

Description of Hajj

Praise be to Allaah.

Hajj is one of the best acts of worship. It is one of the pillars of Islam with which Allaah sent Muhammad and without which a person's religious commitment is incomplete.

Worship cannot bring a person closer to Allaah and cannot be accepted unless it meets two conditions:

1 – Sincerity towards Allaah alone, i.e., it is done to seek the Countenance of Allaah and the Hereafter, and is not done to show off, to enhance one's reputation or for worldly gain.

2 – Following the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in word and deed. Following the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) can only be achieved by knowing his Sunnah.

Hence the one who wants to worship Allaah by doing any act of worship – Hajj or anything else – has to learn the teachings of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) concerning it, so that his actions will be in accordance with the Sunnah.

We will sum up in these few lines the description of Hajj as narrated in the Sunnah.

Types of Hajj

There are three types of Hajj: Tamattu', Ifraad and Qiraan.

Tamattu' means entering ihraam for 'Umrah only during the months of Hajj (the months of Hajj are Shawwaal, Dhu'l-Qi'dah and Dhu'l-Hijjah; see al-Sharh al-Mumti', 7/62). When the pilgrim reaches Makkah he performs tawaaf and saa'i for 'Umrah, and shaves his head or cuts his hair, and exits ihraam. Then when the day of al-Tarwiyah, which is the 8th of Dhu'l-Hijjah, comes, he enters ihraam for Hajj only, and does all the actions of Hajj. So Tamattu' involves a complete 'Umrah and a complete Hajj.

Ifraad means entering ihraam for Hajj only. When the pilgrim reaches Makkah he performs tawaaf al-qudoom (tawaaf of arrival) and saa'i for Hajj, but he does not shave or cut his hair and does not exit ihraam, rather he remains in ihraam until he exits ihraam after stoning Jamarat al-'Aqabah on the day of Eid. If he delays the saa'i of Hajj until after the tawaaf of Hajj, there is nothing wrong with that.

Qiraan means entering ihraam for 'Umrah and Hajj both together. Or entering ihraam for 'Umrah first then including Hajj in that before starting the tawaaf of Hajj. That is done by intending that his tawaaf and saa'i will be for both Hajj and 'Umrah.

The actions done in Qiraan are the same as those done in Ifraad, except that the pilgrim doing Qiraan has to offer a hadiy (sacrifice) whereas the pilgrim doing Ifraad does not.

The best of these three types of Hajj is Tamattu'. This is what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) enjoined upon his companions and urged them to do. Even if a person enters ihraam for Qiraan or Ifraad, then it is strongly recommended for him to change his intention to 'Umrah, then complete 'Umrah and exit ihraam, so that he will then be doing Tamattu'. He may do that after doing tawaaf al-qudoom and saa'i – because when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did tawaaf and saa'i during his Farewell Pilgrimage, and his companions were with him, he told everyone who did not have a sacrificial animal (hadiy) to change his intention and make his ihraam for 'Umrah and to cut his hair and exit ihraam, and he said, "Were it not that I have brought the hadiy with me, I would do what I have commanded you to do."

Ihraam□

The pilgrim should observe the Sunnahs of ihraam which are mentioned in the question referred to above, namely doing ghusl, applying perfume and praying. Then he should enter ihraam after he finishes the prayer or after boarding his means of transportation.

Then if he is doing Tamattu', he should say, "Labbayk Allaahumma bi 'Umrah (Here I am, O Allaah, for 'Umrah)."

If he is doing Qiraan, he should say, "Labbayk Allaahumma bi Hijjah wa 'Umrah (Here I am, O Allaah, for Hajj and 'Umrah)."

If he is doing Ifraad, he should say, "Labbayk Allaahumma Hajjan (Here I am, O Allaah, for Hajj)."

Then he should say, "Allaahumma haadhihi hijjah laa riyaa'a fiha wa la sum'ah (O Allaah, this is a pilgrimage in which there is no showing off or seeking reputation)."

