

Hajj

Q Write a comprehensive note on Hajj and its spiritual, moral and social impacts.

Introduction:

Hajj is an annual pilgrimage to Makkah and a mandatory religious duty for Muslims that must be carried out at least once in a life time by all the Muslims who are physically and financially capable of undertaking the journey and are able to support their family during their absence. The state of being physically and financially capable of performing Hajj is called "Istitha'ah", and a Muslim who fulfills this condition is called a "mustati". The pilgrimage is a 5 day activity that occurs from the 8th to 12th of Dhu-al-Hajjah, the last month of the Islamic calendar.

Different meanings of the word 'Hajj':

In Arabic, the word Hajj means "to resolve to some magnificent duty," or "to aim". While conceptually Hajj represents a transformative experience, where one leaves behind worldly attachments and seeks spiritual redemption and purification.

Historical background of Hajj:

The historical background of Hajj dates back to the pre-Islamic era when the Kaaba was a sacred site for pagan Arabs who performed a pilgrimage to it annually. Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) built the Kaaba with his son Hazrat Ismael. In 628 CE, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) formalized the Hajj rituals and cleansed the Kaaba of pagan idols during his one and only pilgrimage. As Allah in Quran mentions the background of Kaaba "And when Ibrahim and Ismael recreated the foundation of the house" (Al-Baqarah - 127)

Conditions for Hajj to be Obligatory:

Hajj is obligatory on every Muslim man and women who has reached the age of puberty and can afford to undertake the journey to Makkah, as Allah says in Quran, "Pilgrimage, there to is a duty men owe to Allah, - those who can afford the journey." (Al-Imran - 97)

However, the danger to life or the danger of war in the Holy land or around it or in one's own country may exempt one from the pilgrimage. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions could not perform pilgrimage for many years after migration to Madinah as there was a grave danger to their lives.

Hajj and its different kinds:

a- Hajj al-Ifrad:

Hajj al-Ifrad is a simple Hajj. A pilgrim entering into the state of Ihram with the Niyyah of performing Hajj alone. He does not combine it with Umrah. The person who perform Hajj al-Ifrad is called 'Mufrid'.

b- Hajj al-Qiran:

Qiran is an Arabic word which means to combine two things. A pilgrim who performs this kind of Hajj, combines Hajj and Umrah, that he assumes Ihram with the Niyyah to accomplish both of them. The person who performs this kind of Hajj is called Qiran. The residents of Makkah and hills are not allowed to perform this kind of Hajj and if they do so there will be a sacrifice of a specific kind that will be obligatory on them.

c. Hajj al-Tamattu:

Tamattu means to enjoy or to take advantage of a facility. A pilgrim who performs this kind of Hajj combines Umrah with Hajj. First he performs Umrah and then on the 8th of Dhul Hajj with the intentions of Hajj he performs Hajj. The person who performs this kind of Hajj is called Mutamatti Faraidh of Hajj.

- a. To assume Ihram, that is to perform Niyah (intention) to perform Hajj and to recite Takbiyah.
- b. Wuquf at Arafat. To stay at Arafat, even if it be for a moment, from after Zawal of the 9th Dhul Hajj till the dawn of the 10th Dhul Hajj.
- c. Tawaf al-Ziyrat. It may be performed anytime from the morning of the 10th Dhul Hajj till the sunset of the 12th Dhul Hajj.

Wajibat of Hajj.

- a. Wuquf al-Mudaliyah: This is quyam, at the appointed time during the halt at Mudaliyah.
- b. Sa'iy: Traversing seven times between Safa and Marwah.
- c. Rami al-Jamarat: Stoning the Devil, where pilgrims throw pebbles at three pillars representing Satan.
- d. Nahr: The sacrifice of animal (goat ~~sheep~~ / goat or sheep) to commemorate the willingness of Prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail.
- e. Halq: Shaving or cutting of hair, renunciation of worldly attachments and a fresh start.
- f. Tawaf al-Wada: The Farewell Tawaf, the final circumambulation of the Kaaba before departing Makkah, making the end of the Hajj pilgrimage.

Impacts of Hajj on Human Life:

1. Spiritual impacts of Hajj on human life.

a. A sense of Unity with other Muslims.

The Hajj pilgrimage is a time when Muslims from all over the world come together to perform a series of rituals. This shared experience creates a sense of unity and equality among all Muslims.

The Quran says,

"Publically proclaim Hajj for all people so that they come to you from every corner of the world."

(Surah - Al Hajj - 28)

b. Forgiveness from all past sins.

Hajj offers a chance for spiritual cleansing and forgiveness of past sins, allowing Muslims to start anew. The Prophet (ﷺ) said in a Hadith,

"Whoever proclaims Hajj, and does not commit any obscenity or transgression will return as he was on the day his mother gave birth to him." (Bakhari)

c. Deep connection with Allah.

Hajj strengthens one's relationship with Allah, increasing faith and devotion.

2. Moral impacts of Hajj:

1. Hajj embodies commitment to superior morality.

The pilgrim is asked to not to do anything which would deflect him from the path of his act of worship. He must not talk foolishly or say anything immoral. Rather he is called upon to bear the harm of those who sin.

"The pilgrimage is the well known month, and whoever is minded to perform the pilgrimage therein, there is no lewdness nor abuse nor angry conversation on

on the pilgrimage."

(Surah Baqarah - 197)

b. Hajj teaches selfless dedication to duty.

Hajj ~~provides~~ combines both the physical and financial difficulties of performing a religious obligation with the expenditure of money. This serves to combat Man's love of money and his inclination to seek comfort. If he makes up his mind to perform Hajj and sacrifice his money and comfort, he has protected himself from avarice.

c. Hajj resolves the worship-work conflict.

The pilgrimage combines worship and the best blessings of this world in various forms.

"They may witness things that are of benefit to them".

(al-Hajj - 28)

3. Social Impacts of Hajj.

a. Hajj and brotherhood between Ummah.

"Lo! This, your religion, is one religion." (al-Anbiya 92)

Hajj shows the world that Muslim Ummah is one Ummah and their religion is the one religion.

Muslims realize this when they see a huge number of people under one roof, who are not brought together by anything worldly but the desire to fulfill the command of their religion. They get together in one place despite their ~~sexes~~ languages, nationalities, race or any differences.

b. Efforts for maintaining peace:

Islam has made it compulsory that during the months fixed for Hajj and Umrah every effort should be made to maintain peace. Islam and Muslims have made sure to keep the City an example of peace till doomsday.

c. Hajj and the awareness of history:

When the Muslims visit the holy places during Hajj they experience their Iman fresher than ever. All these places: the well of Zamzam, the place where Ibrahim (AS) stood, Safa and Marwa and the cave of Hira, they remind Muslims of the difficulties faced by our Prophets and the people before them their spiritual beliefs intensifies.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Hajj holds immense significance in human life, socially, morally and spiritually. It fosters a sense of unity and brotherhood among Muslims. It offers a transformative experience, allowing Muslims to reconnect with their Creator, and seek forgiveness. Hajj instill value of empathy and compassion, guiding believers towards a virtuous path.