



The Philosophy of Ḥajj: Unity, Submission, and the Journey to Allāh ﷻ

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على سيد الأنبياء والمرسلين

Last year (2025), in the month of Dhul Qa'dah, in our 11th article issue, we spoke about the blessed days of Ḥajj, focusing on their virtues, the obligation of Ḥajj, and the immense rewards connected to this sacred journey. We also reflected on the significance of Dhul Ḥijjah and the call of Ibrāhīm (AS), reminding ourselves of the importance of responding to this divine invitation with sincerity. As we approach these blessed days once again, it is a perfect opportunity to revisit those reminders and reconnect with the spirit of Ḥajj. To read the full article from our 11th issue on Ḥajj, please visit:

<https://pathwaytoilm.info/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/May-article-English-5.pdf>

In this year's issue, we shift our focus to the deeper meanings of Ḥajj. While the actions of Ḥajj are well known, the lessons and wisdom behind them are often not given the attention they deserve.

Ḥajj is not just a set of rituals. It is a journey that teaches us powerful lessons about unity, humility, and our relationship with Allāh ﷻ. From the moment a person enters into iḥrām, to the gathering in Minā and standing in 'Arafah, every part of Ḥajj carries a meaning.

In this article, we will explore these meanings and reflect on how Ḥajj is not only a journey to Makkah, but a journey that prepares us for the hereafter.

Ḥajj and the Unity of the Ummah

One of the most powerful and visible lessons of Ḥajj is the unity of the Ummah. Every year, millions of Muslims gather in one place, coming from different countries, cultures, and backgrounds. They speak different languages, look different, and live completely different lives - yet during Ḥajj, all of these differences fade away.

From the moment a person enters into iḥrām, a sense of equality and unity begins to take shape. Everyone is dressed in the same simple clothing, removing any signs of status, wealth, or social position. The rich and the poor, the leader and the labourer, all stand side by side with no distinction between them. This powerful image reminds us that in the sight of Allāh ﷻ, no one is superior to another except through taqwā.

As the pilgrims move together, they recite the same words:

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ

"Here I am, O Allāh, here I am"

These words are not just recited individually, but echo collectively across the plains of Ḥajj. It is as though the entire Ummah is responding to the call of Allāh ﷻ with one voice. This unity in purpose, action, and speech is something rarely seen elsewhere.

Hajj teaches us that Islam is not limited by nationality, race, or culture. It removes the artificial divisions that people create and reminds us that we are all part of one Ummah. The barriers that separate us in our daily lives - whether they are based on language, background, or social standing - hold no value in this sacred gathering.

This lesson of unity is not meant to remain in Makkah alone. Rather, it is something we are meant to carry back with us. The spirit of brotherhood, equality, and mutual respect that is experienced during Hajj should continue in our communities, shaping the way we see and treat one another.

The State of Ihṛām and Its Deeper Meaning

One of the most striking aspects of Hajj is the state of ihṛām. At first glance, it may appear to be simply a change of clothing, but in reality, it represents a complete shift in mindset and state. It is the beginning of a person's journey away from the distractions of the world and towards Allāh ﷻ.

When a person enters into ihṛām, they leave behind their usual identity. The clothing is simple, plain, and the same for everyone. There is no sign of wealth, status, or position. This reminds the believer that before Allāh ﷻ, all people are equal. The only thing that truly matters is taqwā. As Allāh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَاكُمْ

"Indeed, the most honoured of you in the sight of Allāh is the one with the most taqwā."
(Sūrah al-Hujurāt, 49:13)

The garments of ihṛām also serve as a powerful reminder of the kafan. Just as a person stands in ihṛām with simple cloth, one day they will stand before Allāh ﷻ after death with nothing but their deeds. This realisation encourages humility and softens the heart, making a person reflect on their purpose in life.

Along with the clothing, there are also restrictions that come with ihṛām. A person is not allowed to engage in arguments, sinful behaviour, or even certain permissible actions. Allāh ﷻ says:

فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ

"So whoever undertakes Hajj, let them stay away from intimate relations, foul language, and arguments during pilgrimage." (Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:197)

These restrictions are not just rules to follow, but a means of training the nafs. A person learns to control their desires, their anger, and their tongue. It is a practical lesson in self-discipline and purification.

