



Hajj



Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand that Hajj is Wājib for every Muslim (with conditions)
- Understand the consequences of delaying Hajj
- Be reminded that Hajj is made up of 2 major portions,
- Understand the spiritual significance of the rites of Hajj
- Understand briefly the major themes of Hajj and how they apply to our world

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 5

Hajj- Spiritual Journey

Hajj is one of the fundamental Islamic practices. It is very potent in its spirituality, that every able Muslim must in their lives at least once. The rewards one receives in this world and the Hereafter are so great that Imam 'Ali (as) has said:

"Perform the Hajj and 'Umrah, for they discard poverty and are an atonement (Kaffarāh) of sins and make paradise obligatory (for the person who completes them)"

HAJJ IS WĀJIB

Allah(SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an:

"...and pilgrimage to the house is incumbent upon men for the sake of Allah, (upon) everyone who is able to undertake the journey to it; and whoever disbelieves, surely Allah is self-sufficient, above any need of the worlds". (3:97).

To the extent that it is reported from Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) that:

"Whoever dies without having performed obligatory pilgrimage when he was not prevented by lack of means, illness, or force, dies a death of a Jew or a Christian".

As soon as we meet the conditions below, Hajj becomes obligatory. These are:

1. Bulūgh (reached age of maturity)
2. We are sane (āqil)

3. Performing *Hajj* would not stop us from missing out on another more important obligation
4. Must have the capacity (*Istiṭā'ah*). This includes having the money to make the journey of *Hajj*. It also includes having the physical ability to make and complete the journey.

CONSEQUENCES OF DELAYING *HAJJ*

Counting *Hajj* insignificant and postponing it when you are able to perform it is regarded as a **major sin** in Islam which has consequences in both worlds:

- Failure in worldly affairs which you have delayed your *Hajj* for. Imam al-Baqir (as) says that if a person postpones *Hajj* in order to acquire or complete some worldly affair he will see that other people have gone and come back from *Hajj* while neither his aim is achieved nor his work complete.
- Imam al-Ṣādiq (as): "When a person is capable of doing the pilgrimage but does not do it, he has indeed flouted (disregarded) a law from the laws of Islam."ⁱ
- Imam al-Ṣādiq (as): "One who keeps postponing *Hajj* until he dies, Allah will resurrect him on the Day of Judgment as a Jew or a Christian."ⁱⁱ

A TWO PART JOURNEY

The journey of *Hajj* is divided into two main sections:

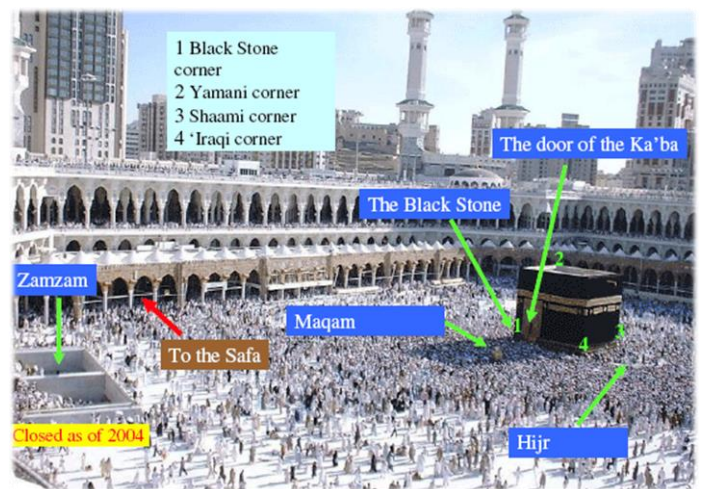
- 'Umrat al-Tamattu'
- *Hajj* al-Tamattu'

'UMRAH TAMATTU'

1. This starts when we wear *Iḥrām* (after performing a *muṣtaḥab* Ghusl) at one of the stations on the way to Mecca (*Miqāt*).
2. **Ṭawāf**: Upon entering *Masjidul Ḥarām* in Mecca, we walk around the Holy Ka'bah seven times, resembling angels circling the throne of Allah (SWT), filling the heart with the remembrance of Allah (SWT).
3. **Ṣalātul Ṭawāf**: Upon completion of *Ṭawāf*, a *wājib* two rak'ah prayer is performed in a place called *Maqām Ibrāhīm* (as), the place where this

great prophet stood to pray after building the Ka'bah.

4. **Sa'y**: After performing *Ṭawāf*, one is then expected to perform *sa'y* which is walking or running between the hills *Ṣafah* and *Marwah*.
5. **Taqṣīr**: After *Sa'y*, pilgrims trim some hair or nails (*taqṣīr*) as a symbol of dropping their sins and never returning to the bad habits they may have had before *Hajj*. This marks the end of the 'Umrah al-Tamattu'.



