

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Preparing for Hajj

Some advice for those who are intending to go to Hajj and what you should do before you leave

Every traveller must know where he is travelling to, what to take with him (a map or manual, clothes etc.), what vehicle to take, and knowledge of the place which he is travelling to and its own residents etc. Our life is also a journey (safr) as we are travelling to the hereafter to meet our Lord, Allaah (swt). In fact, the messenger (saw) ordered us to be in the dunyaa (world) like a traveller and that this world for any believer is like a prison full of tests:

كُن فِي الدُّنْيَا كَأَنَّكَ غَرِيبٌ، أَوْ عَابِرُ سَبِيلٍ

“Be in the dunyaa as a stranger or a wayfarer.” (Riyaad us-Saaliheen, 55/471)

الدُّنْيَا سَجْنُ الْمُؤْمِنِ وَجَنَّةُ الْكَافِرِ

“The dunyaa is a prison for the believer and a paradise for the disbeliever.” (Riyaad us-Saaliheen, 55/470)

Hajj is one of the pillars of Islaam and one of the greatest of ritual acts, therefore it is just like salaah, you cannot pray the way you want or the way you think is best. Rather the performance of it must be based upon the teachings of the messenger Muhammad (saw) and his companions (may Allaah be pleased with them all), just like every other action, saying or intention in Islaam. Therefore we must look to how they performed Salaah, Fasting, da'wah, Jihaad and also Hajj etc. Allaah (swt) says in the Qur'aan:

وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ أُولَئِكَ الْمُقَدَّمُونَ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ
وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ أُولَئِكَ الْمُقَدَّمُونَ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

“And the first to embrace Islaam of the Muhaajiroun (those who migrated from Makkah to al-Madeenah) and the Ansaar (the citizens of al-Madeenah who helped and gave aid to the Muhaajiroun) and also those who followed them exactly. Allaah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.” (EMQ at-Tawbah, 9: 100)

This verse clearly lays down the Islaamic standard which we should be following i.e. the messenger Muhammad (saw) and his companions (ra). However, it is very sad to see people today commit so much shirk, kufr, bid'ah (innovation) and **muharramaat** (prohibitions) during the Hajj season and many other ritual acts.

Millions of people, some Muslims by name, secularists (kuffaar), hypocrites and even **faasiqoun** (rebellious sinners), many of which do not even offer their **salawaat** (5 daily prayers) go to Hajj every year, hence it is not surprising to see thousands of people there not knowing what to do. Nowadays people go there as a 'once in a lifetime holiday', taking with them all their bid'ah and shirk.

Hajj is a once in a lifetime pilgrimage to the house of Allaah (swt), therefore we should make sure it is done properly in accordance with the Sunnah, verily the reward for Hajj (if done perfectly) is nothing but paradise. It is Shaytaan's job and full time career to keep us away from Jannah and lead us into Hellfire. He is always looking to attack any believer, even if it means allowing him to do 99 good deeds for the sake of one bad deed. This cursed Shaytaan will try his utmost best to divert us in any of our ritual acts and good deeds; therefore we should make the necessary preparations which are required for these actions.

It is for this reason that we have compiled together some advice for the **hujjaaj** which will enable them to perform their Hajj properly in order for Allaah to accept their deed. Many people leave with the wrong intention, attitude, personality and preparation, not realising that the preparation is one of the foundations of any action. Many people start to indulge in muharramaat, deliberately miss their prayers and do many other forms of corruption thinking that they will be forgiven for all of that which they used to do before they went to Hajj, **na'oudhu-billaah!**

The necessary preparations which are needed before you go to Hajj

1. Have Taqwaa in Allaah (swt)

Allaah (swt) says in the Qur'aan:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

“Oh you who believe, fear Allaah as he should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.” (EMQ Aali ‘Imraan, 3: 102)

Taqwaa is to fear Allaah (swt), his Majesty, Might, Glory and Punishments etc. The scholars define at-Taqwaa (based upon the saying of Abou Hurairah [ra]) as: ‘To be in the place where Allaah loves you to be, and absent from the place Allaah hates you to be.’ The messenger Muhammad (saw) also taught us to frequently ask Allaah (swt) to grant us hidaayah (guidance) and also at-Taqwaa:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالنُّقَىٰ وَالْعَفَافَ وَالْغِنَىٰ

Allaahumma innie as-alukal hudaah, wat-tuqaa, wal-'afaaf, wal-ghinaa

“O Allaah! I ask you for guidance, piety (at-Taqwaa), chastity and self-sufficiency.” (Muslim and Riyaad us-Saaliheen, 6/71)

2. Give people back their huqooq (rights)

If someone has given you anything in the past (*amaanaat [pl. for amaanaah]* – personal belongings) make sure you give it back as this is a direct order from Allaah (swt). Amaanaah is anything which people have entrusted you with, such as a car, money, property etc. Whenever one undertakes the journey of his lifetime, he must have the intention that he will never return back again, therefore one should not keep any amaanaah which does not belong to him as he will not be returning back home.

