj, what are wrong things I must avoid in Hajj, what are the right things I must do in Hajj without mistakes, what makes my Hajj accepted or what makes my Hajj cancelled, and what do I take away from Hajj to practice in my day-to day life etc. Therefore, Hajj is a spiritual journey for Allah. It is special, and it requires special preparations as well. I have included this chapter on "preparation for Hajj" to give some examples for Muslims to widen the thinking about Hajj for more benefits.

Repenting in preparation:

Before Hajj one must change the bad ways of life. One must do the self-assessment seriously to identify all the wrongdoing in him/herself. Self-assessment is a very good thing. It is like judging oneself in a most respectful manner. When other people judge us, we feel hurt. But when we judge ourselves, we do not feel humiliated. Every Muslim should have a judgmental fair mind to judge own doings. The benefits of self-judgment are huge, such as:

- It makes one wiser,

- It makes one learn how to self-check own shortcomings,
- It removes arrogance and makes one humble. An arrogant mind never thinks that he/she might have done something wrong. That mentality prevents him/her from self-checking,
- It saves from humiliations. Before other tells off one can mend,
- It allows one to see own wrong-doing, own sins,
- It allows to feel remorse for own wrongdoing,
- It motivates to seek Allah's forgiveness,
- It allows to seek forgiveness before too late, before death,
- It motivates one to repent to Allah and be clean from sins through Allah's forgiveness,
- It also guides people to seek forgiveness from their human victims to be saved from becoming accused on the Day of Judgment and to be forced to pay compensation to the victims etc.

To start with, part of the best preparation, a Pilgrim should repent to Allah for all the sins, wrong manners, unfair dealings and relationships etc. In the repentance one should include:

- Identify sinful actions in him/her,
- Admit to Allah for those sins,
- Feel true remorse for those sins (Disobedience to Allah),
- Apologise to Allah for all the wrongs, and apologise to the person(s) you victimised,
- Promise to Allah that you won't do it again,
- Take U-turn from the wrongdoing, change your direction to righteous deeds,
- And beg Allah to forgive you etc.

Repenting for bad deeds is a good start towards mending, changing directions and towards becoming a full surrendered servant to Allah. Hajj wants you to be good like that, so you need to start preparing yourself as a good Muslim before Hajj. If you do not prepare before Hajj, then you will go to Hajj with a sinful mind and you won't be able to benefit from Hajj much. For example, to get good vegetables you need to prepare the soil first. Prepared soil will allow the vegetable to grow well. Otherwise in hard, unprepared soil vege will struggle.

Our hearts and minds need preparation, and the best preparation is to remove sins from them. Once sins are removed, it is clean and a clean heart and mind resonate with the mercy of Allah, forgiveness of Allah, love of Allah well. But dirty heart with sin does not resonate well and it loses the benefits of Hajj. Allah accepts repentance from those who give up sins and repent soon, Allah says in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَلٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۝ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

“Allah accepts only the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and foolishness and repent soon afterward; to them will Allah turn in Mercy: For Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom.”

[Al-Quran 4:17]

Seek forgiveness from others:

Before going to Hajj, Muslims should change their life for the better. In their life they deal with family, friends, neighbours, work mates, community members and so on. They might hurt others intentionally or unintentionally in their dealings. They might have been dishonest with someone. They might have outstanding quarrels with neighbours, with family members. They might be part of abuse, violence, unfairness, oppression, and unhappiness in the society directly or indirectly. Pilgrims are humans too, and they are not free from errors in life. It is very important that believers are aware of their shortcomings. It helps them to feel humble, to self-check, and to be a better righteous person all the

time. If any Muslim is acutely not aware of it, can take the arrogant direction, may do many wrong things against humanity (small or big) without feeling sorry, and they may be deprived from seeking forgiveness from their victims.

Why seeking forgiveness from others is a best practice? Why it is very beneficial? The reason is, if they have done wrong, then that is a great problem. Because violating Allah's creation's rights is a big sin. On the Day of Judgment, the victims may seek compensations, and the compensation would be giving away own good deeds to the victims. If the sins are related to Allah's rights, Allah may forgive with repentance, but if the sins are related to human's right, then Allah does not interfere with it. It means; to receive forgiveness to be saved from punishment, the oppressor must seek forgiveness from the victim. To understand this, we should remind ourselves with a Hadis:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ "أَتَدْرُونَ مَا الْمُفْلِسُ" . قَالُوا الْمُفْلِسُ فِينَا مَنْ لَا دِرْهَمَ لَهُ وَلَا مَتَاعٌ . قَالَ "إِنَّ الْمُفْلِسَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَأْتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِصَلَاةٍ وَصِيَامٍ وَزَكَاةً وَيَأْتِي قَدْ شَتَّمَ هَذَا وَقَدْ فَعَلَ هَذَا وَأَكَلَ مَالَ هَذَا وَسَفَكَ دَمَ هَذَا وَضَرَبَ هَذَا فَيُعْطَى هَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ وَهَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ فَإِنْ فَنِيَتْ حَسَنَاتُهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُقْضَى مَا عَلَيْهِ أَخِذَ مِنْ خَطَايَاهُمْ فَطَرَحَتْ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ طُرِحَ فِي النَّارِ" .

Abu Huraira (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: Do you know who is poor? Companions said, among us that person is poor who has no money or wealth. Then Holy prophet (peace be upon him) said: On the Day of Judgment such person will be the poorest among my followers, who would come with Salah, Fasting and Charity (etc) from this life, and with it some have scolded others, has done scandal mongering against others, or has grabbed others property wrongly, or has killed someone and has beaten someone (etc.). So, his/her good deeds will be given to the victims (as compensation), if his/her good deeds finish before giving all the compensations to victims, then the wrong doer must take sins from the victims. Then he/she will be thrown into the Hell Fire."

[Muslim]

So, from this Hadis it becomes clear about human rights on Muslims. Any breach in human rights will have serious consequences on the Day of Judgement. So, if a Muslim truly wants to be clean from sins through Hajj, then must seek forgiveness from people too before going to the Hajj. This way, Hajj also can change him/her to a person who becomes sensitive about other's rights, sensitive about Allah's rights, sensitive about Muslim's rights, sensitive about parents' rights, sensitive about spouse's rights and sensitive about the rights of Allah's creations. A best Hajj is who respects human rights, women's rights, neighbours' rights, poor's rights etc before and after the Hajj.

Discharge other's rights:

According to above Hadis, Allah won't interfere with human rights unless the victim forgives it, or the victim gets compensation on the Day of Judgment. If a Muslim performs Hajj properly, he or she gets forgiven the sins related to rights between the servant and Allah. But for the human rights the servant is still at risk. That's why a pilgrim must focus on human rights issue and sort it out before going to Hajj. That would be a best preparation for Hajj as well.

There are so many ways people violate other rights such as:

- **Disrespect:** Many do not respect their elders. They may be using harsh words to their old parents. Or the poor old man or woman in the neighbourhood are not respected because they do not hold high status, or the non-Muslim in the society is looked down upon, or the elder in

the society is neglected etc. Maybe in the modern society, it is not a big deal, and there is no accountability for this disrespect, but in the court of Allah, it is a crime as well. Allah's Holy Messengers has taught to pay respect to their elders in every situation. It is their rights on younger people. A pilgrim during preparation should reflect on this and seek forgiveness from the older people. That is a reminder to re-cultivate the culture of respect that Islam teaches.

- **Love:** Often people do not give the proper love to the young that they deserve. For example, every parent loves his/her children, and this is the common claim every parent will make. In that claim, does he consider how many times he neglected his child in caring, loving for the right reasons? Or how many times did he beat or shout at his child for the annoyance in his game-watching? Or how many times he was absent due to gossiping with friends when his child needed him to teach a Sura or to tell a story from the Quran? Can any parent claim to be a 100% dutiful parent? Another example is love towards husband or wife. Or love to parents? Or love to fellow humans? These little questions are so important on "OTHER'S RIGHTS", and if we do not seek forgiveness often, then we could be in trouble. That's why, a Hajji, should include seeking forgiveness from others in the best Hajj preparation.
- **Domestic violence:** Are you a wife beater? I am sure, you are not. But are you fully fair to your wife, or do you give fair rights to your wife? I am not sure about that because I can't give guarantee about myself. That's why, I think my apology is the best practice with my wife because it makes me feel humble and makes me feel that I should improve myself to the best husband in this world. Seeking forgiveness is not only a humility but it is wise too. It increases the love-bond and turns two spouses into a best team. Furthermore, a spouse never wants to be accused by another spouse on the day of Judgment to claim compensation. To avoid that, seeking forgiveness from spouse is also a best practice for best preparation of Hajj.
- **Not keeping the trust:** People told you many things to keep them as secret. Did you spread them like a fish? Or you promised to so many people in your life, did you keep them? Did you maintain your honesty all the time? Did you follow the teaching of Islam that, "Not keeping Amanah, and not keeping the promise, are signs of not having the true Faith"? Are we perfect in these two areas? Maybe yes or no. So, the best safety practice is to seek forgiveness from the people we deal with before they charge us as breachers of trust and promises in the court of Allah. This is another good reason to seek people's forgiveness before pilgrims go to Hajj to arrive in there as clean as possible from the sins.
- **Corruption:** Are you a 100% honest businessman? Do you ever corrupt your business for little more profits? Did you ever take advantage of your position to persuade the fair deal for your selfish reasons? Did you practice unfairness to please your loved ones? Did you take bribes? You can think of many more and make a list. These are serious human rights breaches. If I think that after doing all the above, I shall go to Hajj to be sin free from those violation of human rights, I am mistaken. I need to seek forgiveness from those people to be forgiven by Allah. Pilgrims must not take other human rights lightly, and to seek forgiveness from them as part of the preparation is a best thing. If they die during Hajj journey, they will be free from human rights sins if they had any.
- **Bribe:** If any pilgrim is using bribe money for Hajj, be sure, he is taking the wrong direction for the right destination. It is like, I want to go to the city, but I took a bus to take me to a village instead of the city. Taking bribe is a serious breach of human rights, and the bribe-taker is accountable to people as well as to Allah. For Hajj preparation, what should you do if you had taken bribe? One option is to give it back to the person, and another one is to ask forgiveness from the person. It stops further crime, brings corrections, and bribe-taker gets a chance to clean himself from sins. This life is temporary, and the next life is permanent. We should

correct ourselves for the safety in the next life. That's why, in Hajj preparation, pilgrims should take every chance to be rectified.

- **Other's property:** Sometimes, neighbours fight for a small piece of land, and they get into endless hatred and enmity. They continue their quarrel, and they pay bribe to some others to win against another. I hope you are not in that sinful game. If you are, you are in a dangerous game. You must come out of it. Before you go to Hajj, clean yourself from that mess. Make sure, you are not in wrong. Then, make peace. Forgive and seek forgiveness. Love your neighbours and live in peace. If you can do it, you will be a better HAJJI before and after your Hajj Insha Allah! Hajj is a peaceful gathering of the world. From there, if all pilgrims bring little peace for their neighbourhood, then the world will be more peaceful Insha Allah.
- **Oppression:** Are you a member of a party that oppresses poor people? Takes away people's rights by force. Occupy other's lands wrongly? Beat the opposition unfairly for the disagreement? Torture another to continue their power. You must need to disconnect yourself from this kind of human rights abuse. You are going to Hajj as a guest of Allah, and you want to go there with all these filthy dirty sins? No way, you are much better than that. You need to be a role model of justice, fairness and other's rights. That's why, even if there was a slight involvement from your side in those crimes, change yourself before going to the Hajj, and seek forgiveness from your victims. That will be the right thing to do.

