

Some Lessons for an accepted Hajj

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic on Friday, 6th November 2009. Any meanings lost in translation are not to be attributed to the speaker as reminders are translated by volunteers. The mosque has no official translator and volunteers often have no formal qualifications to translate on the day. Please forgive any errors as they are from our human weakness and any right guidance is from God.

Allah says "And [due] to Allāh from the people is a pilgrimage to the House – for whoever is able to find thereto a way. But whoever disbelieves – then indeed, Allāh is free from need of the worlds." [Al-Imran 3:97] and "And proclaim to the people the Hajj [pilgrimage]; they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel; they will come from every distant pass –That they may witness benefits for themselves and mention the name of Allāh on known days over what He has provided for them of [sacrificial] animals. So eat of them and feed the miserable and poor." [Al-Hajj 22:27-28]. Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the prophet (pbuh): "O people, Allah has obliged Hajj upon you therefore performs it" and one man asked "Every year? to which the prophet (pbuh) was silent. The man repeated his question twice and again the prophet was silent. At the third time of asking the prophet (pbuh) said: "If I said yes it would become obligatory and you would never be able to fulfil it". Then he (pbuh) said: "Leave me with what I have left to you, for those who were before you were destroyed because of excessive questioning, and their opposition to their prophets. So when I command you to do anything, do it as much as it lies in your power and when I forbid you to do anything, then abandon it."

These days are the day of one of the greatest pillars of Islam- pilgrimage to the sacred House- which was the last pillar among the pillars of Islam to become obligatory. Pilgrimage is one of the five main pillars of Islam stated by Quran, Sunnah and consensus of the ummah. It is a moral obligation that must be carried out at least once in their lifetime by every able-bodied Muslim who can afford to do so. It is thereto is a duty mankind owes to Allah upon those who can afford the journey. So what does pilgrimage means?

In Arabic, the word hajj (pilgrimage) literally means going to a place for the sake of visiting. and according to the terminology of Islamic law, it implies the act of going to the sacred House in Mecca to observe the necessary devotions related to pilgrimage such as entering the state of Ihram, reciting the talbiya, standing at 'Arafaah, walking around the Ka'ba seven times (Tawaaf), going seven times between the small mountains of Safa and Marwa (Saa'ee), the ritual of standing (wuquf), stoning the Jamaraat and all other permissible actions.

Oh Muslims,

Hajj is a shipment full of passion and spiritual conscience of the Muslim who goes to that land in the state of Ihram. So what does '**in the state of Ihram**' means?

It means: intending the pilgrimage to the sacred house and abandoning the daily life nicely made decorated cloth to wear a more natural cloth with no sewing or decoration, a cloth more similar to the coffins of the dead.

The journey of pilgrimage is journey to the blessed land which brings back the memory of Ibrahim (AS) and more recently the memory of Muhammad (pbuh) whenever the tongues of the pilgrims repeat 'Lab-baikha Allahumma Lab-baik. Lab-baikha la-Sharika laka lab-baik. In-nal Hamda wan-ni 'mata laka wal mulk. La Sharika lak' (Here I am at Your service, O Allah! You have no partner; Here I am at

Your service, O Allah. Verily, all the praise, the grace belongs to You, and the kingdom. You have no partner) which leaves a profound impact within the soul of the believer.

These meanings within the worship of pilgrimage create a new born Muslim so he goes back with a purer heart, sincere determination to obey Allah and more remorse for sin. Therefore, you can notice the good change straight after pilgrimage as the prophet (pbuh) said: "Whoever performs Hajj and does not commit any Rafath (obscenity) or Fusuq (transgression), he returns (free from sin) as the day his mother bore him" [agreed upon]. Abu Hurairah narrated that the prophet (pbuh) said: "Umrah is an expiation for the time between it and the previous Umrah and an accepted Hajj has no less a reward than Paradise" [agreed upon] and Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that the prophet (pbuh) said: "There is no day on which Allah will grant His servants freedom from the Hellfire, like the Day of Arafah" [Muslim].

Oh Muslim, how do you perform a pilgrimage that is accepted by Allah? It was said: "actions might look the same but the people who are performing them differ!" Ibn Umar said: "people who are travelling for pilgrimage are many but the true pilgrim are indeed few!"

To achieve a pilgrimage that is accepted by Allah you need to prepare yourself spiritually so you might perform this worship in a special spiritual atmosphere. This spiritual preparation will help your heart to benefit from performing the rituals and to reflect upon and learn from your journey, Allah says "And take provisions, but indeed, the best provision is taqwa/awe of Allāh. And have taqwa/awe of Me, O you of understanding." [Al-Baqara 2:197].

To get yourself ready for this spiritual state you need:

- True and sincere repentance to Allah (SW)
- Seek the forgiveness to anyone that you oppressed
- Return the rights or property that you wrongly took as such sin cannot be forgiven by a repentance or pilgrimage only. The only way wipe it out is either by giving the rights back to its people or by them forgiving you.

Those who want to perform pilgrimage should also stick to the Islamic noble manners such as patience, restraining anger, and controlling nerves, being easy with people, not causing harm to others, spending time with remembrance and worship and abandoning all ill speech so they might get the full reward for their pilgrimage. The Muslim should also choose a lawful wealth for his pilgrimage as Allah the Exalted is pure and He does not accept but that which is pure. The unlawful wealth precludes the acceptance of deed and brings only loss especially in pilgrimage when he/she is dropped to the lowest of the levels and it precludes the acceptance of the du'a whereas the lawful wealth raise him/her to the high levels and become a reason for their deed to be accepted.

May Allah bless us all with an accepted pilgrimage and guide us to whatever pleases Him.