

MLU-4.1: Pillars of Islam: The pilgrimage (Hajj)

Pillar of Islam (Cont.)

Meaning of Hajj

Hajj means **"to intend"**. In Islamic terminology, it means to visit the holy Kaaba in ihram and to perform specific rituals.

Importance of Hajj in Islam

Hajj is one of the most important pillars of Islam and it is one of the greatest religious duties. Holy Qur'an says in a short and meaningful sentence:

"In it are clear signs [such as] the standing place of Abraham. And whoever enters it shall be safe. And [due] to Allah (SWT) from the people is a pilgrimage to the House – for whoever can find thereto a way. But whoever disbelieves – then indeed, Allah (SWT) is free from need of the world" (3:97).

The Hajj is a spiritual, emotional, and physical undertaking that tests one's patience and temperament. But it also gives Muslims a chance to renew their spiritual identity, compensate for their wrongdoings, and get nearer to Allah (SWT).

As Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

"Whoever performs Hajj for the sake of Allah (SWT) and does not utter any obscene speech or do any evil deed, will go back (free of sin) as his mother bore him". (Bukhari and Muslim)

On whom it is Obligatory

Certain conditions are required to perform the Hajj pilgrimage:

- Firstly, only Muslim adults (whether male or female) are required to perform Hajj. This means that while children may go to Hajj, it is not required of them.
- Secondly, the very weak, sick, elderly, or otherwise physically incapable Muslims are exempt from having to perform the pilgrimage.
- Thirdly, the Muslim must be financially able to perform Hajj. This means that a person in debt is not obliged to perform Hajj until he has cleared his debt – and must have the intention of doing so as a priority. However, if one is in debt, they may still perform Hajj as long as:

- The creditor permits it
- The debtor has time to pay off the debt
- Hajj does not affect their ability to pay off the debt

Pillar for Performing Hajj

There are three basic pillars for performing Hajj:

1. To enter into a state of "Ihram" and have the intention to perform the pilgrimage.
2. To stay at the field of "Arafat" on the ninth of Dhul-Hijja. If someone cannot go to the field of Arafat even for a short time then his/her pilgrimage will not be complete. He/she has to perform the pilgrimage again the following year.
3. Additional circling of the "Ka'ba" after the stay at the field of "Arafat" was performed from the tenth to the end of the month.

Rituals of Hajj

- Ihram
- Tawaf
- Sa'i
- Wuquf –E-Arafat
- Shaving the head or trimming the hair
- Stoning Jamrat Al-Aqabah
- Sacrifice
- Tawaf Al-Ifadhah
- Return to Mina
- Farewell Tawaf

1. Ihram:

Before arriving at Makkah to begin Hajj, it's important to make an intention (niyyah) within your heart. The intention must be to perform the Hajj for the sake of Allah alone, with a desire for good in the hereafter. It should not be done to be seen by others or for worldly gain.

The very first rite of hajj requires the pilgrim to enter into the state of ihram, which means sacred. A Muslim must accomplish this before crossing into the boundaries of the holy city of Mecca. The pilgrim attains ihram by performing the necessary cleansing rituals, wearing the required dress, and behaving appropriately. For men, the clothing of ihram is two sheets of white cloth. The top cloth is draped over the torso and the bottom cloth is secured onto the lower body with a belt. Men also wear simple sandals. For women, ihram consists of a loose-fitting garment of any color that covers all of the body except the face and hands. There are no restrictions on women's footwear. The purpose of ihram clothing is to eliminate all differences among pilgrims by requiring all to dress the same to attain a greater sense of spiritual equality and unity in the shared experience of worshipping God. Muslims must also follow the specific ihram behavioral standards during the hajj. Any activity that could distract pilgrims from their purpose of the pilgrimage and their focus on God is prohibited, such as cursing, fighting, killing

animals, cutting trees or plants, excessive laughter, excessive eating, and even personal grooming or using perfume or scent on the body.

Talbeyah:

It is recommended to repeat the well-known supplication of Hajj, called Talbeyah, as frequently as possible from the time of Ihram till the time of the first stoning of Jamrat Al- Aqabah in Mina. Men are recommended to utter the Talbeyah aloud while women are to say it quietly.

Talbeyah is:

Labbayka Allāhumma labbayk. Labbayk lā shareeka laka labbayk. Inna al-ḥamda, wa n-'imata, Laka wal mulk. Lā shareeka lak.

Translation:

"Here I am at your service. O my Lord, here I am. Here I am. No partner do You have. Here I am. Truly, the praise and the provisions are Yours, and so is the dominion. No partner do You have".

2. Tawaf: Walking Around the Ka'ba

When a Muslim arrives in Makkah, he should make Tawaf around the Ka'bah, as a gesture of greeting Masjid Al-Haraam. This is done by circling the Ka'bah seven times in the counterclockwise direction, starting from the black stone with Takbeer and ending each circle at the Black Stone with Takbeer, keeping the Ka'bah to one's left. Then the pilgrim goes to Maqam Ibrahim (Ibrahim's Station), and performs two rak'ah behind it, close to it if possible, but away from the path of the people making Tawaf. In all cases, one should be facing the Ka'bah when praying behind Maqam Ibrahim.