To conclude, these are few examples I wanted mention to bring your attention about another's rights. A Hajji must be concerned about human rights because it is emphasized in the teaching of Islam. To address it properly. The best time is before going to the Hajj, as part of the Hajj preparation, pilgrims should do it, because that will be good kickstart for correction.

Pay off the lenders:

One of the human rights is to be paid back from the borrowers. In life people borrow money if necessary. Sometimes people borrow for business to increase money and at other times people borrow to survive due to the shortage of money. Here we are discussing about money borrowed not due to poverty. Because Hajj is not compulsory on a Muslim who is poor and cannot afford to do Hajj with his own money. Sometimes, some people may mistake thinking that they owe money, therefore, Hajj is not compulsory on them. It is wrong because one may own billions of dollars with owing another billion. That does not mean, he can't afford the Hajj Journey. If after the owing money, he has enough money to take the Hajj journey, then he must do the Hajj as compulsory duty on him. Note, if the owing is part of business, and it can be managed without risk, then, that loan payment is not my topic here. The person in that situation should consult with Imams or scholars to know the exact answer for the exact situation. I am talking about the usual loans that people do with the promise to pay back soon because it is best to pay off without leaving the burden on self or the family should something happen.

Hajj is a life journey. Many Muslims wish to die in the journey because this journey is purely for the pleasure of Allah. I am not talking about suicide, but I am talking about the willingness of taking the risk to performing the Hajj even if death comes. Death can come anytime. No one knows about when it will come. Only Allah knows about it. In Hajj pilgrims go to the foreign land, and if they die there, they will die without family and relatives around. But they do not worry about it because they feel honoured to die in Hajj as Allah's guests. If death comes in the Hajj journey, it is rewarding as well. Muslims are keen for the reward, for the Paradise more than their temporary life. Hajj is also a risky journey. One may not return. Therefore, before a risky life journey, one must make sure he or she paid off any owing. If not, at least, must arrange to pay off if something happens to him/her. The idea is, before

going to Hajj, a Muslim can try enough to be as clean as possible from worldly duties. Paying the loan off can have the following benefits:

- **To have peace of mind:** So, a Muslim can have peace of mind throughout the Hajj without any worries. Borrowing money can borrow troubles. Why troubles? Why not a peaceful journey without thinking about behind? Personally, I can't sleep well if I borrow money. It contributes restlessness in me, and I feel at peace when I can return the owing. I prefer to live frugally. In other words, I follow the philosophy of cutting my coat according to my clothing. That is a best practice for not so rich people.
- **To focus fully:** No money tension, borrowing obligations will distract a Muslim from the total focussing in the Hajj duties. Thinking about borrowing with the fear if something bad happens is not a good thing. We better be anxiety free as much as possible. So, pilgrims should choose to be debt free if that is possible and practicable.
- **To be free from owing other's rights:** If death comes, he or she will not leave owing behind to answer Allah for that or to be liable to pay compensation by deeds on the Day of Judgment. Allah placed the responsibility to pay off on the borrowers. Some people, after their death, leave chaos around their debt, and there is tension or argument over who would pay. Sometimes, the family takes responsibility, or other times, no one takes the responsibility. The borrower is liable to answer to the court of Allah for borrowing because it is related to other people's rights. So, pilgrims should keep this issue clear.
- **To keep family out of liability:** For his debt he should not keep his family liable to make sure that his family does not suffer the least for his burden. Some families are not well off to take a burden with extra loan. Maybe they are struggling in their day-to-day life. A pilgrim should consider all these and makes sure that no one suffer for their loans.

In the Hajj preparation, if a Muslim considers about every liability, can plan to sort things out. That's why, good preparation is necessary. They should take time, think wisely, makes lists of things they need to sort out, and get them done by ticking them off etc. Preparation does not bring any harm, it only brings better self-control, better outcome and lesser mistakes.

Take Halal income:

Halal income is like healthy blood circulation. Haram income is the opposite and can be called septic blood circulation. Blood circulation rotates around the body, reaches to every small or big organ, and either nourishes the system or poison the system. Income also circulates in every sphere in and around human lives. It goes to food, drinks, medicines, clothing, houses, families, relatives, neighbours, societies, worships, Qurbani, donations, business, and humanitarian works etc. It goes everywhere, and if the money is Halal, then with it, Allah's blessings reach everywhere, but if it is Haram, then it goes without Allah's blessings. According to Islamic Faith, haram income is a big problem. Holy Quran has emphasized that the believers must eat Halal food (For example, and Halal income and spending is the general teaching):

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ عَامَنُوا كُلُّا مِنْ طَيْبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَأَشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيمَانًا تَعْبُدُونَ

“O believers! Eat from the good things We have provided for you. And give thanks to Allah if you truly worship Him alone.”

[Al-Quran 2:172]

Halal income is very essential for an accepted Hajj like any other worship. Like the example of a robber who robs a bank to give charity has no value in the sight of Allah. Similarly, doing Hajj with ill-

gotten money has no value in the sight of Allah. Hajj is a worship to Allah. Allah is Pure and HE likes purity from HIS servants in worship. Allah wants the following in worships:

- **Pure in intention:** The worship must be done only for the pleasure of Allah. Hajj is the same. Otherwise, Hajj is not accepted and will not gain any reward from it.
- **Pure in Tawhid:** All worships must be purely for One Allah without joining any partners with HIM. Hajj is the same.
- **Pure in mind:** Worships should be done with pure clean mind without sinful, defiance, disobedience doubts, confusions and half-mindfulness. Total sincerity is a precondition for the best form of worship, and Hajj must be the same. Hajj must be done without sinful thinking, conspiracy, plot, criminal intent to cheat or exploit others.
- **Pure in manner:** Worships are done with prescribed manner. One cannot just follow his/her own desires in worship. The manner or method of worship is prescribed by Allah, and then HIS Holy Messenger has demonstrated it for others. Hajj is not outside this protocol. Therefore, Hajj must be done without quarrel, arguing, fighting and so on.
- **Pure in deeds:** In worship, or in the name of worship, sinful, immoral, inhumane, cruel deeds are never allowed. Hajj has the same pure deeds in it from the beginning to the end. In the name of Hajj, no one can harm no one or no one is allowed to damage the rights and honour of no one. Hajj must be pure from sinful deeds.
- **Pure in body and cloth:** With filthy unclean state in worshipping Allah is not allowed. Allah is pure from all unclean things. That's why, in worship there are cleaning duties to keep the mind, emotion, body and prayer places clean. In Hajj it is the same.
- **Pure income:** Like everything else, worship requires pure income. It is called Halal income. It is free from any ill-gotten source according to the prescription of Islam. That's why, halal money for Hajj is a big deal. If money is Haram, everything collapses in pure Hajj because impurity in money does not match with pure Hajj.

In other words, without Halal money, Hajj is not accepted. We can find Hadis about it as following:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ "أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ طَيِّبٌ لَا يَقْبِلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَمَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا أَمَرَ بِهِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ فَقَالَ { يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ كُلُّوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ } وَقَالَ { يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُّوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ } . ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ الرَّجُلُ يُطِيلُ السَّفَرَ أَشْعَثَ أَغْبَرَ يَمْدُدُ يَدِيهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ يَا رَبِّ يَا رَبِّ وَمَطْعَمُهُ حَرَامٌ وَمَشْرُبُهُ حَرَامٌ وَغُذِيَ بِالْحَرَامِ فَأَنَّى يُسْتَجَابُ لِذَلِكَ

"O people, Allah is Good and HE, therefore, accepts only that which is good. And Allah commanded the believers as He commanded the Messengers by saying: "O Messengers, eat of the good things, and do good deeds; verily I am aware of what you do" (xxiii. 51). And He said: "O those who believe, eat of the good things that We gave you" (ii. 172). He then made a mention of a person who travels widely, his hair dishevelled and covered with dust. He lifts his hand towards the sky (and thus makes the supplication): "O Lord, O Lord," whereas his diet is unlawful, his drink is unlawful, and his clothes are unlawful, and his nourishment is unlawful. How can then his supplication be accepted?"

[Muslim]

Leave money for dependants:

Hajj is not to cause bankruptcy. It does not impose any hardship on the pilgrims of their families. Allah merciful did not make Hajj compulsory for a family to starve, go without food, clothes or education and all other basic necessary things. Allah never commands the believers to suffer without basic needs for the Hajj. Instead, Allah has forbidden to exceed the moderation for any worship. Allah does not want to place heavy burdens on HIS beloved servants that they cannot carry. That's why, Allah made the Hajj and affordability linked together.

Now, if a pilgrim does not prepare in advance enough basic necessary provisions for the family, then it is not a best preparation. After they leave for Hajj, if their family suffers from poverty, or if they must depend on the bad people who take advantage of their vulnerability, or if they must borrow or suffer in any way, then the guardian will be responsible to Allah. Guardianship is an amaanah, thus a responsibility. That's why, a guardian should prepare well to leave their family or dependants in good condition. That way, they will be relieved, and their dependants will be relieved. Good preparation helps a pilgrim to plan for everything properly. So, every pilgrim must make sure his/her dependants are:

- They are safe in your absence,
- They are well fed in your absence,
- They have life as usual with normal expenses in your absence,
- They are not starving in your absence,
- They are not abused for the vulnerable situation you left them with economically,
- They are being provided and so on.

To conclude, Hajj should be well prepared and then to pray to Allah for help. Allah's help comes when the servant does his/her duties.

Avoid extravagance:

In your preparation, do you feel obsessed about making things expensive? I hope you are not that kind of person who cares about what other people say, or what other people think about you. I hope you do not feel shy if you do not organize your goodbye event very expensively. I do not think you feel less important in your society if you spend everything in moderation. I hope your family does not demand everything for your Hajj preparation expensive, gorgeous to uplift their faces in the society. If you do have any of those, you are in trouble! When manmade prestige, expectations, demands, and wants are added up with Hajj preparation, it becomes an expensive exercise. The extravagance becomes often more important than the main spirit of worship. It does not only take time, but it also takes energy and focus away from worship.

Extravagance is a disease. Yes, it is a moral sickness. Once someone gets it, it eats away the true intention of worship from within. This sickness gives room to add more sicknesses such as a high feeling with it and a low feeling without it. Whereas Hajj is a worship, and everything around it must be according to the teaching of Islam. Extravagance is not Islamic teaching, but moderation is. That's why, in your Hajj preparation, only think about how to please Allah and do not think about your ego, status, family or friend's expectations and keep everything simple. I saw some people prepared their extravagant list of shopping in Hajj even before they left home, and instead of spending their time over there in worship, they spent lots of time in shopping. One unnecessary or bad habit creates many more. Therefore, pilgrims should take careful approach to save themselves from unnecessary actions or habits before, or during Hajj.

