



Hajj Mabrūr

Hajj Mabrūr is one of the most virtuous deeds in the sight of Allah ﷻ. The Prophet ﷺ was asked, *“Which of the deeds are the most virtuous?”* He ﷺ replied, *“Belief in the oneness of Allah then going for fighting in the path of Allah ﷻ, and then hajj mabrūr. The degree of superiority of these deeds over all others is equivalent to the distance between the east and the west.”*¹ The Prophet ﷺ said on another occasion, *“The only reward for hajj mabrūr is Jannah.”*² On yet another occasion the Prophet ﷺ said, *“Whoever does the pilgrimage of this house (i.e., the Ka’bah) and does not indulge in sexual relations nor commits sin, he leaves like the day his mother gave birth to him (i.e., free of all sins).”*³ It is important to note that the forgiveness of sins and entrance into Jannah that is promised through the completion of hajj is dependent on the hajj being mabrūr, which will be possible when two qualities are apparent.

THE FIRST QUALITY: CARRYING OUT ACTIONS OF BIRR

The word *birr* (piety, righteousness) has two meanings. The first meaning of *birr* entails good character as demonstrated by virtuous qualities, whereas the second meaning entails carrying out all forms of obedience. The following discussion centers around these two meanings of *birr*.

GOOD CHARACTER AS DEMONSTRATED BY VIRTUOUS QUALITIES

The Prophet ﷺ said, *“There is no reward for hajj mabrūr except jannah.”* The Ṣaḥābah asked, *“What is hajj mabrūr?”* The Prophet ﷺ replied, *“Providing food to eat and spreading salām.”*⁴ In another narration, the Prophet ﷺ said *“Good speech.”*⁵ On another occasion, the Prophet ﷺ was asked regarding *birr*, and he ﷺ replied, *“Birr is good character.”*⁶

Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه used to say, *“Bir is something simple: a cheerful face, soft gentle words.”* Based on these narrations, the first meaning of *birr* is understood as good character as demonstrated by virtuous qualities, most importantly valuing good deeds and helping others. A necessity in hajj is to deal with people with kindness in words and in action because a

¹ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’, 1092

² Musnad Imām Aḥmad, 14 522

³ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 1820

⁴ Musnad Imām Aḥmad, 14 522

⁵ Musnad Imām Aḥmad, 325/3

⁶ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2553

journey unveils the true character of people. The ḥujāj need to socialize with others because those who socialize with others and bear the inconvenience of others are better than those who do not socialize with others and do not bear any hardship from others.

IMPORTANCE OF HELPING OTHERS

Another important virtuous quality is helping others. Indeed, the best of mankind are those who are most beneficial to mankind, and those who are most forbearing upon difficulties caused by people. Allah ﷻ says, *“Those who spend [in Allah Ta’āla’s cause through deeds of charity or alms] in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon men; verily, Allah loves Al-Muhsinun (the good-doers).”*⁷ Once the Prophet ﷺ was on a journey during intensely hot weather. With him were some people who were fasting, as well as others who were not fasting. Those who were fasting collapsed (on account of weakness), whereas those that were not fasting made tents for the fasting people to rest and provided the mounts with water. Seeing these actions, Prophet ﷺ said, *“Indeed those who did not fast today went away with great reward.”*⁸ In yet another narration, it is mentioned that some companions Prophet ﷺ returned from a journey while praising one of their companions saying, *“We have never seen a man like him; he did not walk except that he was reciting Quran, and we did not stop at any place except that he would be in prayer.”* The Prophet ﷺ asked *“Who was looking after his means of acquiring livelihood such that he could engage in remembrance?”* and he ﷺ further inquired *“Who was feeding his animal (his conveyance)?”* The companions replied, *“We were doing this.”* Hearing this, he ﷺ said, *“So all of you are better than him.”*⁹ Many of the pious predecessors used to impose a condition upon their companions in a journey that they would serve them, trying to seize the opportunity to attain the reward of this act. They used to serve their companions along with their exertion in their own worship. The quality of service is the essence of good character.

IMPORTANCE OF VALUING GOOD DEEDS

The most comprehensive virtuous quality that is relevant to the ḥujāj is valuing every good deed, regardless of how small or insignificant it may seem. A simple kind gesture, such as greeting others with Salam or offering one’s seat to an elderly person, reaps tremendous reward, especially during Ḥajj. This is a simple way to ensure that *birr* is present in Ḥajj. The Prophet ﷺ instructed Abu Juray al-Hujaymi رضي الله عنه, *“Never despise any good deed, even if you give a piece of rope, or empty from your bucket into the vessel of one seeking water, or you meet your brother with a cheerful face, or you befriend a lonely person, or you gift a shoelace.”*

⁷ Qur’ān, 3:134

⁸ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 1119

⁹ Sunan al’Nasā’ī, 9694

CARRYING OUT ALL FORMS OF OBEDIENCE

The second meaning of *birr* entails carrying out all forms of obedience. Allah ﷻ explained *birr* in this manner in the Quran as, “...but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, and the Prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves...” (2:177). As explained in the *āyah*, there are six forms of obedience:

1. Belief in the five fundamentals of *īmān*,
2. Spending wealth on relatives, orphans, the destitute, travelers, beggars, and using that wealth to free slaves,
3. Establishment of prayer,
4. Discharging of *Zakāh*,
5. Fulfilling the promise,
6. Patience at the time of poverty, physical hardship and battle.

