

# Fikr-e-Raza

*A Voice of Ah-lu-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah*

This is issued monthly by The FIKR-E-RAZA Organization in Cairo, Egypt



**The performers of Hajj and Umrah are guests of Almighty Alla, if they seek something from Him, He will grant them, if they seek forgiveness He will forgive them.' (Ibn Majah)**

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# The virtues and benefits of Hajj and Umrah

Hajj, being the fifth pillar of Islam, needs to be performed by every Muslim once in their lifetime so that they may preserve their religion.

The virtues of Hajj are many and those who have performed Hajj are indeed aware of the spiritual contentment and uplifting experience such an act plants in the hearts of mankind; forever. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) has spoken endlessly on the virtues of Hajj throughout his lifetime. We are going to mention some traditions in below.

The act of Hajj is amongst the best deeds one can perform when pleasing Almighty Allah. This is known from the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him) when his companions asked him about the absolute best deed in the eyes of Allah. The Prophet replied **"Belief in Allah and His Messenger."** Then he was asked: "what else?" He said, **"Striving and struggling for the sake of Allah"** Then he was asked: "what else?" He said, **"A Hajj, which is free from vice - accepted and complete."** [Agreed upon, Bukhari & Muslim]

The ones who perform Hajj, in its proper and complete form, has all their past sins forgiven from Allah and they return to their homes as a newborn comes into this world; sinless. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) said **"Whoever performs Hajj to this house - Ka'bah- and does not commit any obscenity and wrongdoing, he, or she, will come out as the day he, or she, was born - pure and free from sins."** [Agreed upon, Bukhari & Muslim]

The reward for completing a Hajj and having it accepted is nothing less than Paradise itself. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) said **"An 'Umrah is a means of expiation of sins committed between it and the next and a Mabroor Hajj - complete and accepted - has no reward for it but Jannah."** [Agreed upon, Bukhari & Muslim]

When performing Hajj, we are known as the guests of Almighty Allah and will be fully taken care of by Him. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) said **"The people performing Hajj or 'Umrah are the guests of Allah. If they ask Him something He answers them and if they ask him forgiveness He forgives them."** [Related by an-Nassaa'i, ibn Maajah, ibn Hibbaan and ibn Khuzaymah]

One who sets forth and leaves for Hajj is in the state of a pilgrim till he/she reaches back home, and therefore remains a guest of Allah throughout the entire journey until he/she returns home. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) said **"When you meet anyone who has performed Hajj, greet him, shake hands with him, and beseech him to pray for the forgive-**

**ness of your sins before he reaches his home, for he is in the state that decision of forgiveness has been taken for him (and it is confidently expected that his supplication will be accepted)."** [Musnad Ahmed]

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet, ﷺ, said: **"From one 'Umrah to another is an expiation for the sins committed between them, and the accepted Hajj has no less a reward than Paradise."** [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

Aa'ishah, the Mother of the Believers asked the Prophet, ﷺ, **"O Messenger of Allaah, can we not go out on campaigns and fight in Jihaad with you?"** He said: **"But the best and most beautiful of Jihaad is an accepted Hajj."** 'Aa'ishah said, **"I never stopped going for Hajj after I heard that from the Messenger of Allaah ."** [Al-Bukhaari]

Amr ibn Al-'Aas reported that the Messenger of Allaah, ﷺ, said: **"Hajj wipes out whatever (sins) came before it."** [Muslim]

Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood narrated that the Messenger of Allaah, ﷺ, said: **"Keep on doing Hajj and 'Umrah, for they eliminate poverty and sin just as the bellows eliminate impurities from iron, gold and silver."** [At-Tirmithi, An-Nasaa'i]

Ibn 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, ﷺ, said: **"The one who fights for the sake of Allaah and the pilgrim who goes for Hajj or 'Umrah are all guests of Allaah. He called them and they responded; they ask of Him and He will give them."** [Ibn Maajah]

Allaah The Almighty Himself Says which means: **{That they may witness (i.e., attend) benefits for themselves...}** [Quran, 22: 28] The benefits of Hajj are both worldly and religious (spiritual). As for the latter, the one who goes for Hajj earns the pleasure of his Lord and comes back with all his sins forgiven. He also earns immense reward, which he cannot earn in any other place. For instance, one prayer in Al-Masjid al-Haraam (i.e., the Sacred Mosque in Makkah), is equal to a hundred thousand prayers elsewhere, and Tawaaf (circumambulation of the Ka'bah) and Sa'y (pacing between Safa and Marwah) cannot be done anywhere else. Other benefits include meeting other Muslims and discussing their circumstances, encountering scholars and learning from them and asking them about one's problems. Worldly benefits include trade and business, as well as other kinds of earnings related to Hajj.

