

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

As expected, Eidul Adha will be celebrated in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday 20th July and hence the Day of Arafat will be on Monday 19th July. This year, only the Saudis and people of different nationalities living in Saudi Arabia are performing the Hajj and their number is limited to only sixty thousand. Let us hope and pray that Allah grant ease to all the pilgrims and that everything goes on smoothly for them by His Grace.

So, the starting day for hajj will be Sunday 18th July this year. The pilgrims will go to the valley of Mina. The next day will be Monday 19th July and that will be the day of Arafat when the pilgrims will assemble there for prayers starting from *Zohar* to Sunset. Then they will move to *Muzdalifa* where they will read Maghrib and Esha prayer and they will stay outside and pray throughout the night.

The next day, for those performing Hajj, the day is known as *yawm-ul hajj al-akbar* (The big hajj day) and is probably the longest day of the pilgrimage, and sometimes the most dangerous. The 10th of *Dhul-Hijjah* is Eid al-Adha, a day celebrated by Muslims around the world as the greater of the two Muslim holidays.

Pilgrims start the day in Muzdalifah and begin heading back to Mina before dawn. Once in Mina, they perform the first rami, throwing seven pebbles at the largest of three columns known as Jamarat.

This act is a symbolic stoning of the devil, based on historical tradition. Hazrat Ibrahim (as) understood from his dream that he had to sacrifice his son, as proof of faith. It is believed that at this spot in Mina, the devil appeared and tried to dissuade Abraham from heeding the command. Abraham responded by throwing stones to scare him off.

Millions of pilgrims converge at the Jamarat Bridge, which houses the three columns representing the devil, in order to re-enact the story.

After casting their stones, pilgrims must perform the sacrifice, re-enacting what Hazrat Ibrahim did when instead of sacrificing his son Allah made him sacrifice a ram.

Pilgrims thus must slaughter a sheep, goat, cow or camel – or more likely, pay for it to be done in their names.

At this point, pilgrims trim or shave (men only) their hair and remove their ihram clothes. Many will then proceed to Mecca to perform *tawaf* and *sa'ee*, first circling the Kaaba seven times, then walking seven times between the hills of Safa and Marwa.

When all is finally done, they return to their campsite in Mina.

On each day, they will again symbolically stone the devil – this time throwing seven pebbles at each of the three pillars. With the hardest part behind them, pilgrims will now spend the next two or three days in Mina.

When their time in Mina is finished, the pilgrims return to Mecca to perform the final circulation of the Kaaba, a “farewell” tawaf.

Before heading home, many also go to Medina, the second holiest city in Islam, where Prophet Muhammad (saw) is buried along with his closest companions. Visiting Medina, however, is not part of the pilgrimage.

Very briefly said, this is how Hajj is performed. In some of my sermons of previous years, I spoke about these steps in greater detail. For those who are interested, there are many documents or even videos showing with great detail all the rituals of the Hajj.

Last week, I said this and am repeating it that Allah swore by the ten days of Dhul-Hijjah — and He (the Most High) does not swear by a thing except that it is tremendous and honourable in the sight of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. He said:

وَالْفَجْرِ
وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ

“By the dawn, and by the ten nights (i.e. the ten days of Dhul-Hijjah).” (Al-Fajr: 1-2)

These ten days are the best days for a person to perform righteous deeds and show obedience to Allah through acts of piety such as prayer, dhikr, fasting, *sadaqah* and sacrifice.

Jābir bin Abdillāh narrated that Allah’s Messenger (saw) said:

أَفْضَلُ أَيَّامِ الدُّنْيَا أَيَّامُ الْعَشْرِ

“The best days in the world are the ten days (of Dhul-Hijjah).” (Ibn Hibbān, Al-Bazzār,)

These are days of plentiful Dhikr (glorifying Allah and remembering Him). Allah stated:

وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَعْلُومَاتٍ

“And they mention the name of Allah on the known days.” (Al-Hajj: 28) And these are the ten days of Dhul-Hijjah.

The following is from the Takbeers recited by the Sahābah:

الله أكبر الله أكبر لا إله إلا الله لا إله إلا الله

Allahu akbar, Allahu akbar, lā ilāha illallāh

الله أكبر الله أكبر و لله الحمد

Allahu akbar, Allahu akbar, walillāhil-hamd

Or one may increase the takbīr (الله أكبر) in the first line to three Takbīrs.