The *ḥujāj* need all six types of obedience described above, but the most important of these pertains to the establishment of prayer, as evidenced in the lives of the Prophet ﷺ and the pious predecessors. Regarding the Prophet ﷺ, it is known that he ﷺ used to consistently offer the *tahajjud* prayer on his conveyance in all his journeys. Similarly, the pious predecessors used to offer voluntary prayers during the *ḥajj* with consistency. For example, Masruq رضي الله عنه carried out the *ḥajj*, and did not sleep except in the state of *sajdah* (prostration). Likewise, Mughirah bin Hakim al-Sanani رحمته الله set out for the *ḥajj* walking from Yemen, and would recite one third of the Quran every night in prayer.

IMPORTANCE OF THE REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAH (DHIKR)

Another important form of obedience is the excessive remembrance of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ repeatedly commands us to remember Him abundantly during *ḥajj*. The Prophet ﷺ was asked, “Which of the pilgrims are the best?” He ﷺ replied, “The one who remembers Allah the most.”¹⁰ It has been further reported that the Prophet ﷺ was asked, “Which of the actions are the most virtuous?” He ﷺ replied: “Loud recitation of the *Talbiyah* and the shedding of the blood of sacrificial animals.”¹¹ At another occasion, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Recite the *talbiyah* loudly and duly carry out the religious sacrifice on the camels.”¹²

AN INSPIRING STORY

Buhaym Al-‘Ijli رحمته الله, who was amongst the worshippers who would cry excessively in front of Allah ﷻ, traveled with an affluent businessman in the Pilgrimage. On the day of their leaving for the journey, Buhaym رحمته الله wept to such an extent that his tears fell on his chest, and then fell upon the earth, and he said, “This journey has made me remember the (ultimate)

¹⁰ Laṭā’if al-Ma’ārif, 417

¹¹ Ibn Mājah, 2383

¹² Musnad Imām Aḥmad, 16 566

journey to Allah Ta'āla.” He wept loudly and his companion (the businessman) disliked it. He feared that his journey would become loathsome due to his excessive weeping. When they returned from the Pilgrimage, a man who was a close associate of both Buhaym رَحِمَهُ اللهُ and the businessman came to greet them. He started with the businessman and greeted him and asked him regarding his condition with Buhaym رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. The businessman replied, “*By Allah, I do not think that in the entire creation there is someone similar to him; by Allah, he used to spend upon me despite the fact that he is destitute and I am wealthy, he used to serve me despite the fact that he is an old and weak man and I am a young man, and he used to cook for me while he was fasting and I was not.*” The man asked him regarding what he used to dislike (i.e., his excessive weeping). The businessman replied, “*By Allah, I became fond of that weeping and my heart became saturated with its love. To the extent that I used to encourage him upon weeping so much that the other companions would be inconvenienced because of us. Then, even they became fond of that weeping. When they heard us crying, they would start crying, and they would say to each other, ‘What has made them weep more than us when our Place of Return (the hereafter) is one?’ They started crying and we would also cry.*” The man left from him and went to Buhaym رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. He greeted him and said, “*What do you think about your companion (the businessman)?*” Buhaym رَحِمَهُ اللهُ replied, “*He is the best of companions; he used to remember Allah ﷻ abundantly and recite Qur’ān for long periods of time. Tears would come to his eyes very swiftly and he used to bear the mistakes of the companion (i.e., he used to tolerate my mistakes). So, may Allah ﷻ reward him with good on behalf of me.*”

THE SECOND QUALITY: ABSTAINING FROM PERPETRATING SINS

The second quality of *birr* is to abstain from perpetrating sins during the Ḥajj. Allah ﷻ mentioned, “*So whoever has made Ḥajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihram], there is [to be for him] no sexual relations and no disobedience and no disputing during Ḥajj. And whatever good you do - Allah knows it. And take provisions, but indeed, the best provision is fear of Allah. And fear Me, O you of understanding.*”¹³ The Prophet ﷺ said, “*Whoever does the pilgrimage of this house and does not indulge in sexual relations or in any sin, he returns just like the day his mother gave birth to him (i.e., cleansed of sins).*”¹⁴

IMPORTANCE OF TAQWA

As mentioned in the *āyah* described above, the ḥujāj do not take any provision better than *taqwa* (fear or consciousness of Allah ﷻ). It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ bid farewell to a young boy who was setting out for the ḥajj, and he ﷺ said to him, “May Allah give you

¹³ Qur’ān, 2:197

¹⁴ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 1820

Taqwa as a provision...”¹⁵ And another man said to the person who he was bidding farewell to, “I advise you with what the Prophet ﷺ advised Mu’adh رضي الله عنه when he bid him farewell: Fear Allah wherever you are, and follow a bad deed with a good deed that will eradicate it, and treat the people with good character.”¹⁶ And this is an advice which encompasses all the qualities of righteousness.