Then he should recite the Talbiyah as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did: "Labbayka Allaahumma labbayk, labbayka laa shareeka laka labbayk. Inna al-hamd wa'l-ni'mata laka wa'l-mulk, laa shareeka lak (Here I am, O Allaah, here I am. Here I am, You have no partner, here I am. Verily all praise and blessings are Yours, and all sovereignty, You have no partner)."

The Talbiyah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) also included the words, "Labbayka ilaah al-haqq (Here I am, O God of Truth)."

Ibn 'Umar used to add to the Talbiyah the words, "Labbaayk wa sa'dayka, wa'l-khayr bi yadayka, wa'l-raghba' ilayka wa'l-'aml (Here I am and blessed by You, and all good is in Your hands, and desire and action are directed towards You)."

Men should raise their voices when saying this, but a woman should recite in such a manner

that those who are beside her can hear it, unless there is a man beside her who is not one of her mahrams, in which case she should recite it silently.

If the person who is entering ihraam fears some obstacle that may prevent him from completing his pilgrimage (such as sickness, an enemy, being stopped from proceeding any further, etc), then he should stipulate a condition when entering ihraam by saying, "If I am prevented then my exiting ihraam is where I am prevented" – i.e., if something prevents me from completing my pilgrimage such as sickness or delay etc, then I will exit my ihraam. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) commanded Dubaa'ah bint al-Zubayr, when she wanted to enter ihraam but she was sick, to stipulate such a condition, and he said, "Your condition is valid with your Lord." Narrated by al-Bukhaari (5089) and Muslim (1207).

If he stipulates this condition and something happens to prevent him from completing his pilgrimage, then he exits his ihraam and does not have to do anything (i.e., offer a sacrifice in compensation).

But the one who does not fear that some obstacle may prevent him from completing his pilgrimage does not have to stipulate any conditions, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did not stipulate conditions nor did he command everyone to do so. Rather he told Dubaa'ah bint al-Zubayr to do that because she was sick.

The muhrim (person who has entered ihraam) should recite the Talbiyah a great deal, especially when circumstances and times change, such as when going up to a high place or going down to a low place, or when night or day begin. After that he should ask Allaah for His good pleasure and for Paradise, and seek refuge in His Mercy from the Fire.

The Talbiyah is prescribed in 'Umrah from the moment one enters ihraam until one starts Tawaaf. In Hajj it is prescribed from the moment one enters ihraam until one stones Jamarat al-'Aqabah on the day of Eid.

Ghusl when entering Makkah

When the pilgrim approaches Makkah, he should do ghusl before entering, if possible, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did ghusl before entering Makkah. Narrated by Muslim, 1259.

Then when he enters al-Masjid al-Haraam he should do so with his right foot first, and say, "Bismillaah wa'l-salaatu wa'l-salaam 'ala Rasool-Allaah. Allaahumma ighfir li dhunoobi waftah li abwaab rahmatika. A'oodhu Billaah il-'Azeem wa bi wajhii il-kareem wa bi sultaanih il-'qadeem min al-Shaytaan il-rajeem (In the name of Allaah, and blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allaah. O Allaah, forgive me my sins and open to me the gates of Your mercy. I seek refuge with Allaah the Almighty and in His noble Countenance and His eternal power from the accursed Satan)." Then he should go to the Black Stone in order to start tawaaf...

Then after he has done tawaaf and prayed two rak'ahs, he should go to the Mas'a (place for doing saa'i) and perform saa'i between al-Safa and al-Marwah.

The pilgrim who is doing Tamattu' should do saa'i for 'Umrah; those who are doing Ifraad and Qiraan should do saa'i for Hajj, and they may delay it until after Tawaaf al-Ifaadah.

Shaving the head or cutting the hair

When the pilgrim who is doing Tamattu' has completed seven circuits of saa'i, he should shave his head if he is a man, or cut his hair. If he shaves his head he must shave his entire head, and if he cuts his hair he must cut from all over his head. Shaving is better than cutting because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) made du'aa' three times for those who shaved their heads and once for those who cut their hair. Narrated by Muslim, 1303.