**Some examples of the wisdom behind some of the rituals of Hajj are:**

**When the pilgrim travels for Hajj**, he leaves his near and dear ones behind as well as his homeland, which reminds him of his final journey to Allaah The Almighty and the Hereafter.

Whoever equips themselves with provisions sufficient to help them reach the sacred land should remind themselves that they also need enough provisions to help them reach their final destination. Allah The Almighty Says which means: {...**And take provision, but indeed, the best provision is fear of Allah...**} [Quran, 2: 197]

**Traveling is tiring**, and this is also true of the journey to the Hereafter – only on a much greater scale. Man goes through various stages of existence: there is the stage of his passing away, the grave, the gathering, the accounting, the scales and As-Siraat (a bridge that will be laid across Hellfire, for people to pass over on the Day of Judgment), followed by either Paradise or Hell. The only ones who truly blessed are those whom Allaah The Almighty saves.

**When the pilgrim puts on the two garments of his Ihraam** (the state of a pilgrim in which he performs Hajj and ‘Umrah, and during which he is prohibited from certain acts that are lawful otherwise), he is reminded of the shroud in which he will be wrapped after he dies. This prompts him to give up disobedience and misdeeds. Just as he gives up his regular clothing (for Hajj), likewise he should give up sins. Just as he has put on two clean, white garments, he has to cleanse his heart and make it clean and pure, and guard his senses so they remain uncorrupted, uncontaminated and unsullied by sins and disobedience.

After the pilgrim starts saying, “Labbayk Allaahumma labbayk (Here I am at your service, O Allaah, here I am)” at the Meeqaat (station from where one enters into the state of Ihraam), he must not continue sinning further, having responded to his Lord’s call. When he says it he should think of it as, “I am responding to Your prohibition of it (committing sins) and this is the time I am giving it up.”

**When he enters the Sacred House of Allah The Almighty**, which He has made a sanctuary for humankind, he remembers the sanctuary of the Day of Resurrection, which no one can reach without first striving hard in this world. Tawheed (belief in the Oneness of Allah The Almighty) and shunning Shirk (association of others with Allah The Almighty) provides the greatest sanctuary on that Day. Allah The Almighty Says which means: {**They who believe and do not mix their belief with injustice – those will have security, and they are (rightly) guided.**} [Quran, 6: 82]

**Kissing the Black Stone**, which is amongst the first rituals to be carried out, teaches the pilgrim to honor the Sunnah (Prophetic tradition) and not oppose the laws of Allah The Almighty with his feeble reasoning. He realises that there is wisdom behind the laws and rites which Allah The Almighty has prescribed for humankind, and trains himself to submit to his Lord wholly. ‘Umar said after he kissed the Black Stone, “**I know that you are only a stone and that you can neither benefit nor harm. If I had not seen the Prophet kiss you, I would not have kissed you.**” [Al-Bukhaari, Muslim]

**When the pilgrim does Tawaaf**, he is reminded of his father Ibrahim, who built the House so it could be a place of refuge for humankind and a safe haven, and that he called them to perform pilgrimage to this House. The Prophet, , also called humanity to perform pilgrimage to this House, and Moosa, Yoonus and ‘Eesa, may Allaah exalt their mention, also came for the same purpose. This House was venerated by all these Prophets.

**When drinking Zamzam**, the pilgrim is reminded of the blessedness of this holy water, from which millions of people have drunk throughout history, yet it has never dried up. He is encouraged to make Du’aa (supplications) when he drinks it, according to the Hadeeth in which the Prophet, , is reported to have said: “**The water of Zamzam is for whatever it is drunk for.**” [Ibn Maajah, Ahmad]

When he does the Sa’y, he is reminded of the despair of Haajira, the mother of Ismaa’eel who ran back and forth between Safa and Marwah searching for water so she could give her little son water to drink. When a man remembers the struggle and patience of this great woman, it makes it easier for him to bear his problems; a woman will also relate to Haajira’s suffering and find it easier to cope with the tribulations of life.

