

Your Pilgrimage

6

Hajj, the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Makkah, is the fifth pillar of Islam. It is an act of worship which not only involves the heart but also requires physical and financial ability and must be carried out by every able-bodied Muslim who can afford to do so once in his lifetime.

As the Qur'an states, "Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to Allah by people who are able to undertake it. Those who reject this [should know that] Allah has no need of anyone." (*Soorat Aal-'Imraan*, 3:97)

Contents

The Importance and Virtues of Makkah and the Sacred Mosque

The Meaning of *Hajj*

The Ability to Perform *Hajj*: Different Circumstances

A Woman Needs a *Mahram* as a Companion to Perform *Hajj*

Virtues of *Hajj*

The Ultimate Goals of *Hajj*

'Umrah

The Festival of Sacrifice (*'Eed-ul-Adhaa*)

- What Should Be Done On *'Eed Day*?
- The Conditions that the Sacrificial Animal Must Satisfy
- What Should Be Done with the Sacrificial Animal?

Visiting Madeenah

Hajj

The Importance and Virtues of Makkah and the Sacred Mosque

The Sacred Mosque (*Al-Masjid Al-Haraam*) is located in Makkah, a city on the western side of the Arabian Peninsula, and has numerous virtues including the following:

1

It houses the Ka'bah

The Ka'bah is a cube-shaped building located at the centre of the Sacred Mosque in Makkah.

It is the direction towards which Muslims turn in prayer as well as during some other acts of worship which Allah ﷻ commands them to do.

It was built by Prophet Abraham ؑ and his son Ishmael ؑ following Allah's command to do so, and was rebuilt several times throughout history.

As the Qur'an states, "And when Abraham and Ishmael were raising the foundations of the House (the Ka'bah), [they prayed:] 'Our Lord, accept this from us, for You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.'" (*Soorat Al-Baqarah*, 2:127)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself took part in laying the Black Stone in its proper place along with the various Makkan tribes when they rebuilt the Ka'bah.

2

It was the first mosque ever built on earth

Abu Dharr ؓ, one of the Prophet's noble companions, once asked the Prophet ﷺ, "Messenger of Allah, which mosque was built first on earth?" "The Sacred Mosque [in



> The door of the Ka'bah, lavishly inscribed with quotations from the Holy Qur'an

Makkah]" he replied. Abu Dharr again asked, "Which was next?" "Al-Aqsaa Mosque [in Jerusalem]," he replied. "How long was the period between them?" Abu Dharr further enquired, "Forty years," the Prophet ﷺ replied. "Wherever you may be and the prayer time becomes due," he continued, "offer the prayer there, for virtue lies in offering the prayers at their due times." (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 3186, *Saheeh Muslim*: 520)

3

The reward for offering prayers in it is multiplied many times over

The Prophet ﷺ said, "One prayer in this mosque of mine [in Madeenah] is better than a thousand prayers in any other, except the Sacred Mosque [in Makkah], and one prayer in the Sacred Mosque is better than one hundred thousand prayers anywhere else." (*Sunan Ibn Maajah*: 1406; *Musnad Ahmad*: 14694)

4

Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ have declared it sacred

As the Qur'an states, "I have been ordered to worship the Lord of this city which He has declared sacred; everything belongs to Him; and I have been ordered to be one of the Muslims." (*Soorat An-Naml*, 27:91)

This verse makes it plain that Allah has declared Makkah a sanctuary and has thus forbidden people from committing injustices or shedding blood in it, chasing its game or cutting down its trees or grass.

The Prophet ﷺ once observed, "Allah, not the people, has made Makkah a sanctuary; therefore, any person who believes in Allah and the Last Day should neither shed blood in it nor cut down its trees." (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 104; *Saheeh Muslim*: 1354)

5

It is the dearest of all lands to Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ

One of the Prophet's companions once said, "I saw Allah's Messenger ﷺ sitting on his camel in the Al-Hazwarah market, addressing Makkah thus, "By Allah, you are the best and the dearest of all lands of Allah to Him. Had I not been driven out of you, I would have never left you." (*Sunan At-Tirmidhee*: 3925; *An-Nasaa'ee's As-Sunan Al-Kubraa*: 4252)

