



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL
**THE MERITS OF THE FIRST 10 DAYS OF ZULHIJJAH AND HOW TO
OPTIMISE OUR TIME**

INTRODUCTION

Allah is so Merciful that He will Attempt to Help all of us to Enter Jannah. In Ramadan, there is one night which is better than 1,000 months. In the early morning, there is a salah called Ishraq, that is one were to perform it, the reward is Umrah/Hajj.

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever prays Fajr in congregation, then sits remembering Allah until the sun rises, then prays two rak'ahs, will have a reward like that of Hajj and 'Umrah, complete, complete, complete." (at-Tirmidhi (586), from Anas ibn Maalik (may Allah be pleased with him))

In about 10 days' time, a very special period has been programmed by Allah, and literally, it is the best 10 days of the Year. The 1st of Dhulhijjah will begin either on 21 July 2020 (Tuesday) or 22 July 2020 (Wednesday), depending on the sighting of the new moon.

We really must take advantage of this Mercy from Allah and use our time wisely so that we fill the days on this period in doing acts of worship which is Pleasing to Him.

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE FIRST 10 DAYS OF DHULHIJJAH

Allah Swears an oath by them:

"By the dawn; By the ten nights (i.e. the first ten days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah)," 89: 1-2

By swearing an oath, it clearly shows the importance and benefit of these 10 days of Dhulhijjah.

It is narrated from Ibn Abbaas (RA) that the Prophet (SallAllahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"There are no days in which righteous deeds done in them are more beloved to Allah than these days, ie the ten days (of Zul-Hijjah). They said: O Messenger of Allah, not even Jihaad in the path of Allah? He said: Not even Jihaad in the Path of Allah, the Most High, except if a man goes out (for Jihaad) with his self and his wealth, then he doesn't return with anything from that." (Al-Bukhaaree, Abu Daawood and others. The exact wording is that of Abu Daawood)

It is narrated from Ibn Umar that the Prophet Muhammad (SallAllahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"There aren't any days greater, nor any days in which deeds done in them are more beloved to Allah, the Most High, than these ten days (of Zul-Hijjah). So, increase in them the saying of Tahleel (La Ilaaha illa Allah), and Takbeer (Allah Akbar) and Tahmeed (al-Hamdu li-llah)" (Musnad Imaam Ahmad)

Note this weak hadeeth:

The Prophet (SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) has said, "One fast during these days is equal to the fasting of one complete year, and the worship of one night during this period is equal to the worship in the "Lailatul-Qadr".(Tirmidhi)

DEEDS WHICH WILL BENEFIT A BELIEVER IN THESE FIRST 10 DAYS OF DHULHIJAH

1. The performance of Hajj

These are the best of deeds that may be done. And what indicates their superiority are a number of Ahaadith:

Performance of Umrah is an expiation of the sins committed between it and the previous Umrah, and the reward of the Hajj which is accepted by Allah, the Most High, is nothing but Paradise. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Performance of the Hajj washes away all sins. Abu Hurairah narrates: I heard the Prophet say, "Whoever performs Hajj and does not commit any Rafath (obscenity) or Fusooq (transgression), he returns (free from sin) as the day his mother bore him" (Al Bukhari).

Hajj is one of the greatest deeds one can accomplish in his or her lifetime. Abu Hurairah narrates: The Prophet was asked, "What deed is the best?" He said, "Iman in Allah and His Messenger." "Then what?" "Jihad in the sake of Allah." "Then

what?" "Hajj Mabroor, a Hajj accepted by Allah (Subhanahu wa ta'ala)." (Bukhari & Muslim)

2. Fasting during these days

There is no doubt that the act of fasting is one of the best deeds, and it is from what Allah, the Most High, has chosen for himself, as in the Hadith Qudsee: Fasting is for Me, and it is I who give reward for it. Verily, someone gives up his sexual passion, his food and his drink for My sake..." (Al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, Maalik, at-Tirmidhee, Nasaa'ee and Ibn Maajah)

Also, from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree who said that the Messenger of Allah said: No servant (of Allah, the Most High) fasts one day in the Path of Allah, except that Allah, the Most High, removes his face from the Fire because of it (the distance of traveling) seventy years. (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

From Abu Qatadah that the Prophet said: Fasting the Day of Arafah will be credited with Allah by forgiving one's sins of the previous year and the following year. (Muslim)

3. At-Takbeer (Allah Akbar) and adh-Dhikr (the remembrance of Allah)

Allah said "*And mention the name of Allah on the appointed days*"(12:28).