Muslims should not make Hajj event as an event of extravagance. They should not waste money without necessity. Such as:

- **Buying expensive gifts for many families and relatives.** They must not get into the so-called prestige concern theory of the society. They must remember, Hajj is a practice to be Allah's servants only, and to do that they must come out of slavery of people's expectations, cultural or traditional demands. Islam does not allow extravagance, and to be a complete Muslim, a pilgrim must avoid it.
- **Making expensive trips to see relatives.** Relatives can have their say, and they might like you to follow their expensive tradition as a reputable family in the society. When you can manage a trip with moderation within \$100, your ego or family pressure might cost you \$2000. Remember, Allah will question you about income and expenses, and Hajj preparation does not give you licence to be extravagant. So, practice self-control and follow moderation in your spending.
- **Spending so much to be seen, to show off.** If your intention is to show other people that your Hajj preparation is gorgeous, you are putting yourself into trouble again. Showing off is secret SHIRK, and Allah will not accept your worship if it has connection with "To be seen" thought. Do not destroy your rewards, and do not earn more sins than rewards. That's why, a pilgrim must follow Islamic teachings starting from the preparation of Hajj. He or she must not ruin the rewards before even the journey has begun.
- **Organising un-necessary expensive feast before or after going to Hajj.** Doing anything more than the necessity is called extravagance. Islam teaches that time, effort, and activities all are part of life test, and you do not want any actions to be written in the sin column by writer angels. Best preparation of Hajj is not about how much money you are spending, or how many feasts you are organizing, but how much Islamic teaching you are following. That's why, Hajj is not an isolated action in Islam, but it is a part of holistic life approach and Islamic holistic life approach is that you will be following Allah's guidance in every inch in your life. For example, how you spend your money is not your freedom but how Islam is guided must be followed by you, if you want to be a true Muslim or true Pilgrim.

Why extravagance is a big deal, and why it must be avoided in Hajj preparation? The reason is, Allah has clear command about it, and Hajj preparation must be kept away from corrupted with sins. Let us look at a verse in the Holy Quran regarding extravagance:

وَعَاتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ وَالْمُسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيرًا ٢٦ إِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُواْ
إِخْرُونَ الشَّيَطِينِ ٢٧ وَكَانَ الشَّيَطَنُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا

“Do not waste (your wealth) like a wasteful person. Surely wasters are brothers of the Satan; and the evil one (Satan) is ungrateful to his Lord.”

[Al-Quran 17:26-27]

Therefore, wasting money for the event of Hajj is:

- Against Allah's permission,
- Following Satanic inspiration,
- Being ungrateful to Allah etc.

So, Muslims should be very careful about their spending for Hajj. They should not make it as a show, as a competition with others to show ego and ability. They rather should be humble, and Allah fearing. They should fear that Allah will question them about their earning and spending. Therefore, they should be moderate in their spending for Hajj preparation.

Never intend for name or fame:

Hajj preparation is not only packing the bags and taking some cash or travellers cheque for necessary spending. No, the most important Hajj preparation is making up your mind about why you are going to perform Hajj. That is called intention. All good deeds will be judged by Allah against the intention, and depending on intention, some good deeds will qualify for rewards and some no rewards, and some will qualify for punishment. This is how serious it is. For example, for a worship, if the intention is wrong, then how bad it becomes? Let me give an example about a great worship called 5 times Salah, the 2nd pillar of Islam. It is a great worship, and Allah loves it if it is done with the intention to serve Allah. But if the intention is to be seen by others, then instead of rewards, the worshipper will receive punishment. An example in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّ الْمُبَدِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَنَ الشَّيَاطِينِ ۚ وَكَانَ الشَّيَاطِينُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورِ ۚ ۲۷ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ۝ الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ ۝

“So, woe to those who pray, yet are unmindful of their prayers; those who ‘only’ show off.
[Al-Quran 107:4-6]

Again, the preparation for Hajj can be pious and rewarding or it can be sinful and punishable. It may go either way depending on the intention of the pilgrim. If a Muslim intends for Hajj truly to please Allah, then it is rewarding. But if a Muslim intend for Hajj for other intentions except pleasing Allah, then that will not be rewarding at all. What are bad intentions? Below are a few examples:

- **Intention of earning a title like Al-Hajj:** Some people are crazy for earning titles. They love to be called Al-Hajj by others. They feel very happy if they receive respect with titles. If the primary focus in the pilgrim’s intention is earning Al-Hajj title, then please change it, and prepare your mind with correct intention. Otherwise, your entire Hajj will be like a bottomless basket. You will lose your money, energy, efforts, and sacrifices without any gain. So, be careful and prepare yourself right.
- **Intention to earn social status:** Some cultures respect the Hajj so much. After the Hajj, they are promoted to a high social status and some people may do Hajj for earning a status. Why do you need a status in the sight of people when you are gaining high status in the Sight of Allah by accepted Hajj? The danger is, if your primary intention is to gain high status, position, and leadership in your society by your Hajj, Allah might give you these without giving you anything in the next life. Do you want that? No, you would not. Why take the risk then? Intend for your Hajj for the pleasure of Allah, and for nothing else. Status, reputations, and positions in this life are temporary and for test, the high status in Paradise is permanent. So, target the permanent high status in paradise and ignore the temporary test status in this life.
- **Intention to be popular politically:** Some may intend for Hajj to be popular in the electorate. They may think, being a Hajji voters will vote for them. Therefore, some may perform Hajj for that reason. Again, you are in danger! You may win the votes, but you will lose support from Allah for your Hajj. Your Hajj is for the greater purpose of getting rid of sins for everlasting happiness in Paradise, and you want to change it with stressful temporary leadership? Allah may give you that chance, but it will cost you too much. That cost is your Hajj will be not accepted. Can you afford that? Then, change your intention and prepare yourself with the intention that your Hajj is only for Paradise, and not for any worldly gains.
- **Intention to cheat others:** Some may intend to cheat others by becoming a Hajji. For example, in business or as a broker if they have a Hajj title, then ordinary Muslims may trust them more and will do business with them more and they can use the Hajj card to cheat them

after all. Or if some people are going to Hajj as part of thief syndicate to steal money or valuables from pilgrims during Hajj, then think about it. What are you doing? Some organized criminals go to Hajj to steal money, and I read in newspapers about them, and often they are caught. I want to tell them that you change your mind. Stealing will not give you more gain than gaining Paradise from Pure Hajj with pure intention. So, go to Hajj with pure intention and ask Allah for richness in this life and in the Paradise. Allah can provide you both.

- **Intention to beg:** Some may intend to go to Hajj for begging. Begging is Haram in Islam. It is degrading oneself and bringing shame on oneself. Allah does not like it, and that's why no one likes it. How much can you earn from begging? How long will it last? Through Hajj Allah is offering you an ocean, and with begging you are after few drops! What a silly choice! Use your talent and pray to Allah for sustenance and see how your life will change one day. So, do not risk your everything with bad intentions in great worships to Allah. You beg to Allah without begging to people, and that is more honourable. Allah loves us to beg to HIM for every blessing, and HE loves to provide it for us.

So, there could be many other reasons for doing Hajj, except the reason of pleasing Allah. If the intention is not ONLY PLEASING Allah, then Hajj will not be accepted, and Allah will not grant any reward for it. Allah has made the reward for Hajj conditional. The first condition is about pure intention. It is stated in a Hadis:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مِنْ حَجَّ فَلَمْ يَرْفُثْ وَلَمْ يَفْسُقْ رَجَعَ كَيْوَمْ وَلَدَتْهُ
«أَمَّه»

Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said in a Hadis, narrated by Abu Huraira (May Allah be pleased with him): **“Whoever has done Hajj only for the pleasure of Allah, and in Hajj did not do any sexual activities and did not do any sinful activities, he (She) will return from Hajj as sinless as like the newborn (sinless) baby.”**

[Muttafaqun A'laih]

Preparation with your health:

Health is wealth. Health is one of the most important blessings in this life. It is very valuable, and many people do not give proper value to it when they are supposed to. Many people are careless about their health. Some people realize the value of their health after becoming sick, or when it is too late. Whereas, people should give priority in looking after their health, because it is also an Amaanah on them from Allah. One may ask, why many people do not give importance to their health when they are supposed to? The answer is people mainly ignore the importance of it for two main reasons:

1. **Free gotten:** They received it without earning it. They are given by Allah free of charge or fee, and they did not experience the pain or the hard work for receiving it. Allah has given them good health to test them, but they have taken it for granted. That's why, unless someone believes, knows, and understands the value of Allah's blessing, does not care much about it. They use it as they like as if they own it without realizing that Allah is testing for it.
2. **Satan's work:** Satan is devoted to inspiring in diverting people's mind from the truth. So, Satan inspires people to take it for granted, and makes it seem nice to think, "My health is my choice." When people take that attitude, they do not try to find out WHO gave them health and why, and what is their duty towards their health in this life, and for the next life. As a result, some young people take their health as bullet proof, take risks, and in many cases, damage their health to earn suffering.

Islamic teaching is holistic, and part of that teaching is about health. It teaches that Health is Allah's gift for us to use it for the best reasons such as in the obedience of Allah and for worships. It also teaches that Allah has vested this trust on each one of us to look after it, and to put it into the best use. On the Day of Judgment, Allah will ask question about that trust and about the responsibility. It teaches that the believers must not be among those people who neglect to take care of their health.

عَنْ أَبْنَى عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: نَعْمَلَنَا مَعْبُونٌ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ: الصِّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاغُ. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ

"Abdullah Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with both) narrated that Messenger of Allah said: Most people are being deceived in two blessings. One is health and another is free time."

[Bukhari]

Why taking care of health must be part of the best preparation for Hajj? The answer is simple and as following:

1. **For performing the Hajj well:** With ill health, a pilgrim cannot perform all Hajj rites properly and cannot enjoy the rites as much as he/she supposed to enjoy. Besides, with poor health, a Hajji cannot focus in Dua especially in intense dua in the A'rafah field.
2. **For best harvesting:** After whole life's wish, one has come to the Hajj to worship more, to perform the rites with maximum efforts, and to receive high rewards from Allah. But due to his/her poor health, if cannot pray long, cannot make dua for long, and cannot recite long, or cannot do Tawaf well, or cannot do Sa'ee well, and spend time lying and sleeping, then what will happen to his/her harvesting? Imagine! A farmer is sick during the harvesting time, and he cannot pick all the grains, then he will be a loser in the end. Similarly, a pilgrim, after all the spending, preparation, and sacrifice comes to Hajj, and become sick and can't do much. Is it a loss or gain? To gain rewards his/her health is extremely important.

Therefore, as part of the best preparation, take care of your health before Hajj. You are going to different weather, hard-working environment, places with least comfort, and outside your usual comfort zone. To survive in there, and to be fit in there, and to perform best in there, you need good health with good immune system. What preparation are you taking for that tough situation? Are you still spending time with feasts, with gatherings, and with sleepless nights? Are you doing anything to gain more fitness? Or are you still lazy and only hoping to be fit in there without making any effort from your side? Remember! If you do not make effort to be fit and healthy for Hajj, how will you answer Allah if you become sick in Hajj due to your negligence? Do you take this health preparation lightly like many people? Or are you the sincere one?

The sad thing is that many pilgrims even do not consider about it seriously. They take health for granted. My old father went to Hajj with a group of young people. After they came back, two young people told me that they were sick most of the time during Hajj while my old father wasn't, and he took the most advantage of his time. My father told me that he made the best time and enjoyed every rite. Take care of your health before Hajj. What was the difference between my old father and the young men? The difference was health. Despite old age, my father used to walk long every day to prepare himself, and the young ones took it for granted and did not do anything for fitness before they went to Hajj. With sudden changes in weather, they spent more time in bed with sickness.

Hajj is a very physical worship as well. You need to be fit. Without good health you won't enjoy the journey nor the prayers. For performing all the rituals, you need good health. So, keeping best health should be taken as a part of best preparation. Have rest, good food and exercise to be fit. You need to watch the following:

- You are eating healthy foods,
- You are eating Halal Foods,
- You are drinking healthy drinks,
- You are drinking Halal drinks,
- You are sleeping in time,
- You are avoiding last minute stress,
- You are doing regular exercise and
- You are getting checked by medical professionals etc.