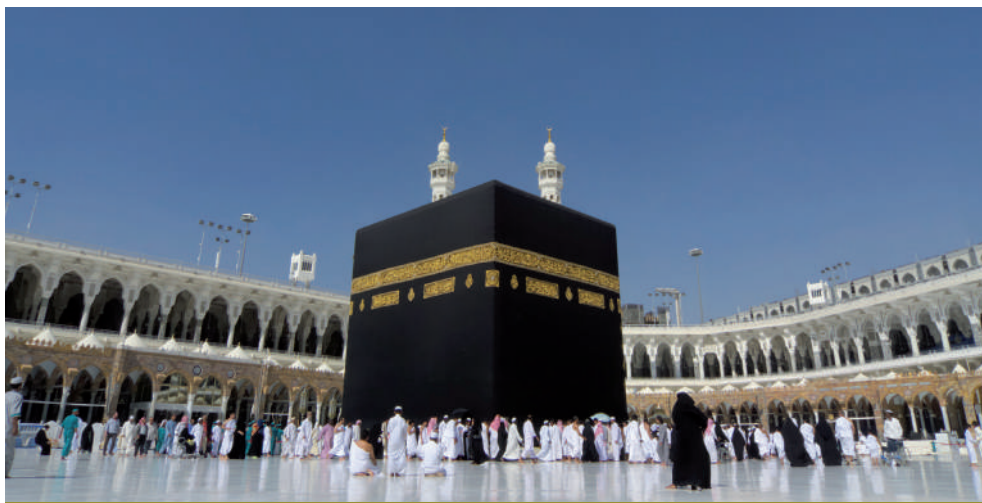
6

Allah ﷻ has made pilgrimage to the Sacred House obligatory upon all those who are able to do so

Abraham ؑ proclaimed pilgrimage to the people and they came to perform it from distant places. According to a Prophetic tradition, all the prophets performed *hajj* to the Sacred House. Regarding Allah's command to

Abraham ؑ in this respect, the Qur'an states, "Announce *hajj* to mankind. They will come to you on foot and on every sort of lean animal, coming by every distant road." (*Soorat Al-Hajj*, 22:27)





> Walking around the Ka'bah (*tawaaf*) seven times is one of the 'pillars' of *hajj* and 'umrah.

> The Meaning of *Hajj*

Hajj is the religious journey undertaken to the Sacred Mosque in Makkah and some of the surrounding are as with the intention of performing the pilgrimage rituals. This journey involves a series of activities taught by the Prophet ﷺ, which include, among other things, assuming the condition of ritual purity (*ihraam*), walking seven times around the Ka'bah, walking seven times between the hills of As-Safaa and Al-Marwah, staying in the Plain of 'Arafah and throwing pebbles at the stone pillars in Mina.

Indeed, *Hajj* provides pilgrims with huge benefits, including, among other things, declaration of the oneness of Allah, immense forgiveness, getting to know one another and learning the rulings of Islam.

The *hajj* rites are usually performed between the eighth and thirteenth of *Dhul-Hijjah*, the twelfth month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

Who must perform it?

For a Muslim to perform *Hajj*, he has to be legally accountable for his actions (*mukallaf*) and able to do so. Legal accountability (*takleef*) means he has to be mature and sane.

What does ability mean?

