

Advice for Those Intending Hajj

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Maintaining Taqwaa

The pilgrim must have taqwaa (fear and reverence of Allaah). He must strive to avoid what He forbade. [Refer Al-Qur'aan 2:197]

The Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: *"He who performs Hajj and does not speak obscenely or commit evil will return clean from his sins just as the day his mother gave birth to him."* [Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree, vol.2, no.596, p.347]. If he did so, his Hajj would be righteous (mabroor). Allaah subhanahu's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: *"The righteous hajj has no lesser reward than Jannah (Paradise)."* [Saheeh Muslim, vol.2, p.680, no.3127].

Thus, it is necessary to warn against some violations that many commit, either ignorantly or erroneously.

Avoiding Shirk

We have seen many people (during Hajj) fall victims to shirk (joining Partners with Allaah subhanahu. For example, they pray to other than Allaah subhanahu for the removal of distress, they seek aid from deceased prophets and pious people, they invoke them instead of Allaah subhanahu and they make oaths by them out of unjustified glorification. By such actions they completely nullify their Hajj, as Allaah subhanahu says (what means): **"If you were to join gods with Allaah, truly fruitless will be your deeds."** [Al-Qur'aan 39:65].

Avoiding Shaving the Beard

Some men adorn themselves by shaving off their beards. This is a sinful deed that involves four separate violations of Islaam:

- a) It is a disobedience of the Prophet's sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam clear command to leave the beard alone.
- b) It is an imitation of the unbelievers.
- c) It is an alteration of Allaah's creation.
- d) It is an imitation of women.

Men must avoid wearing gold

Wearing gold rings is prohibited for men. This applies particularly to the type known today as wedding-rings, as that incurs the further sin of imitating the Christians.

Intending the correct type of Hajj

It is very rare for pilgrims these days to bring the hadee (sacrificial animal) along with them, as the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam did. There is no blame for this. However, anyone who has not brought the hadee with him should intend to perform Hajj of Tamattu'.

Sleeping at Minaa and Muzdalifah

One must not neglect to stay at Minaa on the night preceding the Day of 'Arafah. This is an obligation (waajib) that was practiced and enjoined by the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. [Saheeh Muslim, vol.2, p.615].

One must also stay at Muzdalifah on the following night until he prays fajr there. If one misses staying there (because of delays on the way) then he must at least pray fajr there, as that is even more obligatory - rather, it is a rukn (pillar) of hajj according to the most correct view of the scholars. However, this does not apply to women and the weak, for they have been permitted to depart from Muzdalifah after the middle of the night.

Avoiding passing in front of praying people

One must carefully avoid passing directly in front of a praying person. This applies to those praying in al-Masjid ul-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah), as well as in other mosques and places; the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: *"If the one passing in front of a praying person knew what he incurs on himself (of sins), he would rather stand still for forty (One of the narrators of this hadeeth declares uncertainty whether the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam mentioned days, months, or years following the number), than pass in front of him."* [Saheeh Muslim, vol.1, p.261, no.1027].

This is a general text applying to everyone who prays or who passes in front of a praying person. There is no authentic hadeeth excluding al-Masjid ul-haraam from this ruling. Thus, just like praying anywhere else, one must pray there toward a sutrah. This is due to the general nature of the hadeeth regarding the sutrah, as well as specific authentic narrations concerning the practice of the Companions.

The Duty of those who know

During hajj, the people of knowledge and virtue should teach other pilgrims, whenever meeting with them, the rites and legislations of Hajj according to the Book and the Sunnah. Furthermore, this should not hinder them from calling to

Tawheed, which is the essence of Islaam; it is the reason for which the Messengers were sent and the Books revealed. Most of the people whom we have met, even some of those who are supposed to be knowledgeable, are in total ignorance of the real meaning of Tawheed and of Allaah's attributes.

No hardship!

Making things easy for people, is one of the principles of the Sharee'ah (Islaamic Law). However if there is a specific text, then laxity based on mere opinion is no longer permissible. This is the just and middle course binding upon every Muslim.

There are a number of actions that are permissible during hajj, but some pilgrims have become used to avoiding them due to fatwaas (verdicts) issued by some scholars, that conflict with the practice of the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, some of which are:

1. Bathing, without need to because of wet-dreams (ihtilaam), even if it involves rubbing the head - as it is authentically reported by Aboo Ayyoob radiallaahu 'anhu that the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam did it. [Saheeh Muslim, vol.2, p.595, no.2744).
2. Scratching the head, even if some hair falls out. This is indicated in the preceding hadeeth of Aboo Ayyoob.
3. Smelling aromatic plants and pulling off broken nails - as was instructed by Ibn 'Abbaas radiallaahu 'anhu [Al-Bayhaquee with an authentic chain of narration] and Sa'eed bin al-Musayyib [Muwatta, p.163, no.787].
4. Taking shade under a tent or an upheld garment as this is authentically reported from the Prophet's sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam action. [Saheeh Muslim, vol.2, p.580, no.2656]. Some people remove the roofs of their cars (in order not to be shaded)! This is an excessiveness in the Religion without permission from the Lord of the worlds.
5. Wearing a belt around the izhaar (A plain piece of clothing wrapped around the lower half of a man's body). and tying it when necessary; also wearing rings, watches, eyeglasses, or money-pouches around the neck, as there is no prohibition for any of that; besides, some reports from 'Aa'eshah and 'Atta' indicate permission to use such things. [Muwatta, p.147, no.707]

All of these things fall under the above principle. Furthermore, some of them are supported by authentic ahaadeeth from the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam or by narrations from the Companions - and Allaah subhanahu says: **"Allaah intends every facility for you, He does not want to put you into difficulties."** [Al-Qur'aan 2:185].

All praise is for Allaah Lord of the worlds.