Ihṛām teaches us that true success lies in leaving behind what displeases Allāh ﷻ and submitting fully to His command. It is not just about wearing specific clothing, but about entering a state of obedience, humility, and awareness of Allāh ﷻ that should continue even after Hajj has ended.

Minā: A Place of Reflection and Preparation

After entering into ihṛām and performing the initial rites, the pilgrims move to Minā. At first glance, Minā may seem like a place of waiting, but in reality, it carries deep meaning. It is a place where a believer begins to mentally and spiritually prepare for the most important day of Ḥajj - the day of ‘Arafah.

In Minā, millions of people stay in simple tents. There is no luxury, no comfort, and no distinction between people. This reminds a person that life in this world is temporary. Just as these tents are set up for a short stay and then removed, our time in this world is also brief.

Minā also teaches patience. The crowds, the heat, and the limited facilities test a person’s ability to remain calm and focused. Through this, a believer learns that worship is not always easy, and that true devotion requires effort and sacrifice.

It is also closely connected to the legacy of Ibrāhīm (AS), reminding us of his obedience and submission to Allāh ﷻ. Being in Minā allows a person to reflect on these sacrifices and prepare themselves to follow that same path of submission.

‘Arafah: The Essence of Ḥajj

The day of ‘Arafah is the most important part of Ḥajj. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Ḥajj is ‘Arafah.” (Sunan al-Nasā’ī 3044)

On this day, millions of pilgrims gather on one plain, standing before Allāh ﷻ with humility and hope. There are no rituals of movement here - only du‘ā’, reflection, and turning back to Allāh ﷻ.

This gathering is a powerful reminder of the Day of Judgement. Just as people stand in ‘Arafah, dressed simply and raising their hands in du‘ā’, one day all of humanity will stand before Allāh ﷻ, awaiting His judgement. There will be no wealth, no status, and no support - only one’s deeds.

The day of ‘Arafah is a day of forgiveness and mercy. It is an opportunity for a person to wipe away their past and begin again. Standing in ‘Arafah, a believer realises their weakness, their dependence on Allāh ﷻ, and their need for His forgiveness.

Muzdalifah and the Reminder of Maḥshar (the Place of Gathering on the Day of Qiyāmah)

The scenes of Muzdalifah also give a glimpse of what the gathering on the Day of Judgement will be like. Large numbers of people are gathered in one place, all focused on their own state, with little concern for anything else. Allāh ﷻ describes this powerful scene:

{ يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ }

“(It will happen) on a day when people will be like scattered moths.” [Surah Al-Qāri‘ah: 4]

There is no sense of superiority. Everyone is equal, dressed simply, and concerned about their own condition. This reflects what will happen in Maḥshar, where every person will be worried about themselves, moving in confusion and urgency just like scattered moths.

These moments during Ḥajj are not just physical experiences, but powerful reminders. They are there to wake a person up and make them think about their final return to Allāh ﷻ.

The Overall Lessons of Ḥajj

When we look at Ḥajj as a whole, we see that every part of it teaches something important. It teaches:

- 1) Unity** - bringing people from all over the world together as one Ummah.
- 2) Equality** - removing all signs of status and reminding us that we are all equal before Allāh ﷻ.
- 3) Humility** - through simple clothing, difficult conditions, and complete submission.
- 4) Self-control** - through the restrictions of iḥrām and the need for patience.
- 5) And most importantly, it teaches us about the hereafter** - reminding us of death, accountability, and our return to Allāh ﷻ.

Ḥajj is not just a journey that takes place over a few days. It is a journey that is meant to change a person's life. The one who truly benefits from Ḥajj is the one who carries these lessons back with them and lives by them long after the journey has ended.

Written by: Maulana Ahmad Mohib Siddiqui

Editors: Maulana Eshfaq Akbar, Mufti Umar Azhar Syed