This has been explained (by some) to mean the ten days (of Zul-Hijjah), and the scholars consider it desirable to increase adh-Dhikr in these days, based upon the hadith of Ibn Umar which contains the words:

"... so increase in these days the Tahleel and Takbeer and Tahmeed..." (Imam Ahmad)

It is reported about Ibn Umar and Abu Hurairah that: the two of them used to go out to the market place during the ten days (of Zul-Hijjah) saying: Allahu Akbar, causing the people also to say it. (Al-Bukhaaree)

Ishaaq narrates from the scholars of the Taabi'een that in these ten days they used to say:

Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar Laa Ilaaha illa 'llah Wa 'llahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar Wa li'llahi al-hamd.

It is a beloved act to raise the voice when saying the Takbeer in the markets, the houses, the streets, the Masjids and other places, because of the saying of Allah, the Most High, in Surah al-Hajj, verse 37: "... that you may magnify Allah for His Guidance to you"

4. At-Tawbah (repentance) and abstaining from disobedience and all types of sins

...since forgiveness and mercy are the results of deeds. Disobedience is the cause of being far away (from Allah, the Most High) and repulsion, while obedience is the cause of being near (to Allah, Most High) and His love. In the hadith of Abu Hurairah he said that the Prophet said: Verily Allah has a sense of Ghaira, and Allah's sense of ghaira is provoked when a person does that which Allah has prohibited. (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

This means more than just a verbal expression of sorrow for past misdeeds. It also requires a firm resolution to avoid making the same mistakes in the future by giving up bad habits and behavior while sincerely turning to Allah.

It is useless to have a learned tongue but an ignorant heart.

5. Doing plenty of voluntary (nafl) righteous deeds of worship like Prayer, Charity, reading the Qur'an, Commanding what is Good and Forbidding what is Evil, and other such deeds.

Verily, these are amongst the deeds that are multiplied in these days. It is during these days that even deeds that are less preferred, are superior and more beloved to Allah than superior deeds done at other times. (These deeds are superior) even to al-Jihaad - which is one of the most superior of all deeds - except in the case of one whose horse is killed and his blood is spilled (loss of life in Jihaad).

6. at-Takbeer al-Mutlaq

It is legislated in these days to make at Takbir al Mutlaq at all times of night and day until the time of the Eid Prayer.

Also, at-Takbeer al-Muqayyad is legislated, and it is done after the (five) obligatory prayers that are performed in congregation. This begins from Dawn (Fajr) on the Day of Arafah (the 9th of Zul-Hijjah) for those not performing Hajj, and from Noon (Zhur) on the Day of Sacrifice (10th of Zul-Hijjah) for those performing Hajj (pilgrims); and it continues until Asr prayer on the last day of the days of Tash-reeq (13th of Zul-Hijjah).

7. Qurban (sacrifice of animal)

The slaughtering of a sacrificial animal (udhiyah) is also legislated for the Day of Sacrifice (10th) and the Days of Tashreeq (11th, 12th and 13th). This is the Sunnah of our father Ibraaheem - when Allah, the Most High, redeemed Ibraaheem's son by the great sacrifice (of an animal in his place). It is authentically reported that The Prophet Muhammad slaughtered (sacrificed) two horned rams, black and white in colour, and said Takbeer (Allahu Akbar), and placed his foot on their sides (while slaughtering them). (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

This is an obligation on each one of us and it represents the beautiful, complete submission of Prophet Ibrahim (as) when he chose to obey Allah Ta'ala fully and without question when it came to slaughtering his own son, Prophet Ismail (as). Before the knife was able to cut his son's neck, Allah Ta'ala replaced Ismail (as) with a ram from Jannah. Ismail (as) was saved and Ibrahim (as)'s complete submission to God's command was accepted !!

It is related by Aayesha (r.a.) that Rasulullah (SallAllahu alayhi wa sallam) said, 'There is nothing dearer to Allah Ta'ala during the days of sacrifice than the sacrificing of animals. The sacrificed animal shall come on the day of Qiyamah with its horns, hair and hooves (to be weighed in reward). The sacrifice is accepted by Allah Ta'ala before the blood reaches the ground. Therefore sacrifice with an open and happy heart.' (Tirmizhi, Ibn Majah)

Zaid ibn Arqam (r.a.) related that the companions of Rasulullah (SallAllahu alayhi wa sallam) asked, "O Rasulullah, what is sacrifice?" He replied, "it is the Sunnah of your father Ibraheem". They asked again, "What benefit do we get from it?" he answered, "A reward for every hair of the sacrificed animal." And what reward is there for animals with wool?" they asked. "A reward," he said, 'for every fibre of the wool.' (Ibn Majah, Musnad Ahmad, Mishkaat)

8. Those who do the Qurban, refrain from cutting nails and hair.

It has been narrated from Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) that the Prophet said: If you see the Hilal (new moon) of Zul-Hijjah, and any one of you wants to make a sacrifice, then he should not cut (anything) from his hair and his nails. (Muslim and others) . And in one narration, he said: .Then he should not cut (anything) from his hair, nor from his nails, until he performs the sacrifice. Perhaps this is because of the similarity with the one who is bringing a sacrificial animal for slaughter (in Hajj). As Allah, the Most High, said: And do not shave your heads until the Hady (sacrifice) reaches the place of sacrifice...