Prepare with knowledge:

Have you made a preparation priority list? In that list, you will include that you need to prepare such as passport, ticket, visa, documents, prescription medicines, clothes, money, and other things. Many pilgrims make their list, or some of them do not write down a list, but writing down everything in a list is always better for preparation. The question is, “Did you put down learning about all the rules for Hajj?” Or if you did, “Did you place it as number one priority?” I am not sure about you, but I have been told by many that learning issue was not either written in the list nor it was placed in the priority list. That made me feel very sad because those people did not put their priority right. If the priority is not right, then it is a big danger.

Shall I give an example? Suppose you want to go to the Moon. Will you travel there without enough knowledge about it? Or if you want to meet the King of your country, would you go there without learning the protocols? Your all-other preparations will go astray if you make a blunder in there, won’t you? Now, Hajj is meeting with the RULER of the Universe, and it has strict protocols. If you make blunder with those protocols, your Hajj will not be accepted. With this knowledge, how can you place your learning about Hajj last in your priority list? What kind of preparation is this in which you neglect the most important thing, and you care for the least important things? I am sure, you are not that type, but in case, if you are, I feel very sad for you because you are the poorest pilgrim in relation to the best preparation.

Please, all pilgrims must put their priority before anything else. Your knowledge about Hajj must be perfect, and you must learn about everything well-ahead. Please do not leave your knowledge part last. If your friend advises you, “Do not worry, it is easy, and you can pick up easily or you can follow another,” then please ignore this advice, and make sure your knowledge is the priority. You can spend time with your friends and family after Hajj, and before Hajj, put your most time in learning. You want a perfect Hajj, don’t you? If you do not learn and make a mistake in your Fard duty, your entire Hajj will be cancelled. Can you afford to do another one? So, take your learning seriously and do not be a blind follower of worship. Learning is your fundamental duty, and if you neglect about it, Allah will question you. Can you answer Allah?

Again, do not leave the learning about Hajj for the last minutes. Some pilgrims waste time in lesser important traditional activities and leave their learning part for the last hours. Then they find it hard to grasp and become confused about lots of things. Whereas, learning Hajj rules is the most important thing because if one makes mistakes then the acceptance of Hajj will be in question. So, one must learn about Hajj duties, their rules, long before the Hajj season to understand everything very well. Such as:

- Compulsory actions in Hajj,
- What makes a Hajj invalid?
- What penalty for missing Wajib actions?
- What activities are Haram during Hajj?
- What activities reduces the reward for Hajj?

- What activities are innovations in Hajj?
- What are the conditions for accepted Hajj etc?

Preparation for building good habits:

Good habits! We can study about good habits, or we can listen to the nice stories of good habits from Prophet's life, or we can write about good habits but practicing it is the hardest job. There is a saying, "People are slaves of their habits." It means, once they build up a habit, it goes into the mental emotional and nervous system. Their system remembers it, and it becomes an automatic action. On the other hand, if something is not in the system in a person, he finds very hard to remember it in the right time, and his old habit comes out without effort spontaneously. Good habits or bad habits both have the same style.

Islam teaches about good habits only. It cannot come in a person overnight. For it, requires constant reminder, rehearsal, revision and practice. All Muslims do not necessarily live in the good habit environment or in the high standard environment to develop good habits. They face many challenges. Fear of being criticised by others, or the peer pressure, or the cultural expectations, or the low socio-economic environments can deter them from developing good habits. For some, laziness, procrastination, dependence, gossiping, too much sleeping, without sense of responsibility, lack of patience, lack of focusing in worship for long, lack of ability to stay in the remembrance of Allah for hours, or not used to stand in long prayers, or no habit in praying at night by sacrificing sleep, or not used to with long journey, or not used to with hardship, or not used to control anger for living in privileged household, or not used to sharing a small space for sleep, or not used to touch other's bodies during walking, or never used to waiting for long in the airport, or never used to stand in the long queue for toileting, or never used to go in the crowd, or never used to feel happy by oneself without friends in the worship of Allah.

The list of hardship, discomfort, worship, sharing in Hajj can be very long. The point is you are going to Hajj and are you ready with your habit to adjust with many things that you are not used to. If you are not, then you need good preparation to develop good habits in you to avoid impatience, anger, fight, complaining, pushing, arguing, boredom, too much sleeping etc. You must know, you are going to Hajj to be in the intensive activities. Unless you are used to, you cannot cope, or you cannot enjoy worship. You will have time in your hands without the opportunity of gossiping with your friends or spending too much in your mobile because these things will eat away your precious time in Hajj. That's why, some people in Hajj feel bored quickly, tired quickly, look for friends to gossip in Mina or A'rafah when every second is the best opportunity to recite, worship, and make dua. Some people with good habits, they take the full advantage, and you will find them busy in Sijdah, crying in their dua, learning in their free time, and spending time in the remembrance of Allah, and praying Tahajjud at night without sleeping.

Did they master all those good habits overnight? Not at all. Either they have lifelong practice, or they prepared themselves before they made their Hajj Trip. If you do not have long practice, then take my humble suggestion please. My suggestion is that you invest some time doing the things that you are required to do in Hajj before your Hajj trip to develop habits. You do not need to do anything impossible. Only you need planning and discipline in yourself and timing. Without wasting time before Hajj with this or that, take time out, and practice the following habits regularly. After 40 days, you will see these habits are part of you, you will never need to change them until you die. If you die with those habits, you will go through good death Insha Allah, by Allah's Mercy.

1. **Pray 5 times Salah in Mosque in Juma'ah:** This practice will create a bond between your heart and Allah's House. For this heart connection, you will get honourable throne to sit on under the shade of Allah's throne on the Day of Judgment Insha Allah. This practice will remove laziness, or Satan's blocking from going to the Masjid. Once you will be in Hajj, this

habit will push you towards Salah in congregation in the House of Allah, and you will earn more rewards. For it, you will not feel lazy at all Insha Allah.

2. **Be regular in Tahajjud prayer:** Practice going to sleep early at night without wasting time in TV or gossiping, and after few hours of sleep, wake up for Tahajjud. So, you will begin enjoying it, and you can do it more in the Hajj. You will crave for it, and your heart will be unsatisfied until you perform it. That's how, our good habits push us towards good actions.
3. **Recite Holy Quran daily:** Initially, you may feel harder to focus more than few minutes. But day by day, your ability will increase, and without knowing, you will be in love with it. So, carry on and never give up. When you are in Hajj, if you find time, you can avoid boredom with the recitation of the Holy Quran. You can earn at least 10 rewards for every letter you recited. What a prize! When I went to Hajj with long flights, my Quran copy was with me. I never felt the pain of waiting because my eyes, and heart was busy with Quran recitation. The same in the day of A'rafah. The day went very quickly. I did not feel bored at all because I wanted to do more. Alhamdulillah!
4. **Make Tauba daily:** Seeking Allah's forgiveness is good for the right psychological state. It teaches to be humble, removes the arrogance and anger. A humble heart does not get angry with the fear if he is wrong. It makes the heart soft, and allows to be very apologetic to Allah, and encourages to be corrected to be better. You should practice it more before the Hajj, and in the Hajj, you can repent automatically.
5. **Make dua daily especially long dua at Tahajjud:** Many people perform their Salah quickly and finishes their dua quickly as well. Dua is asking Allah for bounties, and you want to finish it quickly! Is it wise that when you got a good chance asking for more, you stop quickly? With less patience, how can you endure in dua in A'rafah field, when you supposed to make so many duas? Look! You are a beloved servant of Allah, and you got to learn how to talk to Allah more and more in your dua. You need to build a solid habit that you will never miss it. Do the practice before you are heading to the Hajj.
6. **Give charity even a little regularly:** What happens if you stretch your hand muscles too much too suddenly? You develop inflammation and pain without achieving your goal. But if you gradually build up stretching practice bit by bit, then you won't feel the pain rather you will find it easy. Similarly, our inner heart has a stingy tendency, and to open it, you require bit by bit practice by giving charity. Why don't you distribute your one-off charity before Hajj in many days to remind yourself every day that you are required to give charity? The same amount you want to give in a day, give it in 40 days. Insha Allah, it will remind you regularly and will help building up the regular habit of giving charity. You are going to Hajj, gain the generous habit before going. You will not lose anything.
7. **Practice talking nice with everyone:** In Hajj, you will have many excuses to feel angry because the crowd is so big that everything cannot be under control. How can you be always patient in Hajj? Well, start practicing a couple of months before Hajj. Watch your temper, listen to your own talks, measure your own tone, think that two angels are writing your words, and observe your talks if angry, offensive, sinful, or righteous. Your self-observation will give you more power to control your own talks and will give you chance to mend it. Remember! Most sinful actions initiate from sinful talks. So, control it before it controls you.
8. **Treat everyone with kindness:** In Hajj, you will find hazards. Someone will push you during Tawaf unintentionally due to the pressure behind. Will you be able to smile then? Or to think kindly? Or to give a compassionate look? You cannot unless you practiced compassionate behaviour, and kindness is implanted in your system. To build up that habit, start preparation

before the Hajj, and start from home, and from the sub-ordinates. Treat them kindly and look at their mistakes from a compassionate point of view. Watch your progress. Do you feel angry any more with the mistakes of your loved ones as you used to, or do you feel kind towards them despite their mistakes. Trust me, your kind attitude will benefit you and everyone around you. Besides, you can be a champion in anger control, and you can earn huge rewards for your kindness insha Allah!

9. **Engage yourself in the work of Allah:** Remember! You are going to visit Allah's House, and Allah made prophet Ibrahim and Ismael to serve that House. Take the inspiration from that the service of Allah's House is the best and most honourable service on this earth. Why late then? Engage yourself before Hajj in that service, or in Da'wa, or in the humanitarian activities in your area. Serve Allah and HIS creations, and build up that habit, so that after you return from Hajj, you can continue the path you had taken before Hajj. Serve your local Masjid and serve your community.

To conclude, I did not try to mention every example of good habit practice. With a few examples, I would like to remind the readers to make list of all good habits and practice them to get used to. Without early practice, one must not expect to be perfect overnight in Hajj. Hajj is very overwhelming, and one needs to prepare him/herself for long time. May Allah help all, Ameen!

Prepare for the first and the last journey:

A journey has ends in this world, but the journey in our lives has no end. Some people are taking a journey every day for their work or business. They think that they will come back after the day of work or business. They take their preparation to suit that thought. They take little preparation, get up from sleep to jump on the train or in the car, or in the airplane without taking much with them. After their work they return home to spend their time with their family again. Not many people think about death in their daily short journey, and that is the reality. But Hajj is a different journey. It is far, for longer period, with full of hardship, and some people wish they die there in the holy place.

On one hand, they take all the preparation to come back. They never believe in self-harm, self-torture or suicide because Allah does not permit it. That's why in their preparation, they make sure that they are preparing for everything they need to make their journey safe, comfortable and smooth. They spend lots of money to pay for the safe flight, they carry clothes to provide comfort for them, they take extra money if they need to spend, and they plan to do shopping over there if they can come back. In that sense, they are ready to come back to their safe home if Allah permits them, but within their abilities they take all the necessary preparation. In this chapter, I have cited many examples of different types of important preparations pilgrims should take, and pilgrims do take all the steps to make sure their holy trip is safe and sound.