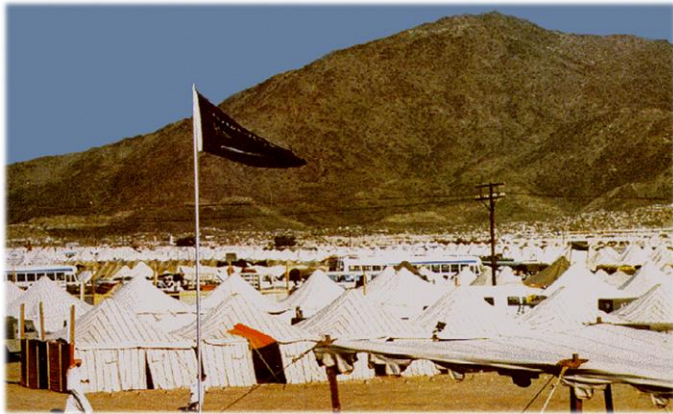
HAJJ AL-TAMATTU'

After the 'Umrah, the pilgrims usually can dress in their normal clothes and stay in Mecca till the 8th of Dhul Ḥijjah. On this day, people prepare for the beginning of *Hajj* by re-wearing their *Iḥrām* and then heading to the desert of 'Arafah. On the 9th day of Dhul Ḥijjah, at noon, the *Hajj* begins.

STAYING AT 'ARAFAH

The first part of the *Hajj* process is to leave Mecca and stay in a plain desert outside Mecca called 'Arafah. 'Arafah literally means 'to know' or to gain insight and vision. A person must spend the afternoon of the 9th day of Dhul Ḥijjah in this place. There are no compulsory rituals while staying there, and other than tents and other humans that look exactly like you, there is nothing. It symbolically represents the whole world as the plain land which Adam (as) and Eve descended to, and returned to their Lord through supplications of forgiveness. This means that it is the best time to reflect and connect with Allah (SWT), ask his forgiveness, and let everything within

you that prevents you from Allah burn under the scorching sun of 'Arafah. Prophet Muḥammad (saw) said: "Ḥajj is 'Arafah", meaning the major spirituality of Ḥajj shall be achieved in 'Arafah. The du'ā of Imam Ḥusayn (a) in 'Arafah is recommended to be recited, and it is also the best time to ask Allah (SWT) to bless you with the visitation of the Imam of our time.



STAYING AT MUZDALIFAH (MASH'AR)

The next step is to stay in a place called al-Muzdalifah between Fajr and sunrise of the 10th day of Dhul Ḥijjah. This is where we collect rocks for the stoning of the pillars, and prepare our souls for the symbolic battle against Satan. Within the darkness, no buildings, tents, or signs exist. You are left alone amidst millions that look exactly like you, and the great sea of Allah (SWT)'s servants have unified in preparation to battle evil.

STONING OF THE PILLARS

On the morning of the tenth day, we head towards Mina, another place on the outskirts of Mecca. Here, on the morning of the 10th, 11th and 12th days, we throw 7 pebbles at each of three pillars or walls which represent Satan. This is symbolic of Prophet Abraham's stoning of Satan on his way to sacrifice Prophet Ismā'il (as). It represents throwing away everything that prevents you from being obedient to Allah (SWT); your ego, arrogance, bad manners, ignorance, intolerance – whatever evil there is within you. You must purify yourself and defeat the Satan if you want to be able to sacrifice your Ismā'il purely for the sake of Allah (SWT).



THE SACRIFICE (AL-QURBAN)

Part of performing Ḥajj is to sacrifice an animal and feed its meat to the poor and needy. The sacrifice is symbolic of the sacrifice of Prophet Abraham (as) who had passed all the previous stages such that he was now prepared to even sacrifice his very son for the sake of Allah (SWT).

Now, you are about to act as Ibrāhim. He brought his son Ismā'il to sacrifice. Who is your Ismā'il or what is it?
- Your position? Your honour? Profession? Money? House? Farm? Car? Love? Family? Knowledge? Social class? Art? Dress? Name? Your life? Your youth? Your beauty? How do I know? But you know it yourself whoever and whatever, you should have brought it with you to sacrifice here. I cannot tell you which one, but I can give you some clues to help - whatever weakens your faith, whatever stops you from "going", whatever distracts you from accepting responsibilities, whatever causes you to be self-centred, whatever makes you unable to hear the message and confess the truth whatever forces you to "escape", whatever causes you to rationalize for the sake of convenience, whatever makes you blind and deaf ... You are in the position of Ibrāhim whose weakness was in his love for Ismā'il (his son). He was teased by Satan. Imagine yourself at the peak of honour, full of pride and there is only ONE THING for which you can give up everything and sacrifice any other love for its love. THAT IS YOUR Ismā'il! Your Ismā'il can be a person, an object, a rank, a position or even a "weakness"! But - for Ibrāhim it was his son!"ⁱⁱⁱ

Cutting the throat of the animal resembles cutting the throat of selfish desire in order to achieve piety. The Holy Qur'an describing this step says:

“It is not their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah; it is your piety that reaches Him.” 22:37

SHAVING OF THE HEAD (TAQSĪR)

After the sacrifice has occurred, men shave their heads, while women cut a small portion of their hair. This is another symbol of a person being freed from their sins. After this, a person can remove their *Iḥrām*, and most things are permissible for them to do again.