3. Sa'i:

Sai is a walk between the mountains of Safa and Marwa. It's obligatory in hajj and if someone has the intention of Umrah his Umrah is completed with this obligation.

This is an important ritual in memory of Prophet Ibrahim's (AS) wife Hajar, and her struggle in the desert in search of water for her son Prophet Isma'il (AS). Sa'i symbolizes the ongoing struggle we encounter throughout our lives, as Hajar experienced.

4. Wuquf –E-Arafat (Stay at Arafat):

On the 9th day of Dhul-Hijja, the Day of Arafat, the pilgrims stay in Arafat until sunset. The pilgrims pray Dhuhr and Asr at Arafat, shortened and combined during the time of Dhuhr to save the rest of the day for glorifying Allah (SWT) and for supplication asking forgiveness. A

pilgrim should ensure he is within the boundaries of Arafat, not necessarily standing on the mountain of Arafat.

The Prophet (PBUH) said:

"There is no day on which Allah (SWT) frees people from the Fire more so than on the day of 'Arafah. He comes close to those (people standing on 'Arafah), and then He reveals before His Angels saying, 'What are these people seeking.'" (Bukhari and Muslim)

5. Stoning Jamrat Al-Aqabah (Rami):

When the pilgrims arrive at Mina, they go to Jamrat Al-Aqabah where they stone it with seven pebbles glorifying Allah (SWT) "Allah-u-Akbar" at each throw and calling on Him to accept their Hajj. The time of stoning Jamrat Al-Aqabah is after sunrise. The Prophet (PBUH) threw the pebbles late in the morning and permitted weak people to stone after leaving Muzdalifah after midnight. The size of the pebbles should not be more than that of a bean as described by the Prophet (PBUH), who warned against exaggeration. The pebbles can be picked up either in Muzdalifah or in Mina.

6. Sacrifice:

The 10th of Dhul Hijjah is also called the Yawm al-Nahr, or the Day of Sacrifice (Qurbani). The pilgrim goes to slaughter his sacrifice either personally or through the appointment of somebody else to do it on his behalf. A pilgrim should slaughter either a sheep or share a cow or a camel with six others.

Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an:

"And when you are safe, then, whoever avails the advantage of the 'Umrah along with the Hajj shall make an offering of whatever animal is available. However, anyone who finds none shall fast for three days during Hajj, and for seven days when you return; thus they are ten in all. This is for him whose family folk are not residents of Al-Masjid-ul-Harām." (2:196)

7. Shaving the Head or Trimming the Hair:

The final rite on the tenth day after offering his sacrifice is to shave one's head or to cut some of the hair. Shaving the head is, however, preferable for it was reported that the Prophet (PBUH) prayed three times for those who shaved their heads when he (PBUH) said:

"May Allah (SWT)'s Mercy be upon those who shaved their heads." (Bukhari and Muslim).

A woman trims her hair by the length of a fingertip.

8. Tawaf Al-Ifadhah:

Tawaf Al-Ifadhah is a fundamental rite of Hajj. The pilgrim makes Tawaf-al-Ifadhah by visiting Al-Masjid Al-Haraam circling the Ka'bah seven times and praying two Rak'ah behind Maqam Ibrahim. Then the pilgrim should make Sa'i between the Safa and the Marwah. After Tawaf-al-Ifadhah the state of Ihram is completely ended and all restrictions are lifted.

9. Return to Mina:

The pilgrim should return to Mina and spend there the days of Tashreeq (i.e. the 11th, 12th, and 13th day of Dhul-Hijja). During each day, and after Dhuhr prayer, the pilgrim stones the three stone pillars called "Jamarat": The small, the medium, and Jamrat Al-Aqabah, glorifying Allah (SWT) "Allah-u-Akbar" with each throw of the seven pebbles stoned at each pillar. These pebbles are picked up in Mina. A Pilgrim may leave Mina to Makkah on the 13th of Dhul-Hijja or the 12th if he wishes, there is no blame on him if he chooses the latter, but he has to leave before sunset.

10. Tawaf al-Wida (Farewell Tawaf):

Farewell Tawaf is the final rite of Hajj. It is to make another Tawaf around the Ka'bah.

Ibn Abbas said:

"The people were ordered to perform the Tawaf around the Ka'bah as the last thing before leaving Makkah, except the menstruating women who were excused." Bukhari.

Types of Hajj

1. **Hajj Mufrad:** All conditions of the Hajj Mufrad are the same as described above. One enters into the state of Ihram for Hajj only and no Umrah is performed before Hajj.
2. **Hajj Tamattu:** This is Hajj when Umrah is performed before the Hajj. The pilgrim removed Ihram for Umrah on the 8th of Dhul-Hijja and re-entered into the state of Ihram again for Hajj.
3. **Hajj Qiran:** In this Hajj, the pilgrim enters into the state of Ihram for both Umrah and the Hajj at one time.

What Are the Differences between Hajj and `Umrah?

Hajj and Umrah are both Islamic pilgrimages. The main difference is that Hajj is an obligatory pilgrimage for those who can afford it, whereas Umrah is the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

A pilgrim can perform Umrah rituals in hours, while the completion of the Hajj takes days. Also, Hajj can only be performed in the month of Dhul-Hijjah, whereas Umrah can be performed throughout the year except for Hajj days.

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