On the other hand, in the Hajj journey, many pilgrims yearn if Allah takes them to HIS Love and Mercy. They know, one day they will taste the death, and that will end this life. They prefer to be with other righteous people and to be with the companions of Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him). Moreover, if Allah appoints their death in Hajj, then it will happen Insha Allah, and they believe in it as well. That's why, in Hajj Journey, they take double preparation. One preparation to come back, and another preparation to stay back if Allah wills. To prepare for staying back, they take all the preparation to clean them spiritually. They intend that if Allah calls them to be with HIM permanently, then they are ready to meet HIM in sinless state. With that aim, they repent to Allah and people, change their wrong ways, and do not leave any sinful liabilities that might continue after their death. They think that this Hajj may be the last chance to be in this earth for them.

This thought of "Last chance" is a huge deal in Hajj preparation. It only happens in the Hajj preparation intensely. It revolutionises the mind and souls of a pilgrim, and it makes him/her lose the strong

obsession with this temporary worldly thing and attracts him/her towards the next everlasting life. With this feeling, the pilgrim feels more love for Allah, for worshipping Allah, and more yearning to be in Allah's Mercy. With this type of preparation, people can see the positive changes in the pilgrim in worship, sincerity, and more craving about the happiness in next life. Those pilgrims even say in their goodbye, "Forgive me if I do not come back," or they will request their other family members, "Please look after my so and so if Allah chooses to accept me as HIS permanent guest," etc. I have seen many emotional pilgrims like that, and I felt their love to meet Allah.

This type of preparation is the best one. I recommend myself and others to take this type of preparation. If Allah decides to bring us back, we do not lose anything, but if Allah decides to take us to HIM, then that is even better. Pilgrims should make up their minds wisely, and if they choose this type of preparation, they have nothing to lose with Allah's Mercy. Allah will grant them more and more Mercies and Blessings for their noble intentions, for their dedications, and for their love for Allah. I am not perfect, but I found this type of preparation worked best for me. Every opportunity Allah gave me in my Hajj, I did my best with the thought that this could be my last chance. After that I might die, or I might not afford to come back. So, that motivated me to do my best. May Allah forgive my imperfection, and the imperfection of all other pilgrims, Ameen!

In the preparation, mental preparation is the primary state to work on. If we place our mind fully in Allah's worship, and we equip our minds with all the guidance that Allah has provided, then our bodies will follow it. Mind is the primary part in us to surrender to Allah. Once the mind is fully satisfied with Allah's obedience, we find no obstacles to stop us. But if mind is confused, sick with doubts, suffering with depression and hopelessness with Allah's Mercy, and unconvinced about the everlasting happiness with Allah, then you have got your own enemy inside you. It is most difficult to fight your own enemy. Preparing our minds with the love of Allah and taking the Hajj as a meeting with Allah and beyond, gives mental boost from within us, and even Satan cannot defeat our minds because our minds remember Allah, and dedicated to the loyalty to Allah.

Therefore, prepare yourself for Hajj as best and as pure as you can. Consider this is your last journey. Consider this is your last chance to be clean from sins. Consider after this Hajj you will not be in this life any longer. Consider your last chance to go to the paradise. Consider how desperate you are for receiving Allah's mercy, blessings and forgiveness. How you will prepare yourself depends on some of the following:

- **What are you thinking about it?** You need your mind to be involved in thinking about Hajj, learning about Hajj, asking questions to the knowledgeable ones about the Hajj. If you think right, your mind will surrender to Allah fully, and you will find everything is easier. You will find this life is a blessing, and you will look forward about the most blessings from Allah in the next life. That's why, do not limit your preparation for Hajj in learning a few duas. Please, learn and reflect about it, and take long time to get there, and then Insha Allah! Allah will help you to taste the sweetness of Hajj better and better. Some pilgrims do not think enough, they like the shortcut of memorising a few duas, and they think that they will enjoy the best Hajj ever. No, brothers and sisters! We need mind preparation equipped with Faith and Knowledge more than ever.
- **How strong your belief is on your thinking?** One can think like a scholar or a philosopher without anchoring on anything. What will happen to that person? What will happen to a ship without anchoring? It will not be stable, and the wave can displace it from its safe spot. Similarly, only thinking about Hajj or Islam is not enough, we need to anchor those thoughts with Strong Faith. Strong faith will give us stability with satisfaction in the heart. For example, taking the Hajj preparation as if it is the last chance requires strong faith. Otherwise, Satan and

many other life challenges will persuade us towards the wrong direction, and we will lose the chance that Allah's gives us, and we cannot reap the maximum rewards.

➤ **How determined you are to follow your thinking?** We need perseverance, persistence to continue to nourish the good thoughts, good ideas, our good faith, and actions. This is called SABR (Patience). We need SABR to work hard, to pass the life test, and to continue our journey of life towards Paradise. Paradise is our original home because Allah placed Adam and Hawa in there, and our aim is to get back to our original home Insha Allah. This journey can be a tough journey with tests and tribulations, with ups and downs, but with SABR we can be consistent in our mission whether it is in Hajj or in everything else to be successful. Allah gave the good news for Paradise for those who practice SOBOR, and we want to be with them.

وَلَنَبْلُونَكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالْثَّمَرَاتِ
وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ

“We will certainly test you with a touch of fear and famine and loss of property, life, and crops. Give good news to those who patiently endure.”

[Al-Quran 2:155]

To conclude, if you think desperately to be cleaned from sins from the Hajj and if you believe in your thoughts, then definitely your preparation will be meticulous, organized and sinless. Muslims are those who surrender their thoughts, feelings and actions to the will of Allah. So, when they prepare for their Hajj, they consider everything to make sure that their preparations are in the way of surrendering to Allah. Besides, when they believe that this Hajj could be their first and last chance then they take their Hajj seriously from the preparation to the finishing. Every Muslim should be well organized, well thoughtful and well prepared for getting all the benefits of Hajj. May Allah grant all the Muslims to be prepared for Hajj in the best possible way and to perform the Hajj in the best possible way as well! May Allah grant all our Hajj, Ameen!

Chapter 8: How to perform Hajj

Conditions for accepted Hajj:

Just imagine! A Muslim performed Hajj, did all the hard work, sacrificed money and so on but at the end, Allah did not accept the Hajj! How painful is that? How much loser is the Pilgrim? Would you like to be one of those losers? You would not. Because your aim is to get all the rewards from Allah for the Hajj. That's why you would want your Hajj to be perfect to be accepted by Allah. This essay is to offer some tips on that Insha-Allah!

Why condition for acceptance? Allah does not accept just anything unless it is done in the way that HE prescribed, and HIS messenger taught. Allah makes the law for guidance and for the reward. Allah put the conditions for the servants in their worship for HIM. If they fulfill those conditions, then Allah accepts their worship. For example, if you join a university, you follow the condition placed by the university authority to pass the exam for the award. Allah is the LORD of the University of the Entire Universe, if any servant wants awards from HIM, must follow HIS conditions.

Simple condition from Allah: To accept Hajj or any other act of worship, Allah has put one simple condition. That condition is righteousness (At-Taqwa). Allah says in the Holy Quran:

قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَنْقَبِلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

“Surely, Allah does accept from those who are righteous (Muttaqeen).”

[Al-Quran 5:27]

Simply, Allah will accept Hajj with Taqwa and HE will not accept Hajj without Taqwa. Therefore, for doing Hajj one needs money, health, and safety to do it, permission to travel and so on but for acceptance of Hajj to Allah, one needs Taqwa.

Understanding Hajj with Taqwa: As we found out from the Holy Quran that Taqwa is the most important condition for the acceptance of Hajj or any other worship. That guides us to realize that regarding accepted Hajj for us, our most important job is to understand properly about Hajj with Taqwa. Now, can we afford not to understand it? Or can we afford to ignore it? Or can we afford to be busy with un-necessary traditional formalities of Hajj, leaving ourselves in the dark about the most important condition for Hajj that Allah wants from us? Commonsense dictates that we must learn more about Taqwa in Hajj. Let us then ask the next question, “What makes a Hajj righteous or with Taqwa?” To answer this question, I would like to give few examples of actions that makes a Hajj with Taqwa in below:

1. **Fear of Allah in the pilgrim:** A Hajj must be afraid of Allah's punishment and Judgment. It must be like a device permanently installed in the heart of a believer (A Hajji). This fear prevents him/her from doing anything sinful before Hajj, or in Hajj and motivates him/her to do everything right according to the teachings of Allah's messenger.
2. **Self-control in the pilgrim:** A Hajj must have self-control in performing Hajj duties. This self-control will prevent him/her from disobeying Allah. This self-control also will prevent him/her from following selfish desires or wants, from following wrong culture and tradition in Hajj.
3. **Free from shirk** (Joining partners with Allah): In Hajj, a Hajji must avoid any words, dua, actions that is shirk. For example, if someone prays to Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) instead of Allah, then that is shirk. Allah doesn't accept any worship that has element of shirk in it. For example, if someone does Hajj for showing off, that is also a shirk (hidden shirk).

4. **Must do repent:** A Hajji must repent for all the sins done in this life. Moreover, a Hajji must promise to give up the sinful actions. If he/she holds the belief that old sins will be as usual after the Hajj as well, then it is not repentance rather it is defiance. Allah does not accept worship from defiant servants. Allah accepts worship from Muttaqeen and Muttaqeen are Allah fearing servants who fear the disobedience of Allah.
5. **Provision of Taqwa:** A Hajji must take provision of Taqwa with him/her for Hajj. Provision of Taqwa means Halal Income and not the Haram income from the fear of Allah's punishment. During Hajj, for Taqwa a Hajj would not beg, steal, rob or cheat. Taqwa makes a Hajj sincere, honest, humble, and righteous and so on in terms of Hajj provision.
6. **Correct intention:** The intention must be correct. Any intention except "For Allah" is a wrong intention. Allah does not accept any worship that is not done absolutely for HIS sake. So, if anyone performs Hajj for the name and fame, then the intention is not within Taqwa. He/she will get what is intended but will not receive acceptance of the Hajj for rewards from Allah.
7. **Must learn Hajj rules:** A Hajji must learn rules and etiquettes well before going to the Hajj. Lots of rules in Hajj takes time for sinking in. Some pilgrims rely on a small booklet which is not good enough. One is doing Fard Hajj once in life and that person should make effort to grasp the best knowledge for Hajj possible. Allah has given whole life, all opportunity to learn to perform Fard Hajj only once in life. Yet if a Hajji makes very little effort for learning and makes mistakes in Hajj duties, then that is not a sign of Taqwa at all.
8. **Be with pious pilgrims:** For the acceptance of Hajj, one must stick to the pious pilgrims. Because pious pilgrims are sincere in their actions, they know what to do and what not to do in performing Hajj. Pious pilgrims do not waste their time in gossiping, in photo taking, in fun etc. They follow proper procedure in performing their Hajj. Being with pious pilgrims is a positive motivation as well. On the other hand, being with non-pious pilgrims may demotivate in hard work, continuous Tasbih and so on resulting in loss.
9. **Refrain from making others suffer:** A Hajji must make sure, in performing Hajj, is not causing suffering to other pilgrims. If for his/her carelessness or pushing another a Pilgrim dies, or gets injured, then he/she is performing Hajj as well as murdering or injuring a Muslim. So, one must be extremely careful about own performance. One must not endeavour to earn rewards as well as sins. If every Hajji is careful about his/her own actions, then the biggest gathering of Hajj will be comfortable for everyone.
10. **Following all the rules:** A Hajji must follow all the rules in Hajj. Most particularly must follow Halal and Haram rules. Also, must follow Fard, Wajib actions because without those Hajj is not completed.
11. **Following the teaching of Holy Prophet (peace be upon him):** Not following his (peace be upon him) teaching means innovating methods from others. Hajj is taught by Allah's messenger on behalf of Allah and Hajj must be performed according to the teaching of Allah's messenger. Or else that Hajj will not be accepted by Allah.