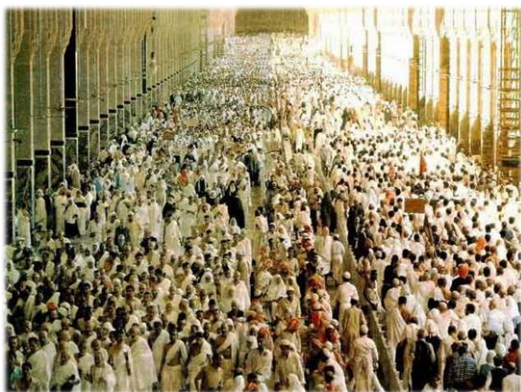
ṬAWĀF

After shaving the head, we can head back to the Ka'bah in Mecca. Here we must perform *Ṭawāf*. This means to walk around the Holy Ka'bah seven times, and then perform a two rak'ah prayer at a place called Maqām Ibrāhīm (as). This is the place where this great prophet used to offer prayer to Allah (SWT).



SA'Y

After completing the *Ṭawāf*, we move to the two hills, Ṣafah and Marwah. Here, we do what Hager, the wife of Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) did thousands of years ago. We walk between the two hills seven times.



ṬAWĀFUL NISĀ'

After completing the walking between the hills, we go back the Ka'bah and perform another seven laps to complete what is called *Ṭawāful Nisā'*.

STAYING AT MINA

We are required to stay in Mina on the 10th, 11th and 12th days of Dhul Ḥijjah. Once we have done this, and completed all the above actions, our *Ḥajj* is complete.

THE RITES OF ḤAJJ

It is important throughout the rites of *Ḥajj* to remember that it is the act itself which is obligatory and which brings about the rewards. While it is useful to find a symbolic meaning for the action and apply it to our lives to increase our piety, it is important to remember that we cannot ever forego the act itself or diminish from the significance of the jurisprudential aspects of *Ḥajj*.

The following narration from Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) demonstrates this:

وَاذْبَحْ حَنْجَرَتِي الْهُوَى وَ الطَّمَعِ عِنْدَ الدَّيْحَةِ

Note that the Imam says: “when you slaughter your Sacrifice, also slaughter your whim and greed.”^{iv}

There is a very important point in that. The Imam (as) while taking us to a higher level of *Ḥajj* and pointing at its spiritual and self-building significance does not ignore its jurisprudential procedure and hence he says do so and so **while you are slaughtering the animal**.

MAJOR THEMES OF ḤAJJ

Ḥajj has various applications to both our physical world as well as our personal spiritual consciousness.

- **Unity of Muslims:** During *Ḥajj*, it does not matter where you are from or what Islamic sect you belong to. You dress and act the same way as everyone else, and nothing identifies you apart from the sea of millions of Muslims around you. Everyone comes together from all parts of the world and stands united besides one another.
- **Learning about others:** At certain times during *Ḥajj* you have the opportunity to talk with others and learn about their background, culture, ideologies,

concerns and needs. The Imams of Ahlul Bayt used this opportunity to deliver sermons to Muslims from around the world, with Imam Ḥusayn (as) going to Mecca and talking with the people before leaving for Karbala.

- **Humility to Allah (SWT):** Being prepared to put your worldly affairs aside and take upon yourself all the difficulties of Ḥajj, including the travel, expenses, heat, flies, walking...etc. for the sake of Allah (SWT) humbles man in obedience. Being amidst a crowd of millions of people who look exactly the same as you, where nothing distinguishes the rich from the poor, reminds us that we are all humans equal in our creation, and we are nothing before Allah (SWT).
- **Discipline & Spiritual Upliftment:** Ḥajj disciplines us against our very souls, teaching us to fight our desires, to sacrifice our wants, to kill the whispers of Satan, and make our hearts circle only around the remembrance of Allah (SWT) – as this is the key to achieving tranquillity upon the land which man has descended to:

“Those who believe and whose hearts are set at rest by the remembrance of Allah; Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest.” 13:28

Ḥajj is the training camp in which one detaches from all worldly desires and abstains from all bodily pleasures, elevating themselves to the realm of spirituality and light. Ḥajj therefore is a rebirth for the pilgrims to start a new and different life based on piety. Thus, Imam al-Ṣādiq (a.s) said:

“(The one who completes) Ḥajj... will exit from his sins like the day that his mother gave birth to him.”^v

Review Questions

Q1. Discuss the spiritual significance of the sacrifice and what you would be prepared to sacrifice.

Q2. Discuss the worldly benefits of Ḥajj for the global Muslim population.

Q3. Discuss the spiritual significance of circling the Ka’bah

ⁱ Tafsilu Wasa'il 'ilī 'sh-Shi'a, p. 28.

ⁱⁱ Shaykh as-Sadūq, Man La Yahdhuru 'l-Faqih, vol. 4, p. 266. Wasa'il ul-Shia Vol. 8 page 21

ⁱⁱⁱ “Ḥajj”, Dr. Shari'ati

^{iv} Misbahul Shari'a

^v Behaarul-Anwaar, vol.99 p.26