Concerning fasting on the day of Arafat, the reports are contradictory. But many Muslims who cannot go for Hajj do fast on that day as an act of piety. It is reported in

Hadith Muslim that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) said **“Fasting the day of ‘Arafah expiates the sins of the previous year and the coming year.”**

Allah’s Messenger (salallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam) said:

“There is no day on which Allāh frees more of His servants from the Hellfire than He does on the Day of ‘Arafah. Indeed, He draws close and then He boasts of them to the Angels and He says: ‘What is it that they want?’ (Muslim, no. 1348) In another narration, Allah stated: “Bear witness my Angels that verily I have forgiven them!”

The Prophet (saw) said regarding the Dhikr of the Day of ‘Arafah:

حَيْرُ الدُّعَاءِ دُعَاءُ يَوْمِ عَرَفَةَ وَحَيْرُ مَا قُلْتُ أَنَا وَالنَّبِيُّونَ
مَنْ قَبْلِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ
وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“The best supplication is that of the Day of Arafat—and the best that I and the Prophets before me have said is: None has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, He has no partner. His is the dominion and His is the praise, and He is able to do all things.” (At-Tirmidhi)

The day of *Nahr* is greatest day of the year. Allah’s Messenger (saw) said:

أَعْظَمُ الْأَيَّامِ الْيَوْمَ الَّذِي نَحْرَثُ فِيهِ يَوْمَ الْقَرِّ

“Indeed, the best or the greatest day with Allah is the Day of Sacrifice, then the day of rest.” (Abu Dawūd and An-Nasā’ī)

In a narration, he said: **“This is the greatest day of Hajj (yawm Al-Hajj Al-Akbar)” (Abu Dawūd)**

During these days, we also remember Allah after each Farz Namaz. It is reported in one book that **“‘Ali (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) would make the takbīrs after Fajr on the day of ‘Arafah until ‘Asr on the last day of Tashreeq and he would make it after ‘Asr also [on that day].”** So, let us remember these and do our best to implement them in the coming days. Women also should recite these takbirs rather silently.

Now I will share a few thoughts of Hazrat Masih Maood (as) with you. He said

“God Almighty states:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا

This means, “those who strive in our way, we open to them all the avenues that lead to us”. Nothing can happen without struggle. Those people who say that Syed Abdul-Qadir Jilani, may Allah have mercy on him, turned a robber into a saint, with a single

glance, are deluded. It is statements like these which have ruined people. People think that an individual can be transformed into a saint by incantations and spells.

Those who act hastily in the matter of God perish. Everything in the world progresses in stages. Spiritual advancement is no different and nothing can happen without struggle; and that struggle too must be in the way of God. One cannot make up their own futile ascetic practices and exercises like yogis. The very task for which I have been appointed by God is to demonstrate to the world how one can reach Allah the Exalted. This is the law of nature, neither do all people remain deprived, nor do all people receive guidance.”

The Purpose for Remaining in the Company of the Righteous

The Promised Messiah (as) states: “The fact is that I look at the practice of seeking help from the dead with extreme disgust. It is a characteristic of those who are weak in faith to turn to the dead and flee from those who are alive. God Almighty states that during the life of Joseph, peace be upon him, the people rejected his prophethood, but the day that he passed away, they began to say that on this day prophethood has come to an end. Allah the Exalted has not instructed anywhere that we should turn to the dead; in fact, He gives the following commandment:

كُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

Be with the truthful.

In doing so, God Almighty has instructed us to remain in the company of those who are living. This is precisely the reason that I encourage my friends emphatically to come here again and again. When I invite my friends to come and stay here with me, Allah the Exalted knows full well that I do so merely on account of my sympathy for their condition, as an expression of mercy upon them and out of my goodwill for them.

I truthfully say that faith cannot be rectified until a person remains in the company of one who possesses faith. This is because dispositions are diverse. A person who gives counsel cannot deliver a speech that addresses the state of every unique disposition at the same time. A time will arise when the discussions are in line with a person’s understanding, way of thinking, and nature, and this brings beneficial results. However, if a man does not come here repeatedly and does not stay for a good number of days, it is possible that the discussion at that time (when the person is present here) may not accord with his nature. This in turn may dishearten the individual in question and push them away from thinking positively, ultimately leading them to ruin. Therefore, as per the Holy Quran, it is the living in whose company we have been instructed to remain.”

These extracts are from Malfuzaat Volume 2 English. May Allah guide us all to what pleases Him. Ameen.