Conclusion: A runner in the Olympics aims for the gold medal as an outcome. What does a pilgrim aim for in Hajj as an outcome? A pilgrim aims for acceptance of Hajj from Allah as an outcome. For that best outcome, every Muslim in Hajj must make all effort to perform it with Taqwa, with righteousness. In other words, an accepted Hajj must turn a Muslim to be a Muttaqi, to be Allah fearing, to be righteous, to be dedicated in Allah's service in every step of life and be surrendered to Allah completely. When a Muslim develops fear and love for Allah in heart, and out of fear avoids disobedience of Allah, and out of love dedicate fully into the obedience of Allah with everything he/she

has, that makes him or her a Muttaqi. Allah loves that Muttaqi and accepts worship from that Muttaqi and reward that Muttaqi lavishly. Finally, the reward for Hajj is conditional. The condition is that the Hajj must be accepted by Allah. That's what we find in the Hadis as well. Abu Huraira (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

«وَالْحَجُّ الْمَبْرُورُ لَيْسَ لَهُ جَزَاءٌ إِلَّا جَنَّةٌ»

“The reward of the accepted Hajj is nothing but paradise”
[Muttafaqun A'laih]

Main duties in Umrah Hajj:

Umrah Hajj is little bit different than Hajj. The duties in Umrah Hajj are lesser than Main Hajj. The main duties of Umrah Hajj are below according to the Hajj performed by Holy Messenger of Allah, and Hadis in Sahih Muslim:

1. **Ihram:** Intention must be for Umrah Hajj from Meekat,
2. **Tawaf:** Circling around the Ka'ba 7 rounds,
3. **2 Rakah Salah:** facing Ka'ba from behind Maqam-e-Ibrahim,
4. **Sa'ee:** between Mount Safa and Marwa 7 rounds,
5. **Cutting hair:** Shaving hair for male Hajj or shortening hair if after the break he/she is going to do Hajj. For female, no shaving but little cut from the tip of hair.

How to perform Umrah Hajj?

Now, let us go through in a little bit more in detail about how to do the Umrah Hajj. Some of the duties will be like Hajj. So, I would like the readers to picture the duties in your mind slowly. Once the bigger duties are sunk in your mind then the other smaller duties will be easier to grasp. The following description should help Insha Allah about how to perform Umrah Hajj:

1. **Ihram:** Make intention for Umrah by saying Labbaika Umrah. The other duties include:
 - Make intention when transport begins to move, (Follow the guide)
 - Wear Ihram dress. For males 2 pieces of unsewn white cloth and for females any dress.
 - Wear sandals (Sunnah).
 - Recite Talbia as much as possible.
 - Stop Talbia when you begin Tawaf.
2. **Tawaf:** Start Tawaf from the Black Stone:
 - **7 rounds make 1 Tawaf:** First 4 rounds is Fard, if missed must do again. 2nd 3 rounds are Wajib, if missed can do Sacrifice for correction.
 - **Say any dua** but Holy prophet (peace be upon him) recited especially the Quranic dua in between Rukni Yaminee and Hazru Aswad,

يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا إِعِنَّا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةٌ وَفِنَا عَذَابٌ أَنَّارٌ

“Rabbanaa aatina fid dunya hasanah wa fil aakhirati hasanah. Waqinaa a'jaabannar.”

[Our Lord! Grant us all the best things in this life and all the best things in next life and save us from the punishment of the Hell.]

- **Do Ijtiba:** It is Sunnah. Take the cloth for the upper body from under the right arm
- **Do Romol:** It is Sunnah. In first 3 rounds walk little faster than normal (not in last 4 rounds),

- **Kissing Black Stone:** It is Sunnah. If you can touch then kiss the hand, or if you can touch with a stick, can kiss the stick. No touch means no kissing. One should not take risk touching the Stone by putting oneself and others prone to accident.

3. **2 Rakah Salah:** After completing Tawaf go toward Maqam-e-Ibrahim and recite the Quranic verse:

وَاتَّخِذُوا مِنْ مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلَّى

“Wattakhijoo mim-maqaami Ibraaheema Musallah”

[And take the House of Ibrahim as a place of prayer.]

[Al-Quran 2:125]

- Face Ka'ba standing behind the Maqam-e-Ibrahim,
- In first Rakah recite Sura Fatiha then Sura Al-Kaafiroon
- In 2nd Rakah Sura Fatiha then Sura Al-Ikhlas.

4. **Do Sa'ee:** Sa'ee is running between Safa and Marwa mountains.

- When arrive near Safa recite the Quranic verse:

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ

“Innas-safaa wal-marwata min sha'aerillaah.”

[Surely, Safa and Marwa are among the Symbols of Allah]

[Al-Quran 2:158]

- Begin round from Safa side,
- When at the top of Safa, before you start walking towards the other side Marwa, look toward Ka'ba and recite,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“Laa ilaaha illallahu wahdahu laa shareeka lahu, Lahul mulku walahu hamdu wa hua a'laa kulli shaien qadeer”

(There is no other true GOD except Allah, HE is the only One without any partners, the Dominion is for HIM, the Praises are for HIM, and HE is Most Powerful over everything.)

- Make other dua.
- Come down from Safa, between green light males should run but for females normal walking,
- Go up in Marwa and do the same as on Safa top (as above) ...That makes 1 round
- Continue for 7 rounds which will end in Marwa.

5. **Cut hair:** Shave if you are only doing Umrah. But cut short if you are doing Hajj after few days so you can shave the head after the Hajj. For female, shorten the hair.

That is the end of Umrah Hajj. Umrah duties are lesser than Hajj duties.

Some differences for women in Hajj:

Most of the duties are like men but there are a few differences for female Hajj. We can list some of them below for easy following:

- **Dress in Ihram.** For female sewn dress and jewellery is allowed.
- **Their head:** Must be covered.

- **Face:** Uncovered face but in front of male best to cover,
- **Voice:** Will recite Talbia with lower voice,
- **Speed:** Normal. Won't do Romol (quick walking) during Tawaf.
- **Normal walking:** Won't run between Safa and Marwa but will walk normal.
- **Hair:** Won't shave the head, few inches of hair from the top of hair is ok.
- **No risk:** Won't try to kiss Black Stone in crowded period.
- **In menses:** In Menses or bleeding from childbirth will perform every other Hajj duty, except Tawaf and Sa'ee. Once she is pure from those, will perform Tawaf and Sa'ee without delay.

Different types of Hajjs:

There are 3 kinds of Hajj:

1. **Ifrad:** The Hajj without Umrah with it is called Ifrad Hajj.
2. **Kiran Hajj:** In this type of Hajj, with one Ihram Umrah and Hajj both must be performed. At first Umrah is done and then without breaking the Ihram, one must continue the Hajj duties until ihram duties end.
3. **Tamattu Hajj:** In Hajj months with first Ihram Umrah is done and then break the Ihram. Then wait (without going back home) for the 8th Julhijj for the start of Hajj and make new Ihram to complete the Hajj duties.

For the outsiders of Makkah, Tamattu or Kiran Hajj is best because in one visit, and in the same season they can perform both Umrah and Hajj.

Fard and Wajib actions in Hajj:

What are Fard actions and what are Wajib actions? The brief about them is given below:

Fard Actions:

In Islamic ruling some actions are compulsory. These actions must be done. Missing all of them or one of them means the worship is cancelled. It must be done again. No penalty can correct it. So, in simple terms Fard action is a "Must do" action.

In Hajj there are some Fard actions. Muslims must not miss them. Muslims should be very careful in performing the Fard actions because these actions are the main pillars in Hajj. They must not be missed. There are 3 Fard actions in Hajj. About the 4th* and 5th* has difference in opinion. The differences of opinions are between 4 Imams in Ahle Sunnah wal Jema'ah. All of them are correct because their opinions are based on evidence. We believe that different opinions are Allah's Mercy because they give us more flexibilities. They are:

1. **Ihram from Meekat:** Making intention from the appointed boundary is a must do action. [Mishqat]
2. **Uqufu A'rafah:** Staying in the field of A'rafah on 9th Julhijj. It is on 9th Julhijj. The time is from after Mid-day until before Fajr, at least one moment staying will serve the Fard. But staying in A'rafah from after Mid-day till sunset is Sunnah and more rewarding.
3. **Tawaf-e-Jiarah:** In 10th Julhijj coming from Mina, this Tawaf must be done. For outsiders 3 Tawaf: **First** one is on arrival that is Sunnah, **second** one is Tawaf-e-Jiarah on 10th Julhijj which is Fard, and the **third** one is Tawaaful Widaa (Goodbye Tawaf at last) in either 12th or 13th Julhijj which is Wajib. [Mishqat]
4. **Sa'ee:** *Running between Mount Safa and Marwa. Some scholar's opinion is that it is Fard action as well. (Ahle Hadis).
5. **Halq:** *Shaving hair is Fard according to Shafee school of thought.

Wajib actions:

Wajib actions are close to Fard actions but essential to be done. If one misses a Wajib action can correct it by offering a sacrifice as a penalty. So, pilgrims should be very careful about Wajib actions.

In Hajj, main Wajib actions are 6, but about 2 of them *difference in opinion. They are as below:

1. **Sa'ee:** * Some say it is Fard and other say it is Wajib.
2. **Staying in Muzdalifa:** After leaving A'rafah field, staying in Muzdalifa at night.
3. **Rami:** Pebble throwing in some places in Mina on 10th, 11th, 12th, but 13th day is optional.
4. **Qurbani:** In Kiran and Tamattu Hajj.
5. **Halq:** *Shaving hair or cutting hair short. **Note:** Shafi School of thoughts considers it Fard action.
6. **Tawaaful Widaa:** Goodbye Tawaf for outsiders. [Taken from Fiqh book "Moqsudul Mu'mineen" by Moulana Shah Moniruzzaman]

Hajj days and duties: A brief chart

Hajj has certain duties in certain days. For a first-time pilgrim, it may seem quite a lot to remember. But it is not that hard. The best thing is to memorise the days and main actions (Events) in brief. Discuss about it with your close one about days and duties. Ask each other questions such as:

1. What day is the first day?
2. What are the duties in the first day?
3. What is the sequence of duties in that first day etc.?

This way, keep sharing until the last day. Through talking, asking, answering you will be amazed how easily everything sinks in your mind. Once the basic chart of Days and Duties sink in your mind, then you can feel relaxed and can go about more details.

Please see below the sequence of events:

Day one duties:

- Day one is 8th Julhijj,
- Ihram,
- Tawaaful Qudum for outsiders (Sunnah),
- Stay in Mina from Juhor to Fajr,
- Pray in Mina 5 Salah Juhor, Asr, Magrib, Isha and Fajr (Qasor Salah).

Day two duties:

- Day two is 9th Julhijj,
- Leave Mina for A'rafah after sunrise,
- Arrive in A'rafah before Juhor Salah,
- Juhor and Asr prayer in A'rafah (Qasor),
- Until Magrib do as much prayer, supplication, recitation etc as possible,
- After Sunset leave A'rafah for Muzdalifa,
- Pray Magrib and Isha on arrival of Muzdalifa (Qasor),
- Have rest (Sunnah),
- Pray Fajr in early hour,
- Then make supplication facing Ka'ba.