But if the time of Hajj is so close that there will be no time for the hair to grow back, then it is better to cut one's hair at this point, so that there will be some hair left to shave during Hajj. The evidence for that is the fact that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) commanded his companions, during the Farewell Pilgrimage, to cut their hair during 'Umrah, because they arrived on the morning of the 4th of Dhu'l-Hijjah.

Women should cut the length of a fingertip from their hair.

With these actions, the 'Umrah of the one who is doing Tamattu' is concluded, after which he should exit ihraam completely and do everything that those who are not in ihraam do, such as wearing regular clothes, wearing perfume, having intercourse with their wives, etc.

Those who are doing Ifraad or Qiraan should not shave their heads or cut their hair, or exit ihraam, rather they should remain in ihraam until they exit ihraam on the day of Eid, after stoning Jamarat al-'Aqabah and shaving their heads or cutting their hair.

Then when the day of al-Tarwiyah comes, which is the 8th day of Dhu'l-Hijjah, the one who is doing Tamattu' should enter ihraam for Hajj in the morning from the place where he is in Makkah. It is mustahabb for him to do the same when entering ihraam for Hajj as he did when entering ihraam for 'Umrah, namely doing ghusl, putting on perfume and praying. He should form the intention of entering ihraam for Hajj and recite the Talbiyah, and say, "Labbayk Allaahumma Hajjan (Here I am, O Allaah, for Hajj)."

If he fears some obstacle that may prevent him from completing his Hajj, he should stipulate a condition by saying, "If I am prevented then my exiting ihraam is where I am prevented." If he does not fear any such obstacle then he should not make any such condition. It is mustahabb to recite the Talbiyah out loud until he starts to stone Jamarat al-'Aqabah on the day of Eid.

Going to Mina

Then the pilgrim should go out to Mina and pray Zuhr, 'Asr, Maghrib, 'Isha' and Fajr there, shortening the prayers but not joining them, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to shorten his prayers in Mina but he did not join them. Shortening the prayers means making the four-rak'ah prayers two raka'ahs. The people of Makkah and others should shorten their prayers in Mina, 'Arafah and Muzdalifah because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to lead the people in prayer during the Farewell Pilgrimage and there were people from Makkah with him, but he did not tell them to offer their prayers in full. If it had been obligatory for them to do so, he would have told them to do so as he did on the day of the Conquest of Makkah. But since the city has spread and incorporated Mina so that it is like one of the quarters of Makkah, then the people of Makkah should not

shorten their prayers there.

Going to 'Arafah

When the sun rises on the day of 'Arafah, the pilgrim travels from Mina to 'Arafah and stops in Namirah until the time of Zuhr (Namirah is a place just before 'Arafah), if he can do so. If he cannot do it, it does not matter because staying in Namirah is Sunnah but it is not obligatory. When the sun passes its zenith (i.e., when the time for Zuhr prayer begins), he should pray Zuhr and 'Asr, two rak'ahs each, and join them together at the time of Zuhr, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did, so as to leave a lot of time for standing and making du'aa'.

Then after the prayer he should devote his time to making dhikr and du'aa' and beseeching Allaah, and praying as he likes, raising his hands and facing the qiblah even if the mountain of 'Arafah is behind him, because the Sunnah is to face the qiblah, not the mountain. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) stood by the mountain and said, "I am standing here, but all of 'Arafah is the place of standing."

Most of the Prophet's du'aa' in that great place of standing was: "Laa ilaaha ill-Allaah wahdahu laa shareeka lah, lahu'l-mulk, wa lahu'l-hamd, wa huwa 'ala kulli shay'in qadeer (There is no god but Allaah alone, with no partner or associate; His is the Dominion, all praise is due to Him, and He is able to do all things)."

If the pilgrim gets tired and wants to have a break by talking to his companions about useful things or by reading from some useful books, especially things that have to do with the generosity and great bounty of Allaah, in order to increase his hopes on that day, this is good. Then he can go back to beseeching Allaah and praying to Him. He should strive to make the most of the end of the day by making du'aa'. The best of du'aa' is du'aa' made on the day of 'Arafah.