**Standing on the day of ‘Arafah** reminds the pilgrim of the throngs of people on the Day of Gathering. If the pilgrim is tired due to being in a crowd of thousands, how will it feel to stand amongst the hordes of barefoot, naked, uncircumcised people, for fifty thousand years?

**When throwing the pebbles at the Jamaraat** (the three small stone-built pillars in Mina), the Muslim trains himself to obey Allah The Almighty without arguing and questioning His commands, even if he does not understand the reason and wisdom behind this act, and cannot make the connection between rulings and their purpose. This is the manifestation of complete submission to Allah The Almighty.

**When he slaughters his sacrificial animal**, he is reminded of the great incident when Ibrahim submitted to the command of Allah The Almighty to sacrifice his only son Ismaa'eel after he had grown up and become a helping hand for him; there is no room for emotions which go against the commands of Allah The Almighty. This teaches him to respond to what Allah The Almighty orders, as He tells us that Ismaa'eel said: {...**'O my father, do as you are commanded. You will find me, if Allah wills, of the steadfast.'**}[Quran, 37: 102]

These are just some of the virtues mentioned about Hajj. Indeed the virtues of Hajj are priceless to any Muslim and it is therefore referred to as the Journey of a Lifetime.

### **The Virtues of Umrah**

Allah says: **And complete the Hajj and Umrah in the service of Allah...** (Al Baqarah, 196)

Nabi (Peace be upon Him) has stated in a hadith: **'The performance of Hajj and Umrah increase a person's life span and eradicates poverty and sins just as rust is removed from the iron when placed in the furnace.'** (Targhib)

For this very same reason Imam An-Nawawi has written that if Allah grants the ability and guidance to a servant of His, it is Mustahab (preferred) to perform umrah frequently. (Sharah Manasik)

Hazrat Amar ibn Abassa relates: 'Rasulullah (Peace be upon Him) stated that **"the best of deeds is the performance of Hajj or Umrah."** (Musnad Ahmad)

It is also related in a hadith: 'Umrah is the lesser Hajj.' (Duri Manzoor)

Abu Hurairah relates that Rasulullah (Peace be upon Him) stated: **'One Umrah is expiation for the sins committed between that and the previous Umrah'** (Bukhari/Muslim)

Meaning that the performance of one Umrah is the means of forgiving the sins and faults that may have been committed by an individual between that Umrah and the previous one.

Allah has determined for his servants the fact that Hajj can only be performed at its specified time, in the particular days of Dhil Hijjah. It is not possible for one to perform the rites of Hajj outside this time in any way, shape or form. However, Allah has blessed His servants with the fact that, aside from the 5 days of Hajj, there is no restriction on the performance of Umrah throughout the year.

It is narrated from Abu Hurairah Rasulullah (Peace be upon Him) stated: **'The performers of Hajj and Umrah are guests of Allah, if they seek something from Him, He will grant them, if they seek forgiveness He will forgive them.'** (Ibn Majah) In another hadith it is

related: **'The performers of Hajj & Umrah are the special guests of Allah, whatever they ask for they are granted and what they pray for it is granted to them and what they spend of they are rewarded for it. They are granted a recompense of 1,000,000 dirhams for the sake of 1 dirham spent.'** (Targhib)

It is for this very reason that we should, in the spare time that we have, endeavour to take our families to the blessed House of Allah and perform Umrah, stay in the blessed vicinity of the Haramain Sharifain and make it a means of attaching ourselves to Allah and his Prophet (Peace be upon Him), which is the foundation of our deen. It is with these trips that one's attention is directed towards the Akhirah and children are given the motivation to do good deeds and strive to improve their understanding of deen. It is however unfortunate that in this day and age, due to not being aware of the blessings of such actions as Umrah, we prefer to take our families to the seaside where there is nudity and immodesty. The viewing of which removes hayah (modesty & bashfulness) from our wives, children and loved ones.

