



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL
**HAJJ - WHY ARE PEOPLE DELAYING TO PERFORM THIS IMPORTANT
PILLAR OF ISLAM**

With social media, we can openly see Muslims showing off their unlimited expenses on these:

1. Their numerous holiday trips to America, Europe, the Caribbean, etc
2. The expensive restaurants people are eating
3. The expensive cars and accommodation they own
4. The shopping trips people take to buy branded items such as Gucci, Prada, Burberry, etc.
5. Trips to their expensive country clubs, hair salons, etc.

Yet when you ask if they have been to Hajj, they will come up with numerous excuses:

1. They are still too young
2. They have no money
3. They have no time
4. They are just not ready yet
5. Their parents or older sisters have not even been to Hajj, so they will wait for the older members to perform Hajj first.

مَنْ الْبَيْتِ حَجُّ النَّاسِ عَلَى وَجْهِ
سَبِيلٍ إِلَيْهِ اسْتَطَاعَ

"...Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to Allah by all who can make their way to it..." (Quran, 3:97)

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Do not set out on a journey except for three Mosques i.e. Al-Masjid-Al-Haram, the Mosque of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), and the Mosque of Al-Aqsa, (Mosque of Jerusalem)." (Bukhari)

This significant hadith reminds us to prioritise our time and journey to visit the holy places first inshaAllah.

Why Hajj is one of the 5 pillars of Islam?

1. One of the commands of Allah in the Qur'an
2. Involves a lot of sacrifice – time, money, efforts, etc
3. Unity of the Muslim Ummah – you will meet people from all over the world
4. During the pilgrimage, when one enters the ihram conditions, especially for the men – you are no more from the UK, you are no more white or black, rich or poor, Chinese, European, Indian, etc – you are simply a slave of Allah
5. Islam was completed by Allah in Arafah after the prophet Muhammad's (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) last sermon in Qur'an surah 5 verse 3 – a day of celebration
6. The reward for Hajj mabrur (accepted by Allah) is forgiveness of major and minor sins and therefore Paradise inshaAllah.

Jabir ibn Abdullah reported: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "The righteous Hajj pilgrimage has no reward but Paradise." Jabir said, "What is its righteousness?" The Prophet said, "To feed the poor and speak kind words."

Source: al-Mu'jam al-Awsat 8629

"He who came to this House (the Ka'bah) (with the intention in performing Hajj) without speaking or committing indecencies, would return (free from sin) as on the day his mother bore him." (Muslim, 2/3129)

"From one 'Umrah to another is expiation for what is between them and Hajj Mabrûr has no reward except Paradise." (Bukhari and Muslim)

Signs of an Accepted Hajj

Below we will discuss some signs that will help pilgrims to let them know whether their Hajj has been accepted or not by Almighty Allah.

- The accepted Hajj refers to the one performed truly and offered with full sincerity to Allah Almighty.
- Signs of an accepted Hajj also includes that the man returns from Hajj as a better person than the one he was before the Hajj and that he keeps away from sins.
- The sincerity of intention should remain even after the Hajj. The pilgrim should not show off about Hajj.
- The sign of an Accepted Hajj is that upon one's return, his life changes from worst to good. The person who performed Hajj indulges in good deeds and always tries to fulfill the commands of Allah Almighty.
- If pilgrim Hajj is accepted the person will run away from all those things that Allah Almighty disliked.

- Pilgrim should try his best to fulfill the obligations laid down by Allah and must be grateful that his Hajj has been accepted.

As cliché as it sounds – Hajj is truly an experience of a lifetime that may cause a completely change in our outlook of life. So, why do people delay Hajj, if it has a huge benefit in our lives?

1. NOT INVITED BY ALLAH
2. NOT READY TO GIVE UP OF THE ENJOYMENT OF THIS LIFE
3. LOVE OF DUNYA
4. THINKING THAT YOU ARE TOO YOUNG
5. CULTURE – PARENTS MUST GO FIRST
6. SHAYTAN
7. NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE DEEN
8. THOUGHT THAT DEATH IS FAR AWAY
9. POOR COMPANIONS
10. LACK OF PLANNING IN LIFE

Hajj is really a life changing experience to some because: when one goes to Hajj with full of sincerity, his/her whole life flashes in front of his/her eyes in various parts of the Hajj ritual:

- When the pilgrim sees the Ka'bah for the first time;
- When the pilgrim does the tawaf around the Ka'bah (circumbulation);
- When the pilgrim goes to Arafah, which is the climax of Hajj;
- When the pilgrim throws the stones at the jamarat;
- When the pilgrim stays in Mina as part of the Hajj ritual;
- When the pilgrim does the farewell tawaf.

There is a lot of reflections of our relationship with Allah and of our purpose in this life. This usually leads to a commitment to improve oneself inshaAllah when one returns to his/her country, and that is usually how this important journey which we called Hajj would usually help one to prepare ourselves better for our journey in the Hereafter.

However, this journey (Hajj) depends on one important matter – whether we are invited by Allah to perform this great act of worship. It does not depend on the wealth that you have because we know of many people who are wealthy, and worse still, living in the Arabian peninsula, but have not been Invited by Allah to perform Hajj. I also know of a few of my students with no financial means to perform Hajj but have been Invited by Allah to perform Hajj when some organisations sponsor them to go to Hajj.

The key ingredient to note is – Perform Hajj at the earliest opportunity inshaAllah, regardless of age. That will help to prioritise the things we do in this very short life.

IMPORTANCE OF HAJJ

1. It is the 5th pillar of Islam
2. It is obligatory for those who can afford it
3. It allows one be united with Muslims around the world as one ummah
4. Answering the call of Allah
5. It disregards race or culture
6. The pilgrims learns about humility and being a slave of Allah
7. The pilgrim is following the footsteps of previous prophets, especially Ibrahim (AS);
8. The pilgrim has been Invited by Allah
9. The pilgrim leads the life of constant worship of Allah during the whole journey, just like the angels
10. The pilgrim is given the experience on how the Day of Judgement will be like
11. The reward if forgiveness of all sins – just like a baby
12. It should eventually lead to a commitment to be more focus on the preparations of the Hereafter. Therefore, the younger and fitter a person is inshaAllah the more time he/she has to prioritise his/her life when he/she return to his/her own country after Hajj.
13. Develop good characters such as patience

May Allah Invite us all to perform Hajj.