Day three duties:

- Day three is 10th of Julhijj,
- Leave Muzdalifa in 10th morning for Mina,
- Throwing pebbles in Jamra,
- Then stop Talbia and begin Takbir,
- Do Qurbani,
- Halq (Shaving hair or shortening hair for female),
- Shower and change dress (Ihram partially lifted),
- Go to Ka'ba and do Tawaaful Ifada, Sa'ee (Now full Ihram ends),
- Go back to Mina before Sunset.

Day four duties:

- Day four is 11th Julhijj,
- Throwing 7 pebbles in each Jamra of 3 Jamra,
- Stay in Mina.

Day five and duties:

- Day five is 12th Julhijj,
- Throwing 7 pebbles in each Jamra of 3 Jamra,
- Stay in Mina but if one wants to finish Hajj in fifth day then,
- Go to Ka'ba for Goodbye Tawaf (Wajib Tawaf exception for ladies with Menses or bleeding after childbirth).

Day six and duties:

- Day six is 13th Julhijj,
- Optional to stay until 13th,
- If stayed, Throwing 7 pebbles in each Jamra of 3 Jamra,
- Leave for Ka'ba for Tawaaful Widaa,
- THAT ENDS THE HAJJ.

NOTE: For any exceptional circumstances follow your guides, Insha Allah.

How to perform Hajj?

Performing Hajj has more duties involved than performing Umrah. In Hajj, the duties are performed from 8th Julhijj till 12th or 13th Julhijj. 13th Julhijj is optional. If a Muslim can extend to 13th it is better for him or her.

So here is another run down with little bit more in details.

1st day 8th of Julhijj.

- Make ihram. Make intention saying Labbaika Hajjan.
- If just arrived from outside perform Tawaaful Qudum.
- Go to Mina before Juhor and stay the day and night until next sunrise.
- In Mina perform 5 times Salah if you can, such as Juhor, Asr, Magrib, Isha and Fajr.
- THAT ENDS YOUR FIRST DAY DUTY.

2nd day 9th Julhijj:

- 2nd day is also called the Day of A'rafah.

- Leave Mina for arriving in A'rafah field before Juhor Salah.
- Perform Juhor and Asr together, with one Azan and two Iqamah. Both Salah are Qasor Salah (2 Rakah instead of 4 Rakah).
- Listen to the sermon.
- Spend your rest of the time until Sunset in worship like Salah, Dua, Zikr, Reciting etc as much as possible. This day is the best day for remembering Allah.
- Leave the A'rafah field after Sunset for Muzdalifa.
- On arrival of Muzdalifa perform Magrib and Isha together with one Azan and two Iqamah. Magrib is not Qasor (3 Rakah) but Isha is Qasor (2 Rakah instead of 4 Rakah).
- Have rest at the night, pray if you can after some rest,
- Pray Fajr in early period then make dua facing Ka'ba.

3rd day 10th of Julhijj:

- Continue Talbia,
- Leave Muzdalifa for Mina.
- On the way throw 7 pebbles on Jamaratul Qubra. For the first pebble say, "Bismillahi Allahu Akbar," and then for the next 6 just say, "Allahu Akbar."
- Pebbles must be small. Throwing shoes, big Stones etc not allowed.
- Stop Talbia once you throw pebbles and from now begin Takbir, "**Allahu Akbar- Allahu Akbar- Laa Ilaaaha Illallahu- Wallahu Akbar- Allahu Akbar -Walillahil Hamd.**"
- Do Qurbani (Sacrificing animal). [You may arrange with professionals to do it for you).
- Shave your head. For female a little hair cut from tip of the hair.
- Have shower and change dress. Your Ihram is now partially over. You can remove Ihram dress and have shower. But you are not yet allowed for spouse.
- Go to Ka'ba for Tawaaful Ifada. This Tawaf is Fard. How to do Tawaf? Just follow the method we mentioned above for Umrah.
- Then do Sa'ee between Safa and Marwa.
- **NOW YOU ARE COMPLETELY OUT OF IHRAM.** Now you are allowed for spouse as well.
- Go back to Mina before Sunset.

4th day 11th of Julhijj:

- You are in Mina.
- Stay in Mina for the day and night.
- Throw pebbles on 3 Jamra. In each Jamra 7 pebbles. After throwing on each Jamra make supplication.

5th day 12th of Julhijj:

- You are still in Mina.
- Throw pebbles like 4th day and make supplications afterwards.
- If you want to leave Mina on this day, leave Mina before Magrib towards Ka'ba for Last Tawaf (Goodbye Tawaf for outsiders).
- But if you want to stay in Mina can stay. Staying for another day is best.

6th day 13th Julhijj:

- If stayed, you are still in Mina today.
- Finish your pebble throwing like 4th and 5th day.
- Leave Mina before sunset.

- Go for final Tawaf (Goodbye Tawaf) if you are an outsider. **Note:** In last Tawaf Romol and Ijtiba is not required.
- Exception for female in Menses or in bleeding after childbirth. They can skip the Tawaaful Widaa.
- ALL DONE.

How to perform the different types of Hajjs?

Now, let us put every Hajj duty in simpler form. For example, as following:

- **Umrah Hajj:** The description is given in above.
- **Tamattu Hajj:** At first do Umrah Hajj as above. Then break Ihram and wait. Then on 8th again make Ihram and follow the above method written on “How to perform Hajj?”
- **Kiran Hajj:** Do Umrah first and then without breaking Ihram continue Hajj duties starting from 8th Julhijj.
- **Ifrad Hajj:** Without any Umrah and Qurbani. Do all other duties starting from 8th Julhijj until 12th or 13th.

Chapter 9: Some facts and Rewards

The beneficial Black Stone:

Some may wonder why it is called Black Stone. Where is the origin of that Black Stone? Why is it the Stone was placed in there? What is its job and so on? Some of the answers I have given in this book, but to refresh our minds, and remind ourselves, I decided to give brief facts again. We shall look for answer from three Hadis's:

Black Stone was white:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: نَزَّلَ الْحَجَرُ الْأَسْوَدُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَهُوَ أَشَدُ بَيَاضًا مِنَ الْبَنِ فَسَوَّدَتْهُ خَطَايَا بَنِي آدَمَ

“Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with both) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: “When Hazru Aswad (Black Stone) was sent down from the Paradise, it was whiter than milk. Later the sins of Adam’s children turned it to black.”

[Ahmed. Tirmidi]

So, from the Hadis we find the following answers about black Stone:

- It is really a Stone,
- The origin of it is in paradise,
- This Stone was sent by Allah's order,
- Angel Jibreel brought it down to Ibrahim (peace be upon him),
- Ibrahim (peace be upon him) placed it according to divine instruction,
- The job of this Stone is to suck the pilgrim's sins,
- So, this Stone is to serve Allah's servants with Allah's commands,
- This Stone is also a servant of Allah,
- Pilgrims do not worship this Stone but
- Pilgrims follow Allah's commands and Holy prophet's teachings to love the Stone from paradise etc.

Black Stone was in Paradise:

وَعَنْ أَبْنِ عُمَرَ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: إِنَّ الرُّكْنَ وَالْمَقَامَ يَأْقُوتَانِ مِنْ يَأْقُوتِ الْجَنَّةِ طَمَسَ اللَّهُ نُورَهُمَا وَلَوْلَا مَا يَطْمِسُ نُورَهُمَا لَأَضَاءَ مَا بَيْنَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ

Ibn Omar (May Allah be pleased with both) Narrated that he heard from Holy prophet (Peace be upon him): “Hazru Aswad and Maqam e Ibrahim (Stone) both are two precious Stones (Yaqoot) from all the precious Stones in Paradise. Allah removed their brightness. If their brightness was not removed, then they would have brightened everything from the east to the west of this world.”

[Tirmidi]

In Hajj, Allah has kept many miraculous things. Hajj has so many miraculous stories involved in it. All these true stories are the special Signs of Allah. If anyone wants to know about Allah and HIS Power, then he or she will find many Signs of Allah in Hajj. Everything in it, every duty in it, is a great Sign of Allah. Black Stone is one of them. Allah has Power to give or remove light and brightness from a precious Stone. Just like Allah can give or remove smile from a human through life and death. Allahu Akbar!

BlackStone as witness on the Day of Judgment:

Another miracle of Allah about the black Stone is, on the Day of Judgment Allah will make it see and speak. It will be given a tongue to speak. Allah will ask it to give witness about those who have kissed it with Faith in Allah.

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الْحَجَرِ: وَاللَّهِ لَيَبْعَثَنَّ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لَهُ عَيْنَانِ يُبَصِّرُ بِهِمَا وَلِسَانٌ يُنْطِقُ بِهِ يَشْهُدُ عَلَى مَنِ اسْتَلَمَهُ بِحَقِّ

Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with both) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said about the black Stone: **“By Allah! On the Day of Judgment Allah will raise it, it will have two eyes by which it will see, and it will have a tongue by which it will speak, and it will give witness for those who have kissed it with the faith in Allah.”**

[Tirmidi. Ibn Maazah. Daremy]

Rewards from Tawaf:

Tawaf means circling around the Holy Ka'ba. Allah made the Tawaf a very important part of the Hajj. Allah wants Muslim pilgrims to go around it while praising Allah. Ibrahim and Ismael (peace be upon them) were given the job first to maintain the Ka'ba for those who would come to do Tawaf and so on. Holy Quran confirms it:

وَعَاهَدْنَا إِلَى إِبْرِهِمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنْ طَهَرَا بَيْتَنَا لِلْطَّافِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ

“And WE took the promise from Ibrahim and Ismael, that they should cleanse MY House for those who circle it around (Tawaf), or use it as retreat, or bow, or prostrate themselves.”

[Al-Quran 2:125]

For Tawaf Allah rewards Muslim pilgrims. One of the rewards is as in the following Hadis:

**مَنْ طَافَ بِهَذَا الْبَيْتِ أَسْبُوْعًا فَأَحْصَاهُ كَانَ كَعْتُبَ رَقْبَةٍ . «وَسَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ»: لَا يَضْعُ قَدْمًا
«وَلَا يَرْفَعُ أَخْرَى إِلَّا حَطَّ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ بِهَا حَطِينَةً وَكُتِبَ لَهُ بِهَا حَسَنَةً**

(Tabe'ee) Ubaid Ibn Umair (May Allah's mercy be on him) narrated about Hazrat Abdullah ibn Omar (May Allah be pleased with both) that Ibn Omar said: **“I heard holy prophet (Peace be upon him) said that whoever shall make 7 rounds around the Ka'ba will receive same reward as freeing a slave. Allah will forgive one sin from each step for the Tawaf. And for each step Allah will reward a good deed.”**

[Tirmidi].

During Tawaf one should avoid un-necessary talks. Tawaf is around Allah's mercy and a pilgrim should focus to earn that Mercy as much as possible. So, the pilgrim can earn more rewards.

مَنْ طَافَ بِالْبَيْتِ سَبْعًا وَلَا يَتَكَلَّمُ إِلَّا بِ: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ مُحِيطٌ عَنْهُ عَشْرُ سَيِّنَاتٍ وَكُتِبَ لَهُ عَشْرُ حَسَنَاتٍ وَرُفِعَ لَهُ عَشْرُ درجاتٍ

Abu Huraira (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: **“If a pilgrim has completed 7 rounds around the Ka'ba and has not spoken any other talks except **‘Subhaanallaahi, wal hamdulillaahi, walaa ilaaha illallahu wallahu Akbar, walaa haula walaa**

quwwata illaa billaahil a'liyyil a'jeem***. Then his 10 sins will be deleted, 10 good deeds will be added, and 10 higher statuses will be increased.”

