

A Deep Yearning to Perform Ḥajj

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Ḥajj is one of the fundamental pillars of Islām. Rasūlullāh ﷺ has said:

“Islām is founded on five (pillars): bearing witness that there is no deity except Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, establishing ṣalāh, paying zakāh, performing ḥajj and fasting in the month of Ramaḍān.” (Al-Bukhārī)

Ḥajj is no insignificant ritual. Rather, it is a great worship which encompasses both physical struggle and sacrifice of wealth. It is an ‘ibādah of expressing love for the Creator and showing a personification of the submission of Ibrāhīm ؑ.

It is for this reason severe warnings have been stated for that person who neglects this great act of worship without any valid reason.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“He who possesses enough provisions which will suffice for him to reach the House of Allāh, and he does not perform ḥajj, then there is no care whether he dies as a Jew or a Christian, and that is because Allāh ﷻ has mentioned in His Book: ‘As a right of Allāh, it is obligatory on the people to perform ḥajj of the House – on everyone who has the ability to manage his way to it. And if one disbelieves, then Allāh is independent of all the worlds.’” (At-Tirmidhī)

Imām Al-Qurṭubī ؒ and Imām Ibn Kathīr ؒ have narrated in their works of tafsīr that ‘Umar ؓ would say:

“I have resolved to send a few men to the villages and look for those people who possess the means to perform ḥajj but do not do so, and impose jizyah upon them, because Allāh says, ‘...And if one disbelieves, then Allāh is independent of all the worlds.’”

After scrutinising the verse quoted above and all the warnings narrated in the aḥādīth regarding those upon whom ḥajj is farḍ but fail to perform it, the majority of ‘Ulamā have concluded that such people are near to disbelief. Such is the gravity of the non-performance of ḥajj.

However, leaving aside the warnings, ḥajj and everything related to it is so blessed and virtuous that every Mu’min should harbour a deep-felt yearning and desire to perform it year after year.

Let us take a look at some of the virtues associated to this great worship.

1. Travelling:

- The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever sets out intending the Sacred House and mounts his camel, his camel will not raise a hoof and place it down except that Allāh will write a good deed for him, forgive a sin of his, and raise his rank due to it, until he reaches the Ka‘bah...” (Al-Bayhaqī)
- Ibn ‘Umar ؓ narrates a lengthy ḥadīth in which he states that he was sitting with the Prophet ﷺ in the Masjid of Minā, when a person from the Anṣār (Anṣārī) and a person from [the tribe of] Thaḳīf (Thaḳafī) came into his presence. Upon greeting with salām, they said, “O Messenger of Allāh! We have come to ask you...” upon which the Prophet ﷺ said, “If you so wish I can inform you of what you have come to ask me, and if you wish I can remain silent and you can go ahead and ask.” They both said, “O Messenger of Allāh! Tell us.” Then the Thaḳafī turned to the Anṣārī and said, “Ask.” So he said, “O

Messenger of Allāh! Tell us.” So he said, “You have come to me to ask me regarding your leaving home intending the Sacred House, and the reward that lies in it for you...” He remarked, “By the being who has sent you with the truth, this indeed is what I came to ask you regarding!” The Prophet ﷺ said, “When you leave your house intending the Sacred House, your camel does not raise a hoof and place it down except that Allāh will write a good deed for you and forgives a sin of yours...” (Al-Bazzār)

Note: the remainder of this ḥadīth will be mentioned under different headings later on.

2. The Ḥaram:

- Allāh ﷻ mentions in the Qur’ān, “Whoever enters it is secure...” Some commentators have mentioned that this means he will be saved from the Fire. (Ibn Kathīr)

3. Makkah Al-Mukarramah:

- Allāh ﷻ has taken an oath on this blessed city twice in the Qur’ān, saying, “I swear by this city.” (90:1) and, “And [I swear] by this peaceful city.” (95:3)
- Allāh ﷻ also mentions the du‘ā of Ibrāhīm ؑ, saying, “(Recall) when Ibrāhīm said, ‘My Lord, make this city peaceful...’” (14:35)
- ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Adiyy ibn Ḥamrā’ narrates that he witnessed Rasūlullāh ﷺ having stopped at [a place called] Al-Ḥazwarah, [addressing Makkah] saying, “By Allāh! You are the best of the Land of Allāh, and the most beloved Land of Allāh to Him, and if I had not been driven out of you, I would never have left you.” (At-Tirmidhī)
- On the occasion of the liberation of Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ [addressing the people] praised Allāh ﷻ and then said, “Verily, Allāh

has sanctified Makkah; the people have not sanctified it. No human who believes in Allāh and in the Last Day is permitted to shed blood in it, nor uproot a tree...” (Al-Bukhārī, Muslim)

4. Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām:

- Allāh ﷻ says in the Qur’ān, “Surely [We will punish] those who disbelieve and prevent [people] from the way of Allāh and from Al-Masjid-Al-Ḥarām (the Sacred Mosque), which We have made for all men, where residents and visitors are all equal. And whoever intends therein to commit deviation with injustice, We will make him taste a painful punishment.” (22:25)
- The Prophet ﷺ said, “One ṣalāh in this masjid of mine (Al-Masjid An-Nabawī) is better than a thousand prayers in any other, except for Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām.” (Al-Bukhārī, Muslim)
- The actual virtue of performing ṣalāh in Al-Masjid Al-Ḥaram is understood from another ḥadīth to be 100,000 times more than any other. (Ibn Mājah)

5. The Ka‘bah:

- Allāh ﷻ says in the Qur’ān: “Allāh has made the Ka‘bah, the Sacred House, a source of stability for people...” (5:97)
- The sanctity of the Ka‘bah is so great that it affects even those who are miles away from it, so much so that the Prophet ﷺ said, “When you go to relieve yourselves, then do not face the qiblah, nor turn your backs to it, rather, turn to the left or the right.” (Al-Bukhārī, Muslim)
- The Prophet ﷺ said, “Allāh sends down 120 mercies each day and night on this House [of Allāh], 60 for those doing ṭawāf around it, 40 for those performing ṣalāh, and 20 for those looking at it.” (Aṭ-Ṭabrānī)

- The Prophet ﷺ said, “The doors of the heavens are opened, and du‘ā is accepted in four places... [one of which is] when seeing the Ka‘bah.” (Al-Bayhaqī) Note: this is not exclusive to the first sight of the Ka‘bah.

6. Al-Ḥajar Al-Aswad:

- The Prophet ﷺ said regarding the Black Stone, “By Allāh! Allāh will raise it on the Day of Qiyāmah with it having two eyes with which it will see, and a tongue with which it will speak; it will testify for those who kissed it properly [i.e. with Īmān and hope of reward].” (At-Tirmidhī)
- Ibn Hishām ؓ once asked ‘Aṭā ibn Abī Rabāḥ regarding Ar-Rukn Al-Yamānī, whilst he was performing ṭawāf. ‘Aṭā ؓ replied, “Abū Hurayrah ؓ narrated to me that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Seventy angels have been appointed to it. Whoever says,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً،
وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً، وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

“O Allāh! I ask of You forgiveness and safety in the world and the Hereafter, Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and save us from the punishment of Fire”

they say ‘Āmīn’ (O Allāh accept [this prayer]).” When he [Ibn Hishām ؓ] reached Al-Ḥajar Al-Aswad, he said, “O Abū Muḥammad (‘Aṭā ibn Abī Rabāḥ ؓ), what have you come to know regarding this corner of Aswad?” ‘Aṭā replied, “Abū Hurayrah ؓ narrated to me that he heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ saying, “Whoever engages with it, engages with the hand of mercy.” (Ibn Mājah)

7. Ṭawāf:

- Further on, in the previous ḥadīth narrated by Imām Ibn Mājah رحمته, Ibn Hishām رحمته then said, “O Abū Muḥammad! What about ṭawāf?” ‘Aṭā رحمته replied, “Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrated to me that he heard the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, ‘Whoever circumambulates the Ka‘bah seven times, and does not talk, except saying, ‘Subḥānallāh, Alḥamdulillāh, Allāhu Akbar, and Lā ḥawla walā quwwata illā billāh’, ten of his sins are forgiven, ten rewards are written for him, and his rank is raised ten times, and whoever performs ṭawāf and talks, whilst saying the same, paddles in the Mercy [of Allāh] like a person who paddles in water.’” (Ibn Mājah)
- The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Whoever circumambulates this House seven complete times, it is as if he has freed a slave.” He also says, “And I also heard him صلى الله عليه وسلم say, ‘He (the circumambulator) does not take a step except that Allāh forgives a sin of his and writes a good deed for him.’” (At-Tirmidhī)