IMPORTANCE OF SPENDING PERMISSIBLE WEALTH

Among the most necessary things is abstaining from *harām* by spending only permissible wealth (wealth from 3 permissible sources) for the expenditure during the ḥajj, and not acquiring the expenditure from impermissible earnings. Tabraani رحمته الله and others deduced the following from the tradition of Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه: *“When a man leaves as a pilgrim with permissible wealth as his expenditure, and places his foot in the stirrup, and then proclaims, “I am present before you, Oh Allah. I am present before you (i.e. recites Talbiyah),” then an angel proclaims from the skies, “Your presence is welcome and may you be fortunate, your provision is permissible, and your conveyance is permissible (i.e., these things are from permissible earnings), and your pilgrimage is Mabroor and not ma’zur. And when a man leaves with impermissible earnings and places his foot in the stirrup, then proclaims, “I am present before you, Oh Allah. I am present before you (i.e., recites Talbiyah),” “Your presence is not welcome and may there be no good for you, your provision is impermissible, and your expenditure is impermissible (i.e., these things are from impermissible earnings), and your pilgrimage is not Mabroor.”*¹⁷

IMPORTANCE OF SINCERITY

Another important point of consideration is sincerity. The ḥujāj should not intend through their ḥajj ostentation, reputation, pride or boastfulness, and they should only intend through it the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, and they should also humble themselves during the ḥajj and be submissive to Allah ﷻ. Abstaining from these actions is necessary, and through them *birr* of the ḥajj will be attained. It is reported from Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ set out from Mina on the day of Arafah and when his conveyance was dispatched and upon it was a cloth/fabric which was purchased for (only) four dirhams, he said, *“Oh Allah! Make it a Pilgrimage which is Mabroor, in which there is neither ostentation nor the desire to gain any fame.”*¹⁸ In another incident Abdullah bin Haarith رضي الله عنه said, *“The Prophet ﷺ mounted his conveyance and it shook him, so he humbled himself before Allah ﷻ and said, “I am present before you, Oh Allah. There is no life except the life of the hereafter.”* Shurayh رضي الله عنه said, *“The pilgrims are less and the riders (those riding on horseback) are many; so many are those who do good, however, very few are those who intend the pleasure of Allah*

¹⁵ al-Tarīkh al-Kabīr, 7:185

¹⁶ Al-Tirmidhi, 1987

¹⁷ Majma' al-Zawāid, 10:295

¹⁸ Al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ, 2:99

ﷺ.” Similarly, one of the pious predecessors used to perform the ḥajj walking every year. One night, he was sleeping on his night-spread, and his mother sought from him a drink of water. It felt difficult on his *nafs* (inner self) to stand from his night-spread to give water to his mother, so he remembered his ḥajj that he used to perform walking every year, and that it was not difficult upon him. He took account of himself and he found that nothing was making the walking pilgrimage easy upon him except the people looking at him and praising him. So, he recognized that his pilgrimage was defective.

IMPORTANCE OF SIMPLICITY

One of the Taabi'een رضي الله عنه said, *“Many are those in the state of Ihrām who say, “I am present before you, Oh Allah. I am present before you.” So, Allah ﷻ says, “Your presence is not welcome, and may there be no good for you. This (pilgrimage) is returned upon you (i.e. it is not accepted).”* The Taabi'e was asked the reason behind this. He رضي الله عنه replied, *“It is probable that the person purchased a she-camel for five hundred dirhams and a saddle for two hundred dirhams and a night-spread for such and such amount. Then mounted the camel and combed the hair, and looked on both sides. That is what is being returned to him (i.e. not being accepted).”* From here it is known that it is preferable for the Pilgrim to be disheveled and dusty. In another tradition, Allah ﷻ boasts to the angels on the day of Arafah by saying to them, *“Look at my slaves. They have come to me disheveled, dusty, and under the rays of the sun; bear witness that I have forgiven them.”*¹⁹ Umar رضي الله عنه said one day when he was on the way to Makkah, *“You are disheveled, dusty, foul-smelling, and under the rays of the sun, and you do not intend through that anything from the petty things of the world. We do not know a journey better than this (i.e. the Pilgrimage).”* Similarly, the Prophet ﷺ mentioned, *“Pilgrims are only those who are disheveled and foul-smelling,”*²⁰ Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه once said to a man who was seeking shade in his ihram, *“Expose yourself to the heat of the sun for Him whom you have come into Ihrām.”*

© Al Khalil Academy. All rights reserved. No part of this document may be altered without prior written permission of Al Khalil Academy. For more information visit www.alkhalil.ca

To support Al Khalil Academy's future works,
please visit www.alkhalil.ca/donate



¹⁹ Musnad Imām Aḥmad, 7089

²⁰ Sunan al-Tirmidhi, 2998