The apparent meaning of this prohibition is that it is particularly for the one whom the sacrifice is for, and does not include the wife or children, unless there is an individual sacrifice for one of them. There is no harm in washing the head, or scratching it, even if hairs may fall out.

9. Significance of the Day of Arafah

This is the Day when the Deen was complete.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Tariq bin Shihab said, "A Jewish man said to `Umar bin Al-Khattab, `O Leader of the Believers! There is a verse in your Book, which is read by all of you (Muslims), and had it been revealed to us, we would have taken that

day (on which it was revealed) as a day of celebration.' `Umar bin Al-Khattab asked, `Which is that verse' The Jew replied, s

"...This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion...." 5: 3

`Umar replied, `By Allah! I know when and where this verse was revealed to Allah's Messenger . It was the evening on the Day of `Arafah on a Friday.'" Al-Bukhari recorded this Hadith through Al-Hasan bin As-Sabbah from Ja`far bin `Awn. Muslim, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith.

In the narration collected by Al-Bukhari in the book of Tafsir, through Tariq, he said, "The Jews said to `Umar, `By Allah! There is a verse that is read by all of you (Muslims), and had it been revealed to us, we would have taken that day (on which it was revealed) as a day of celebration.' `Umar said, `By Allah! I know when and where this verse was revealed and where the Messenger of Allah was at that time. It was the day of `Arafah, and I was at `Arafah, by Allah."

Sufyan (one of the narrators) doubted if Friday was mentioned in this narration. Sufyan's confusion was either because he was unsure if his teacher included this statement in the Hadith or not. Otherwise, if it was because he doubted that the particular day during the Farewell Hajj was a Friday, it would be a mistake that could not and should not have come from someone like Sufyan Ath-Thawri. The fact that it was a Friday, is agreed on by the scholars of Sirah and Fiqh. There are numerous Hadiths that support this fact that are definitely authentic and of the Mutawatir type. This Hadith was also reported from `Umar through various chains of narration.

Fasting on the Day of Arafah

Abu Hafsah, *may Allah be pleased with him*, reported that the Prophet, *upon whom be peace*, said:

"Fasting on the Day of 'Arafah absolves the sins for two years: the previous year and the coming year, and fasting on 'Ashura, (the tenth day of Muharram) atones for the sins of previous years." Reported by all except Al-Bukhari and At-Tirmidhi

In another saying the Prophet's wife Hafsah, *may Allah be pleased with her*, said:

"Four things the Messenger of Allâh never neglected: Observing fast on the day of 'Ashura, 'Arafat, three days every month, and offering *fajr sunnah* prayers early in the morning."Muslim

Du'a on the Day of Arafah

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: "The best of dua is du'a on the day of Arafat, and the best that I and the Prophets before me said is 'Laa ilaaha ill-Allah wahdahu la shareeka lah, lahu'l-mulku wa lahu'l-hamdu wa huwa 'ala kulli shay'in

qadeer (None has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, with no partner or associate; His is the dominion, to Him be praise, and He has power over all things).” (Tirmidhi-3585)

Another Hadith also mentions that whoever says these words with a sincere heart, attesting to the truth of that with his tongue, then Allah will surely tear open the sky until He looks at the person from amongst the people of the earth who said it. And the right of the servant whom Allah looks at is that He grants him whatever he asked for.” (An-Nisae - Saheeh Al-Albani0

10. Perform the Eid prayer.

It is incumbent for the Muslim (who is not performing Hajj) to make every effort to perform the Eid Prayer wherever it is performed, and to be present for the Khutbah and benefit.

He must know the wisdom behind the legislation of this Eid (celebration). It is a day of thankfulness and performing deeds of righteousness. So, he must not make it a day of wildness, pride and vanity. He should not make it a season for disobedience and increase in the forbidden things like music and singing, uncontrolled amusement, intoxicants and the like - those things which could cause the cancellation of the good deeds done in these days (of Zul-Hijjah).

11. Do other deeds to please Allah SWT.

After what has been mentioned, it is fitting that every Muslim, male and female, take advantage of these days by obeying Allah, the Most High, remembering Him, thanking Him, fulfilling all the obligatory duties, and staying far away from the prohibited things. He must take full advantage of this season, and the open display of Allah's gifts, to attain the pleasure of his Lord.

- **Ghaira:** A sense of honour and prestige, and the anger caused by its being violated.
- **At-Takbeer al-Mutlaq:** the Takbeer (Allahu Akbar) which is unrestricted to specific times or any specific form.
- **At-Takbeer al-Muqayyad:** The Takbeer which is done at a particular time and in a specific manner.