8. The Two Raka‘āt After Ṭawāf:

- In the lengthy narration of Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما mentioned under the virtues of travelling above, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said further, “...And [you also wanted to ask] regarding the reward of the two raka‘āt after ṭawāf...their reward is like freeing a slave from the children of Ismā‘īl عليه السلام...” (Al-Bazzār)

9. Zamzam:

- The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said, “The water of Zamzam is for whatever intention it has been consumed with.” (Ibn Mājah)

10. Multazam:

- ‘Abdah ibn Abī Lubābah Ad-Dimashqī ؓ said, “It would be said that between the corner [of Al-Ḥajar Al-Aswad and the Door [of the Ka‘bah] is the multazam (a place to cling on to); nobody holds onto it and asks Allāh for anything except that he is given it.” (Akhbār Makkah)

11. Sa‘ī:

- Allāh ؓ mentions in the Qur’ān, “Indeed Ṣafā and Marwah are among the signs of Allāh...” (2:158). This means that they are places upon which Allāh ؓ is to be worshipped. (Al-Qurṭubī)

The Sa‘ī takes place between these two mountains.

- In the lengthy narration of Ibn ‘Umar ؓ mentioned above, the Prophet ﷺ also said, “...And [you also wanted to ask] regarding the reward of the sa‘ī between Aṣ-Ṣafā and Al-Marwah...it is like freeing seventy slaves...” (Al-Bazzār)

12. ‘Arafah:

- Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “There is no day in which Allāh frees more of His servants from the Fire than the Day of ‘Arafah, and verily Allāh draws near and boasts of His servants to the angels, and says, ‘What do these [servants of mine] want?’” (Muslim)
- Rasūlullāh ﷺ also said, “Shayṭān is not seen on a day – apart from the day of Badr - in which he looks smaller, more defeated, more despised and more infuriated than on the Day of ‘Arafah, and that is due to the descending of blessings and the pardoning of Allāh of sins on that day. (Al-Bayhaqī)

- In another ḥadīth, the Prophet ﷺ said, “On the Day of ‘Arafah Allāh boasts of His servants to the Angels, saying, ‘Look at My servants, they have come to Me dishevelled and dust-covered, traveling through every distant hilly pathway, I have made you witnesses that I have forgiven them.’” In another narration, the following has been added, “...they are asking Me of My Mercy having not seen Me, and seeking My refuge from My punishment, having not seen Me.” (Al-Bayhaqī and Ibn Khuzaymah)
- In the lengthy narration of Ibn ‘Umar ؓ mentioned above, the Prophet ﷺ also further states, “...And [you also wanted to ask] regarding the reward for the wuqūf during the late afternoon of ‘Arafah...Indeed Allāh draws near to the heaven of the earth and boasts to the Angels about you, saying, ‘My servants have come to Me dishevelled from every distant hilly pathway hoping for My Jannah; even if your sins amounted grains of sand, or the raindrops, or the foam of the ocean, I have forgiven them. O My servants! Return, forgiven for you [are your sins] and for those you have interceded for...’” (Al-Bazzār)

13. Minā

- ‘Abdullāh ibn Qurṭ   narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The greatest days according to Allāh is the Yawm-An-Naḥr (10th of Dhul-Ḥijjah), and then Yawm-Al-Qarr (the 11th)”... (Abū Dāwūd)

Note: both these days are to be spent in Minā.

14. Ramī (Pelting):

- Again, in the lengthy narration of Ibn ‘Umar ؓ mentioned above, the Prophet ﷺ further on states, “...And [you also wanted to ask] regarding the reward of pelting the Jamarāt...For you in return for

every stone thrown will be expiation from a major destructive sin...”
(Al-Bazzār)

15. **Nahr (Animal Sacrifice):**

- Also in the lengthy narration of Ibn ‘Umar ؓ mentioned above, the Prophet ﷺ further on states, “...And [you also wanted to ask] regarding the reward of your sacrifice (on the 10th of Dhu-al-Ḥijjah)...for you the reward has been treasured by your Lord...” (Al-Bazzār)

16. **Ḥalaq (Shaving the head):**

- Yet again, in the lengthy narration of Ibn ‘Umar ؓ mentioned above, the Prophet ﷺ further on states, “...And [you also wanted to ask] regarding the reward of shaving your head...as for your shaving your head, for you is a good deed in return for every strand of hair you shave, and a sin forgiven...” (Al-Bazzār)