Going to Muzdalifah

When the sun sets, the pilgrim should go to Muzdalifah. When he reaches there, he should pray Maghrib and 'Isha' with one adhaan and two iqaamahs. If he fears that he will not reach Muzdalifah before midnight, he should pray on the way, because it is not permissible to delay 'Isha' prayer until after midnight.

He should stay overnight in Muzdalifah, then when dawn comes he should pray Fajr early, with the adhaan and iqaamah, and then head for al-Mash'ar al-Haraam (which is the site of the mosque in Muzdalifah) and proclaim the oneness and greatness of Allaah (by saying *Laa ilaaha ill-Allaah* and *Allaahu akbar*), and making du'aa' as he likes, until it has become very light (i.e., when the light of day appears before the sun has actually risen). If it is not easy for him to go to al-Mash'ar al-Haraam, he should make du'aa' where he is, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) stood there and all of Muzdalifah is the place of standing. When he is reciting dhikr and making du'aa' he should face the qiblah and raise his hands.

Going to Mina

When it has become very light, before the sun rises, he should go to Mina and hasten through Wadi Mahsar (which is a valley between Muzdalifah and Mina). When he reaches Mina he should stone Jamarat al-'Aqabah, which is the last one that is closest to Makkah, throwing seven pebbles one after another, each of which should be approximately the size of a fava bean, saying "Allaahu akbar" with each throw. (The Sunnah when stoning Jamarat al-'Aqabah is to face the Jamarah with Makkah to one's left and Mina to one's right). When he has finished this stoning, he should slaughter his sacrificial animal, then shave his head or cut his hair if he is male; women should cut the length of a fingertip from their hair. This is the first stage of exiting ihraam, in which it becomes permissible to do everything except have intercourse with one's wife. Then the pilgrim should go back to Makkah and do tawaaf and saa'i for Hajj. Then comes the second stage of exiting ihraam, after which everything becomes permissible which was forbidden whilst in ihraam.

The Sunnah is to put on perfume when one wants to go to Makkah to do tawaaf after stoning the jamarat and shaving one's head, because 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: "I used to apply perfume to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) before he entered ihraam and when he exited ihraam, before he circumambulated the House." Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1539; Muslim, 1189.

Then after tawaaf and saa'i, he should go back to Mina and stay there for two night, the 11th

and 12th of Dhu'l-Hijjah, and stone the three jamarats during those two days, when the sun has passed its zenith. It is better for him to go to the jamarats walking, but if he rides that is acceptable. He should stone the first jamarah, which is the one that is furthest away from Makkah and next to Masjid al-Kheef, with seven pebbles, one after another, and say "Allaahu akbar" after each throw. Then he should go forward a little and say a lengthy du'aa', saying whatever he likes. If it is too difficult for him to stand for a long time and make du'aa', he should say whatever is easy for him, even if it is only a little, so that he will have done the Sunnah.

Then he should stone the middle jamarah with seven pebbles, one after another, saying "Allaahu akbar" with every throw. Then he should move to his left and stand facing the qiblah, raising his hands, and offer a lengthy du'aa' if he can. Otherwise he should stand for as long as he can. He should not omit to stand and make du'aa' because it is Sunnah. Many people neglect that because of ignorance or because they take the matter lightly. The more the Sunnah is neglected the more important it becomes to do it and spread it among the people, lest it be abandoned and die out.

Then he should stone Jamarat al-'Aqabah with seven pebbles, one after another, saying "Allaahu akbar" with each throw, then he should go away and not offer a du'aa' after that.

When he has completed the stoning of the Jamaraat on the 12th day of Dhu'l-Hijjah, if he wants he may hasten and leave Mina, and if he wants he may delay his departure and stay there for another night, the night of the 13th, and stone the three Jamaraat after noon as he did before. It is better to delay, but it is not obligatory unless the sun has set on the 12th and he is still in Mina, in which case it is obligatory to stay until one has stoned the three Jamaraat after noon on the following day. But if the sun sets on the 12th and he is still in Mina but not by choice, such as if he had already started out and boarded his means of transportation, but got delayed because of crowded conditions and traffic jams etc., then he is not obliged to stay there, because the delay until sunset was not by his choice.