3. Leave the dunyaa behind you

One should not go to Hajj with their mobile phone, laptop, portable iron, pocket computer game consoles etc. Many people make this mistake of going to Hajj with all of the dunyaa in their hearts and pockets. Those who are going to Hajj should leave as though they will never return back. This means not getting involved in business phone calls or sending faxes and emails etc.

4. Do not go to Hajj if you have any debt

Hajj should not be performed if you have (*halaal*) debt which you owe to people. The reason why we say ‘halaal’ debt is because many so called Muslims today have mortgages and consider it to be debt. However, one should not consider a mortgage as a debt as it is *haram* to have in the first place. Those of you who have debt should clear all their debts before they go, or ask the one they owe to allow them to pay them later.

If you do get permission from the one you owe, you must make sure that you record your debt in a will. Whosoever takes the money of the people and has intention to pay it back, Allaah will pay it back on behalf of him. And whosoever has no intention to pay it back Allaah will waste it; this is based upon a *hadeeth*.

However, if you are from among those who are owed money, it is better for you to completely forgive the one who owes you and let him go to Hajj (i.e. remove the debt from his neck completely). Or you can give him more time to pay you back (without to hassle him as hassling the one who owes you something is not allowed and dispraised by the messenger Muhammad [saw]). Allaah (swt) says:

وَإِنْ كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ وَأَنْ تَصَدَّقُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

“And if the debtor is in a hard time (has no money to pay you), then grant him time till it is easy for him to repay, but if you remit it by way of charity, that is better for you if you did but know.” (EMQ al-Baqarah, 2: 280)

5. Study the *ahkaam* (divine rules) related to Hajj before you go

This is very obvious, one should never go to Hajj without to study its rules as it will clearly be invalid, just like the one who prays but doesn't know the ahkaam of salaah. Make sure you study its ahkaam from those who follow Ahl us-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah, and not from the people of innovation.

6. Beware and abstain from the sicknesses of the heart

Some of the diseases of the heart are: backbiting, nationalism, tribalism, arrogance, having hatred towards the believers and scholars, picking on the mistakes and errors of Muslims, envy and doubt etc. When you are going to Hajj you must go in a pure state, leaving behind any quarrels or arguments you have had with your Muslim brothers and put it all behind you. You should ask those who you have backbitten for forgiveness, and this shouldn't be done by saying 'forgive me brother if I have backbitten you'; either you have backbitten them or not, don't say 'if I have'. The best way to seek forgiveness from the one you have backbitten is to say: 'I have backbitten you before, please forgive me.'

Another disease of the heart is ar-Riyaa (showing off). Many people like to show off that they have been to Hajj and that they are 'Hajjie'. Your pilgrimage should be done for the sake of Allaah and not to show off or gain respect from your families and community. Neither should you go there aiming to look for a wife or to do business etc.

7. Avoid doing any muharramaat (prohibitions)

The one who is going to Hajj should not indulge in any form of ribaa (interest), whether it is in the form of a loan or mortgage. One should also not take any form of insurance (such as travel insurance etc. as they are haraam) and neither should you be from among those who smoke cigarettes, let alone drugs!

You should also not take a loan for the sake of going to Hajj from someone who can go to Hajj himself with that money. In other words, many people ask others to sponsor them or for a loan to go to Hajj. Make sure that (if you are from among these two) that you do not over burden the one you are borrowing money from by taking money which he himself needs to perform his own Hajj but does not have the heart to tell you that he needs the money himself.

8. Do not go with haraam money

It is not allowed for you to go to Hajj on money which has been earned in haraam, such as interest based loans or money which you have earned from gambling (such as The National Lottery). Allaah (swt) says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَذَرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا إِن كُنتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ
فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَإِن تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا تَظْلَمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ

"O you who believe! Fear Allaah and give up what remains (due to you) from Ribaa (interest), if you are (really) believers. And if you do not do so, then take a notice of war from Allaah and his Messenger (saw) but if you repent, you shall have your capital sums. Deal not unjustly (by asking more than your capital sums), and you shall not be dealt with unjustly (by receiving less than your capital sums)." (EMQ al-Baqarah, 2: 278-279)

As the verse clearly states, those who deal with interest are declaring war with Allaah (swt) and his messenger (saw). Who can dare challenge and fight Allaah (swt)?!

9. Do not commit any Zulm (oppression)

Make sure you do not commit any oppression upon someone, such as by deliberately not taking your wife whilst you have the money and capability to do so, or even worse, by taking her money (which you manage for her) all for yourself. You should also not do any oppression to your pets, such as by leaving them at home with no food or guardian. The Jinns of your home will always revenge upon you if you deliberately and constantly harms any

animals or pets at home. The messenger Muhammad (saw) said:

اتقوا الظلم فإن الظلم ظلمات يوم القيامة

“Be on your guard against committing oppression, for oppression will be darkness on the Day of Resurrection...” (Riyaad us-Saaliheen, 26/203)