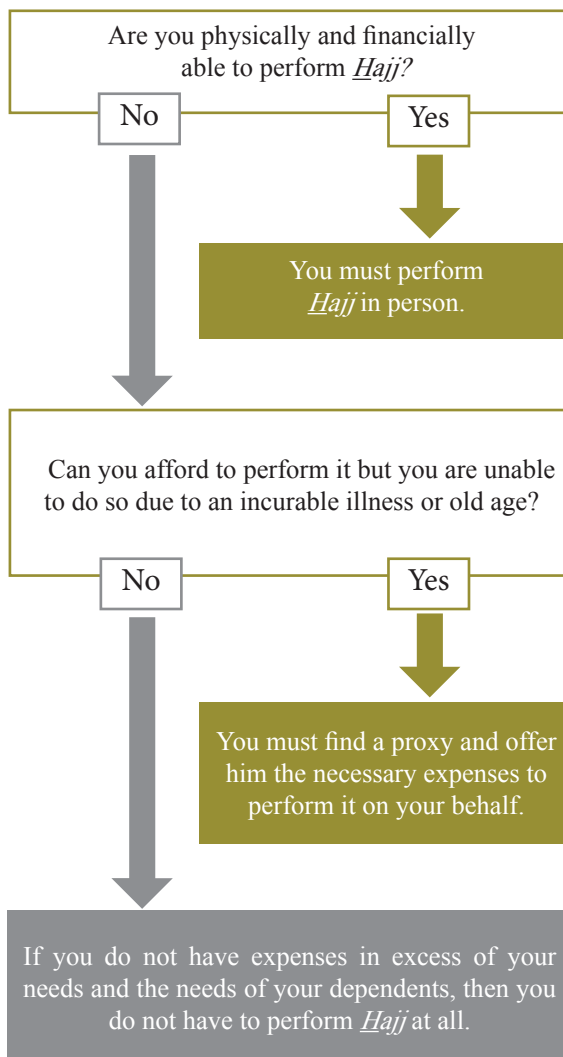
Ability here involves the ability to undertake the journey to the Sacred Mosque through legitimate means and to perform the *Hajj* rites without undergoing unusually strenuous hardships and without risking personal safety and property. This also means that the expenses the pilgrim requires for *Hajj* must be in excess of his needs and the needs of his dependents.

>The Ability to Perform Hajj: Different Circumstances

- 1 **The ability to perform Hajj in person:** This ability allows a Muslim to undertake the journey to the Sacred House without undergoing unusually strenuous hardships while having sufficient means to do so. He must, in this case, perform it in person.

- 2 **The financial ability to authorise someone else to perform Hajj on one's behalf:** This applies to a Muslim who is unable to perform Hajj in person due to illness or old age but who has the means to authorise someone else to perform it on his behalf. He must, in this case, offer the proxy the necessary expenses to perform it on his behalf.

- 3 **Lack of ability to perform Hajj in person or by proxy:** A person who cannot possibly do so is exempt from performing Hajj altogether. To illustrate, a person who does not have expenses in excess of his needs and the needs of his dependents with which he can perform Hajj does not have to perform it at all. Nor is he required to raise or collect money in order to perform it. However, he must perform it as soon as he becomes physically and financially able to do so.



> A Woman Needs a Mahram as a Companion to Perform Hajj

For a woman to perform *Hajj*, she has to be with her husband or any of her male relatives whom she is not permitted to marry because of their close blood relationship (*mahram*), such as her father, grandfather, sons, grandsons, brothers, nephews and uncles. (See page 207)

However, if a woman performs *Hajj* without a *mahram* in such a way that she is not exposed to any danger whatsoever, her *Hajj* is valid and would certainly suffice.

> Virtues of Hajj

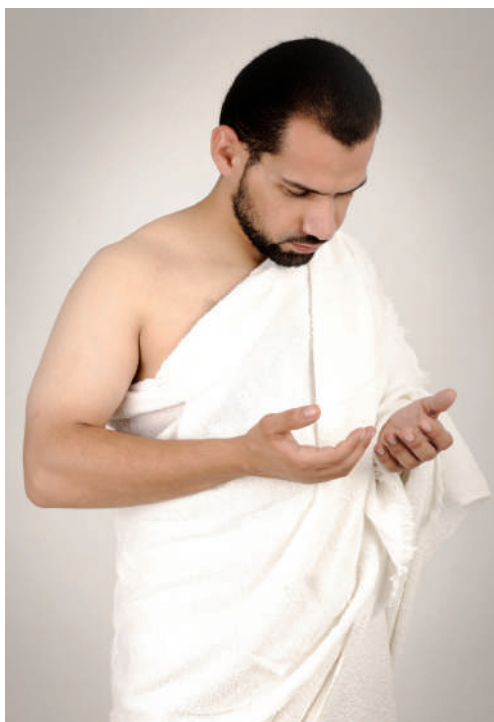
Performing *Hajj* has numerous virtues including the following:

- 1 It is one of the best deeds in the sight of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ was once asked, “What is the best deed?” He replied, “Belief in Allah and His Messenger.” He was then asked, “What next?” “Fighting in the way of Allah,” he replied. He was further asked, “What next?” He replied, “*Hajj* that is performed correctly and is accepted by Allah.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 1447; *Saheeh Muslim*: 83)
- 2 It is a season of great forgiveness. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever performs the pilgrimage for Allah’s sake, avoids intimate relations [with his wife], does not fight with anyone nor abuse anyone, he will return home free from sins like the day his mother gave birth to him.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 1449; *Saheeh Muslim*: 1350)
- 3 It provides a great opportunity to be saved from the hellfire. The Prophet ﷺ said, “There is no day on which Allah frees people from the Fire as He does on the Day of ‘Arafah.” (*Saheeh Muslim*: 1348)
- 4 The reward for it is Paradise, as evidenced by the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: “There is no reward for a *Hajj* that is preformed correctly and is accepted by Allah except Paradise.” (*Saheeh Muslim*: 1349)

However, these and other merits will be enjoyed only by those who perform it solely for the sake of Allah and follow in the footsteps of the Prophet ﷺ.

> The Ultimate Goals of Hajj

Hajj has numerous goals and objectives. After instructing pilgrims about what to do regarding the sacrificial animal they have to slaughter to seek closeness to Allah, Allah ﷻ states, “Their flesh and blood does not reach Allah: it is your piety that reaches Him.” (Soorat Al-Hajj, 22:37) The Prophet ﷺ also said in this connection, “Going round the Ka’bah, running between the hills of As-Safaa and Al-Marwah and the stoning of the pillars are only meant for the remembrance of Allah.” (Sunan Abu Daawood: 1888)



> A person who intends to perform Hajj or ‘umrah must learn about the Islamic rulings relating to them.

These goals and objectives include the following:

1 A demonstration of total submission and humility to Allah

This is realised when pilgrims forsake all forms of luxury and adornment and wear simple seamless garments before assuming the condition of ritual purity (ihraam), showing their total need and dependence on their Lord and ridding themselves of all worldly concerns and pursuits that may otherwise distract them from demonstrating total devotion to Him, which is bound to invite His mercy and forgiveness. This demonstration of total submission becomes all the more vivid on the Day of ‘Arafah when they stand before their Lord, in a state of awe and reverence, giving thanks to Him for His countless blessings and seeking His forgiveness for their slips and failings.

2 A demonstration of gratefulness to Allah

Gratefulness to Allah for performing hajj is shown for both the money and good health Allah ﷻ has provided, which are amongst the greatest worldly blessings Allah has bestowed on man. When a Muslim performs Hajj, he actually demonstrates gratefulness to Allah for these two blessings by undergoing great physical hardships and spending his money to seek closeness to Allah, in total obedience to Him. Showing gratefulness is a duty that is not only established and affirmed by reasoning but also ordained by divine law.

3 A wholesome demonstration of the universality of Islam

Muslims from the four corners of the world gather in the holy land in response to the call of Allah. They get to know one another, and the barriers of race, colour, language and social class are set aside in this fraternity of faith that unites all Muslims in the largest, annual human gathering in which they help one another in furthering virtue and God-consciousness.

4 It is a reminder of the Day of Judgement

Hajj reminds those who perform it, of the Day of Resurrection when all human beings will stand equal before Allah for the final judgement. When pilgrims stand in the plain of 'Arafah, after assuming the state of ritual purity (*ihraam*) by replacing their ordinary clothes with simple garments and expressing their readiness to serve Allah, and perceive the countless multitudes of

pilgrims, all dressed in what looks like shrouds, this will open their eyes to what they will go through after death and will prompt them to strive harder in preparation for the Hereafter.

5 It is a demonstration of true worship of Allah alone

This is realised through the pilgrims' recitation of the *talbiyah*: *Labbayk-Allaahumma labbayk, labbayka laa shareeka laka labbayk, innal-hamda wanni'mata laka wal-mulk, laa shareeka lak* (Here I am at Your service O Allah, here I am. Here I am at Your service. You have no partners. Yours alone is all praise and all bounty, and Yours alone is the sovereignty. You have no partners." Describing *talbiyah* Prophet ﷺ one of the Prophet's companions once referred to them as words of "pure monotheism". (*Saheeh Muslim*: 1218) Indeed, pure monotheism is apparent in all the *Hajj* rites, words and deeds without exception.