When the pilgrim wants to leave Makkah and go back to his country, he should not leave until he has performed the farewell tawaaf (tawaaf al-wadaa'), because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "No one should leave until the last thing that he does is (tawaaf) around the House." Narrated by Muslim, 1327). According to another version, he told the people that the last thing they should do was (tawaaf) around the house, but he made an exception for women who were menstruating. Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1755; Muslim, 1328.

Women who are menstruating or bleeding following childbirth do not have to do the farewell tawaaf; neither should they stand by the door of al-Masjid al-Haram to bid farewell, because that was not narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him).

The last thing the pilgrim should do when he wants to leave is to circumambulate the House. If after the farewell tawaaf he stays and waits for his companions or to load his luggage or to buy something he needs on the way, there is nothing wrong with that, and he does not have to repeat the tawaaf, unless he intends to delay his journey, such as if he intended to travel at the beginning of the day and he did the farewell tawaaf, then he delays his travelling until the end of the day, for example; in this case he has to repeat the tawaaf so that it will be the last thing he does in Makkah.

Note:

The pilgrim who enters ihraam for Hajj or 'Umrah has to do the following:

1- He has to adhere to that which Allaah has enjoined of religious laws, such as praying on time in congregation.

2- He has to avoid all that Allaah has forbidden of obscene and immoral speech and sin, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So whosoever intends to perform Hajj therein (by assuming Ihraam), then he should not have sexual relations (with his wife), nor commit sin, nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj”

[al-Baqarah 2:197]

3- He should avoid annoying the Muslims with his words or actions, at the holy sites and elsewhere.

4- He should avoid all things that are forbidden when in ihraam:

- a. So he should not cut anything from his hair or nails, but removing thorns and the like is fine, even if that results in some bleeding.
- b. He should not apply perfume after entering ihraam, either to his body, his clothes, his food or his drink. He should not wash with perfumed soap either. But if any traces of perfume remain from that which he put on before entering ihraam, that does not matter.
- c. He should not hunt.
- d. He should not have intercourse with his wife.
- e. He should not touch her with desire or kiss her etc.
- f. He should not enter into a marriage contract for himself or arrange a marriage for anyone else, or propose marriage to a woman for himself or on behalf of another.
- g. He should not wear gloves, but wrapping one's hands with a piece of cloth does not matter.

These seven prohibitions apply equally to men and women.

The following apply only to men:

- Men should not cover their heads with something that stays on the head. Shading their heads with umbrellas, car roofs and tents, and carrying mats etc. (on one's head, when moving them from one place to another), is acceptable.

- They should not wear shirts, turbans, burnouses, pants or leather slippers, unless someone cannot find an izar (waist wrapper), in which case he may wear pants; and if he cannot find sandals he may wear shoes.

- They should not wear anything that is akin to the above, such as abayas, cloaks, hats, t-shirts and the like.

- It is permissible for men to wear sandals, rings, eyeglasses and hearing aids, and to wear wristwatches, or to put watches on strings around their necks, and to wear money belts.

- It is permissible for them to wash with unperfumed soaps, and to scratch their heads and bodies, and if any hairs fall unintentionally as a result, there is no sin on them.

Women should not wear niqaab, which is what they use to cover their faces, with holes cut for the eyes. They should not wear the burqa' either.

The Sunnah is for them to uncover their faces unless non-mahram men can see them, in which case they should cover their faces whilst in ihraam and at other times.

See Manaasik al-Hajj wa'l-'Umrah by al-Albaani [available in English as The Rites of Hajj and 'Umrah, published by International Islamic Publishing House, Riyadh]; Sifat al-Hajj wa'l-'Umrah and al-Manhaj li Mureed al-'Umrah wa'l-Hajj by Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on them all).

Islam Q&A