[Ibn Maazah]

Meaning of the dua: **...**Allah is Pure, and all the praise for Allah, and there are no other true gods but Allah, and Allah is the Greatest, and there is no other power (shelter) except Allah.

Dua between Rukni Yaminee and Black Stone:

Rukni Yaminee is the name of a corner of Ka'ba. In Tawaf this corner and the corner of Black Stone (Hazru Aswad) are side by side. In between these two corners Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) made the following dua.

Abdullah ibn Saieb (May Allah be pleased with him) said that he saw Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) making the following dua in the middle place between Hazru Aswad and Rukni Yaminee,

“Rabbanaa aatina fid-dunya hasanah wafil aakhirati hasanah waqinaa a'jaaban-naar.”

(Our Lord! Grant us all the best things in this world and all the best things in next life and save us from the punishment of the Hell Fire.) [Abu Dawood]

What happens when a pilgrim makes this dua sincerely? One of those things is, Angels join in this dua.

وَعَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «وُكَلَ بِهِ سَبْعُونَ مَلَكًا» «يَعْنِي الرُّكْنَ الْيَمَانِيَّ فَمَنْ قَالَ: «اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ رَبَّنَا آتَنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ قَالُوا: أَمِينٌ. رَوَاهُ ابْنُ مَاجَهٍ

Abu Huraira (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: **“There are 70 angels appointed near Rukni Yaminee. When a pilgrim says, “Rabbanaa aatina fid-dunya hasanah wafil aakhirati hasanah waqinaa a'jaaban-naar.” Then the 70 angels say, “Ameen!” Allah accept it.”**

[Ibn Maazah]

Allah accepts the dua from angels because they are pure from sins. So, when angels join in the dua with pilgrims, then Allah accepts the dua in there.

Day of A'rafah:

Day of A'rafah is 9th of Julhijj. In this day all pilgrims gather in a vast field. The large gathering for Allah reminds the Gathering on the Day of Judgment. This day has huge significance and huge rewards as well.

Day for freeing from Hell Fire:

This Day Allah forgives so many servants and set them free from Hell Fire. Allah forgives their punishment and replaces it with HIS Mercy and the grant of Paradise for those whom Hajj is accepted.

وَعَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ: إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: مَا مِنْ يَوْمٍ أَكْثَرُ مِنْ أَنْ يُعْتَقَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ عَبْدًا مِنَ النَّارِ مِنْ يَوْمِ عَرَفَةَ وَإِنَّهُ لَيَدْنُو ثُمَّ يُبَاهِي بِهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ فَيَقُولُ: مَا أَرَادَ هُوَ لَاءُ. رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ

Hon Ayesha (May Allah be pleased with her) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: **“There is no other day than the day of A’rafah in which Allah frees HIS servants from the Hell Fire. HE comes too close to the servants and expresses to the angels about how much proud HE is about HIS servants, and HE asks the angels, ‘Tell ME what they want? (I will give them).”** [Muslim]

The best dua is the dua in A’rafah:

Muslims make dua every day to Allah. But one of the best day and place for dua is the dua in the field of A’rafah. Because Allah comes very close to HIS servants with HIS mercy and forgiveness.

وَعَنْ عَمِّرُو بْنِ شَعِيبٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ جَدِّهِ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: خَيْرُ الدُّعَاءِ دُعَاءُ يَوْمِ عَرَفَةَ وَخَيْرُ مَا قُلْتُ أَنَا وَالنَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ قَبْلِي: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ. رَوَاهُ التَّرْمِذِيُّ

Amor Ibn Shuaib narrated from his father through his grandfather that holy prophet (Peace be upon him) said: **Among all the dua, the best dua is the dua on the day of A’rafah and the best of Zikr from all the Zikr, I and previous prophets have done is: “Laa ilaaha illallahu wahdahu laa shareeka lahu Lahul mulku walahu hamdu wa hua a’laa kulli shaien qadeer.”**

[Tirmidi]

Satan is humiliated on the Day of A’rafah:

In this day Satan is humiliated the most. Satan celebrates if he can misguide a person to take that person towards hell fire with him. But Satan feels humiliated when he sees that Allah is forgiving HIS servants to take them into Paradise.

لِإِرْسَالِهِ وَعَنْ طَلْحَةَ بْنِ عَبْيَدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ كَرِيزٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: مَا رُئِيَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَوْمًا هُوَ فِيهِ أَصْفَرُ وَلَا أَدْحَرُ وَلَا أَغْيِظُ مِنْهُ فِي يَوْمِ عَرَفَةَ وَمَا ذَاكَ إِلَّا لِمَا يَرَى مِنْ تَنَزُّلِ الرَّحْمَةِ وَتَجَاوزُ اللَّهِ عَنِ الذُّنُوبِ الْعِظَامِ إِلَّا مَا رُئِيَ يَوْمَ بَدْرٍ . «فَقِيلَ: مَا رُئِيَ يَوْمَ بَدْرٍ؟ قَالَ: فَإِنَّهُ قَدْ رَأَى جَبْرِيلَ يَرْأَعُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ .» رَوَاهُ مَالِكٌ مُرْسَلًا وَفِي شَرْحِ السُّنْنَةِ بِلِفْظِ الْمَصَابِيحِ

Talha ibn Obaidullah Ibn kareej (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that holy prophet (peace be upon him) said: **“Satan is never seen so much humiliated, so much contempt, so much lowly and so much angry except on the Day of A’rafah. Because he sees, Mercy is coming on Allah’s servants, servant’s big sins are being forgiven, as what he saw on the day of Badr battle. Someone asked, what was seen on the day of Badr O messenger of Allah! He (peace be upon him) answered: On Badr day Satan saw Angels Jibrael (Peace be upon him) was making row with angels.”**

[Malik as Mursal]

Great day for forgiveness:

Usually Friday (Jumma day) is the best day every week. But once a year for forgiveness, the day of A’rafah is the best day. Allah forgives HIS servants lavishly on the Day of A’rafah.

وَعَنْ جَابِرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ عَرَفَةَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَنْزِلُ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا فَيُبَاهِي بِهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ فَيَقُولُ: انْظُرُوْا إِلَى عِبَادِي أَتَوْنِي شُعْثًا

عِبْرًا ضَاجِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجَّ عَمِيقٍ أَشْهَدُكُمْ أَنِّي قَدْ غَفَرْتُ لَهُمْ فَيَقُولُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ بِيَا رَبِّ فُلَانْ كَانَ يُرِهَّقُ وَفُلَانْ وَفُلَانَةً قَالَ يَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِقَدْ غَفَرْتُ لَهُمْ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَمَا مِنْ يَوْمٍ أَكْثَرَ عَيْقًا مِنَ النَّارِ مِنْ يَوْمٍ عَرَفَةً . «رَوَاهُ فِي شِرْحِ السَّتَّةِ

Zaber (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “**When Day of A’rafah arrives, Allah comes down to the lowest heaven and expresses to the angels about how proud HE is with Pilgrims. Allah says, “Look at MY servants! They have come with untidy hairs, with dust all over their bodies, towards ME with supplications, from far to further. I am keeping you MY witness and declaring that I am forgiving them.**

Then angels say, “O our Lord! Such person is called a big sinner and such man and woman too.”

Allah says, “I forgive them too!”

[Sharhus Sunnah]

Satan’s regret:

Satan was driven away from Allah’s Mercy due to his defiance. Every time he sees Allah’s Mercy on Muslims he regrets seriously.

وَعَنْ عَبَّاسَ بْنِ مِرْدَاسَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ دَعَا لِأَمْتَهِ عَشِيَّةَ عَرَفَةَ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ فَأَجِيبَ: «إِنِّي قَدْ غَفَرْتُ لَهُمْ مَا خَلَا الْمَظَالِمِ فَإِنِّي آخُذُ لِلْمَظْلُومِ مِنْهُ» . قَالَ: «أَيُّ رَبٌّ إِنْ شِئْتَ أَعْطَيْتَ الْمَظْلُومَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَغَفَرْتَ لِلظَّالِمِ» فَلَمْ يُجِبْ عَشِيَّتَهُ فَلِمَّا أَصْبَحَ بِالْمُزَدَّلَفَةِ أَعَادَ الدُّعَاءَ فَأَجِيبَ إِلَى مَا سَأَلَ . قَالَ: فَضَحِكَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَوْ قَالَ تَبَسَّمَ فَقَالَ لَهُ أَبُو بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ: بِأَيِّ أَنْتَ وَأَمَّيْ إِنَّ هَذِهِ لَسَاعَةً مَا كُنْتَ تَضْحَكُ فِيهَا فَمَا الَّذِي أَضْحَكَ اللَّهُ سِنَّكَ؟ قَالَ: «إِنَّ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ إِبْلِيسَ لَمَّا عَلِمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قَدْ اسْتَجَابَ دُعَائِي وَغَفَرَ لِأَمْتَهِ آخُذَ التَّرَابَ فَجَعَلَ يَحْشُوَهُ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ وَيَدْعُو بِالْوَيْلِ وَالثُّبُورِ فَأَضْحَكَنِي مَا رَأَيْتُ مِنْ جَزَعِهِ» . رَوَاهُ أَبْنُ مَاجَهٍ وَرَوَى الْبَيْهَقِيُّ فِي كِتَابِ الْبَعْثَ وَالنَّشُورِ نَحْوَهُ

وعن عباس بن مرداش ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم دعا لامته عشية عرفة بالغفارة فاجيب: «اني قد غفرت لهم ما خلا المظالم فاني اخذ للمظلوم منه» . قال: «اي رب ان شئت اعطيت المظلوم من الجنة وغفرت للظالم» فلم يجب عشيته فلما اصبح بالمزدلفة اعاد الدعاء فاجيب الى ما سال. قال: فضحك رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم او قال تبسم فقال له ابو بكر وعمر: بامي انت وامي ان هذه لساعة ما كنت تضحك فيها فما الذي اضحكك اضحك الله سنك؟ قال: «ان عدو الله ابليس لما علم ان الله عز وجل قد استجاب دعائي وغفر لامتي اخذ التراب فجعل يحشوه على راسه ويدعو بالويل والثبور فاضحكني ما رأيت من جزعه» . رواه ابن ماجه وروى البيهقي في كتاب البعث والنشور نحوه

Abbas ibn Mirdas (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) **made supplication to Allah for the forgiveness of Pilgrims in the afternoon on the Day of A'rafah. The answer was from Allah, 'I forgive all the sins except doing wrong on others; I shall capture the wrongdoers on behalf of the victims.'**

Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) prayed then, '**O Allah! If YOU want, YOU can grant paradise for the wronged ones and YOU can pardon the wrongdoers for it.**' But that day no answer came.

Then Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) made the same supplication in dawn in Muzdalifa, then his dua was answered for which he was praying for. For this he (Peace be upon him) smiled.

Seeing holy prophet's smile Abu Bakr and Omar (May Allah be pleased with both) said, '**O messenger of Allah! Let our parents be dedicated for you! Why did you smile such a time when you never smile like this? May Allah keep you in happiness all the time!**'

Holy prophet (Peace be upon him) said: '**when Allah's enemy Satan came to know that Allah accepted my dua and has forgiven my followers (Pilgrims), then Satan picked up soil and began hitting his head with the soil and said, 'Alas! My bad luck!**'

Satan's restlessness (from regrets) made me smile."

[Ibn Maazah].

The End-----