My friends, take heed, that those for whom you are responsible, who you take to/allow to go to places of immodesty, it is a right upon you that you teach them correct manners and etiquettes, in accordance with the Qur'an & Sunnah. The propagation and calling towards avenues other than those which are permitted in Shariah is against the orders of Allah and the teachings of his final Messenger (Peace be upon Him).

Allamah Mahmood Aalosi Baghdadi has related a hadith in his book: **'On the day of Qiyamah, a few people (on whom the decision of Jahannum will be manifest) will be in such a state that by looking at them, the others will say... 'these were those who did great feats of worship, but their loved ones devoured their deeds.'** (Roohul Ma'ani) May Allah protect our Iman and grant us the guidance to do good deeds, Aameen.

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# VIRTUES OF QURBANI

Qurbani is a practice commanded by Allah Almighty **“So pray to your lord and sacrifice”** (sura al-kauthar verse 2)

There is no action more dearer to Almighty Allah during the days of Qurbani than the sacrificing of animals. The sacrificed animal shall come on the Day of judgment with its horns, hair, and hooves (to be weighed). The sacrifice is accepted before the blood reaches the ground. Therefore sacrifice with an open and happy heart. (Tirmizi, Ibne maja)

Hazrat Zaid ibn Arqam (Radiallahu Anhu) relates that the Beloved Companions (Radiallahu Anhum) asked, **“O Rasoolallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) what is Qurbani?”** He replied, **“It is the sunnah (practice) of your father Ebrahim (Alayhi Salaam).”** They asked again, **“what benefit do we get from it?”** He answered, **“A reward for every hair of the sacrificed animal”**. (Ibne maja)

When a person slaughters a Qurbani animal, he is forgiven at the fall of the first drop of blood, and verily, the animal shall be brought forward on the Day of judgment with its blood, meat etc, and shall be increased in weight seventy times more than its own weight, and thereafter it will be placed on the scale of deeds.

## ON WHOM QURBANI IS WAJIB?

Qurbani is wajib on every Muslim who is of sound mind, mature (who has reached the age of puberty), Muqem (i.e. he is not a shar`ee traveller and possesses the means to perform Qurbani. It is not necessary he possesses the wealth for one lunar year. If he possesses the wealth during the three days of Qurbani it will be obligatory on him to perform Qurbani. Qurbani is not incumbent on a child or an insane person whether they possess wealth or not, nor is it Wajib upon their guardians to perform it on their behalf. Similarly, it is not Wajib on a shar`ee traveller. During the days of Qurbani, Sadaqa and charity cannot compensate for Qurbani. Qurbani is a unique Ibadah, just like Zakaah cannot compensate for Hajj, or Sawm (Fasting) cannot compensate for Salaah, similarly charity cannot compensate for Qurbani.

## DAYS OF QURBANI

The days of Qurbani are the tenth, eleventh and twelfth of Zil Hijjah. The first day is better than the second, and the second better than the last.

## TIME FOR QURBANI

In towns and cities where Jumma and Eid are performed, Qurbani is not permissible before the Eid Sallah. If the Qurbani is offered before Eid Sallah, it will have to be repeated. Therefore, the time for Qurbani commences after the Eid Sallah on the 10th of Zil Hijjah until before sunset of 12th Zil Hajjah.

## Al-Azhar Offers an E-Learning Program for the Study of Islamic Sciences

Al-Azhar University is now offering an educational e-learning program in Arabic that grants a Bachelor's Degree in Islamic and Arabic sciences for academic year of 2012/13. This is done in cooperation with the world Association for al-Azhar Graduates (WAAG). The program aims at giving student of different nationalities as chance to learn curriculums being taught at al-Azhar University without being in Egypt. The course material will be available online and students will be able to communicate with their instructors via virtual online classes and electronic discussions.

The terms of registration in the e-learning program for the Faculty of Islamic Sciences for international Students are:

The Azhari Secondary Certificate or its equivalent.

The egyptian General Secondary Certificate or its equivalent. In this case, the student must pass an equivalence exam to the Azhari Secondary Certificate.

The student will not be considered registered in the program unless registration is completed. The University has the right to accept or refuse the applicant without giving any reasons.

The student should hold a Certificate in the Arabic language. Applicants are asked to visit our website [www.azharegypt.net](http://www.azharegypt.net) for more information about the program, documents needed for registration, enrollment and online application.

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