17. **Ṭawāf-Az-Ziyārah:**

- Finally, the Prophet ﷺ states in the lengthy narration of Ibn ‘Umar ؓ mentioned above, “...And [you also wanted to ask regarding the reward of] the Ṭawāf-Al-Ifādah (Ṭawāf-Az-Ziyārah)...As for your Ṭawāf after all that [the rituals mentioned in the ḥadīth], you will be circumambulating without any sin in your record; an angel will come and place his hands between your shoulders and say, ‘Do [good deeds] in the future as your past actions have been forgiven.’” (Al-Bazzār)

Furthermore, the virtues of ḥajj as a whole should also encourage a person to undertake this journey over and over again. The Prophet ﷺ has mentioned many virtues of ḥajj, encouraging the believers to fulfil this obligation, some of which are as follows:

“There is no reward for an accepted ḥajj except Jannah.” (Al-Bukhārī, Muslim)

“Whoever performs ḥajj for the sake of pleasing Allāh, and therein utters no word of evil, nor commits any evil deed, shall return from it free from sin as the day on which his mother gave birth to him.” (Al-Bukhārī, Muslim)

“The performers of ḥajj and ‘umrah are deputations of Allāh; if they call Him, He answers them; and if they seek His forgiveness, He forgives them.” (Ibn Mājah)

The performer of ḥajj becomes so pure that even that person is forgiven for whom he seeks forgiveness. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“When you meet a ḥajī [on his way home], then greet him, shake hands with him and ask him to beg forgiveness of Allāh on your behalf before he enters his home, for his prayer for forgiveness is accepted since he is forgiven by Allāh.” (Aḥmad)

Notwithstanding all the virtues mentioned above, the pilgrim on this blessed journey visits Makkah Al-Mukarramah. This is the birthplace of the Prophet ﷺ; and the city which witnessed almost all the Prophets of Allāh ﷺ performing ḥajj; and in which the revelation of the Qur’ān started and continued for thirteen years.

Similarly, (although it is not a requirement of ḥajj) most ḥājīs visit Al-Madīnah Al-Munawwarah, which was the chosen destination for the Prophet ﷺ after Makkah; it has been a place upon where waḥy was revealed; Islām lived and developed there; countless great Muslim personalities have resided there, great Ṣaḥābah ﷺ being at the top of the

list; the Masjid of the Prophet ﷺ is located there, and the Prophet ﷺ rests there. There are numerous virtues in regard to this great city.

- The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever visits my grave, my intercession becomes incumbent for him.” (Al-Bayhaqī, Ad-Dāraqtūnī)
- The Prophet ﷺ said in another ḥadīth, “Verily, Allāh has named Al-Madīnah Ṭābah.” (The place that has a pleasant fragrance or which is pure) (Muslim)
- In yet another ḥadīth, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever from amongst you is able to pass away in Al-Madīnah, he should do so, for I will testify in favour of the one who dies in it.” (Ibn Mājah)

What Mu'min would give up the opportunity to visit such places, more so when he is summoned by Allāh ﷻ?

It is for this reason the pious people performed ḥajj again and again. According to a narration of Imām Al-Bayhaqī, every Nabī, with the exception of Hūd and Ṣāliḥ ﷺ performed ḥajj. Imām Abū Ash-Shaykh writes in his book ‘Al-‘Azmah’ that Ādam ﷺ visited the Ka‘bah a thousand times on foot, performing ‘umrah 700 times and ḥajj 300 times.

Ḥajj is farḍ upon every sane, adult and healthy Muslim, on the condition that he has sufficient wealth to enable him to travel to and from the Ka‘bah. This will be when the wealth used to take him is in excess of his basic needs. He also needs to have sufficient wealth to leave behind for the needs of those who are dependent on him. Furthermore, the journey needs to be a safe one and a woman needs to be travelling with a maḥram.

Thus, whoever finds that ḥajj has become farḍ upon them, should hasten in making preparations to fulfil this obligation. They should take it as a summoning call from Allāh ﷻ, and count themselves fortunate, as many Muslims spend their lifetimes without ever having the means to perform

ḥajj, or even visit the Ḥaramayn at all. Once having performed ḥajj, a person should further try to visit these blessed places again and again with the hope that one day he will breathe his/her last and be buried in the blessed soil of the two ḥarams, for Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “One who dies in either of the two ḥarams, will be resurrected on the Day of Qiyāmah amongst the Āminīn (those granted safety).” (Al-Bayhaqī)

May Allāh grant us all the desire and accept us to visit His House time and time again, year after year, and may He also take our souls in the blessed cities of Makkah and Al-Madīnah. Āmīn.

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