> A person who performs *Hajj* or *'umrah* must walk seven times between the hills of As-Safaa and Al-Marwah.

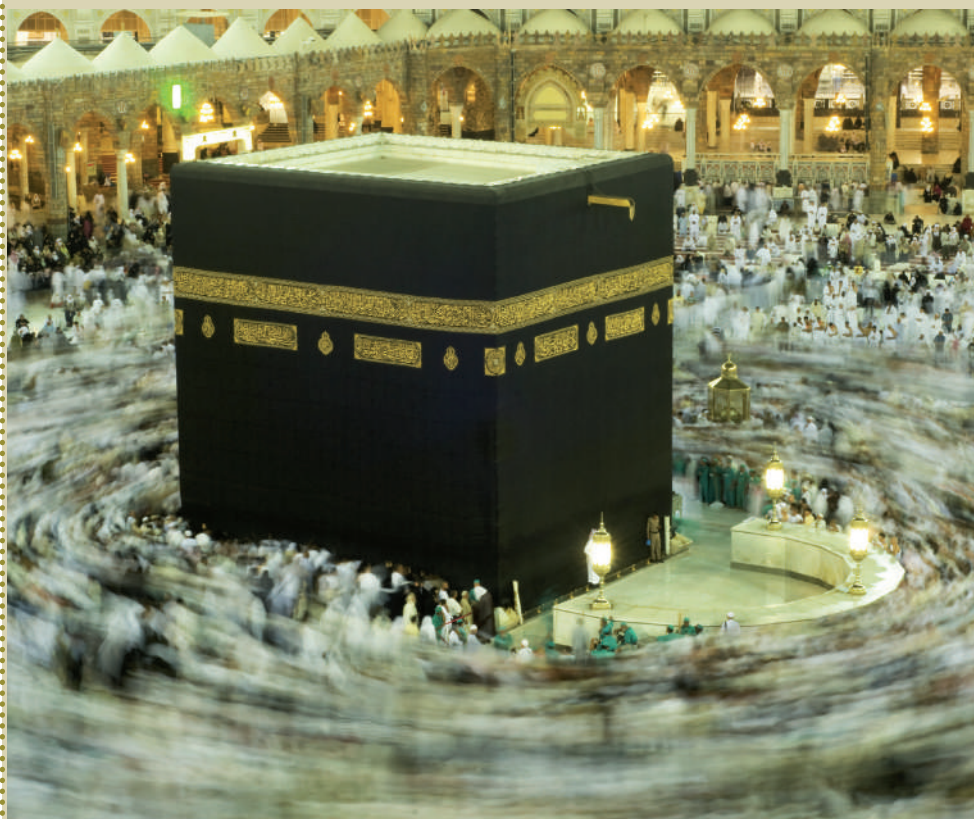


> ‘Umrah

‘Umrah, or minor pilgrimage (*Hajj* being the major pilgrimage), is an act of worship which consists of ritual practices that are confined to the Sacred Mosque area only, namely entering the sacred state of purity (*ihraam*), walking seven times round the Ka’bah, walking seven times between the hills of As-Safaa and Al-Marwah, and then having one’s head shaved off or one’s hair cut short.

The Islamic ruling regarding ‘Umrah: It is obligatory for those who can afford it once in their lifetime and it is recommended to perform it again and again.

Its time: It may be undertaken anytime throughout the year, but performing it during the month of *Ramadaan* has a special merit, as the Prophet ﷺ states, “Performing ‘Umrah during the month of *Ramadaan* is equal to performing *Hajj* (pilgrimage) in merit and excellence.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 3186; *Saheeh Muslim*: 520)



> Muslims are required to perform ‘Umrah once in their lifetime if they are able to do so.

The Festival of Sacrifice ('Eed-ul-Adhāa)

The Festival of Sacrifice ('Eed-ul-Adhāa), which is celebrated on the tenth day of the lunar month of *Dhul-Hijjah*, the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar, has numerous merits including the following:

- 1 It is one of the best days of the year, being amongst the first ten days of the lunar month of *Dhul-Hijjah*, as the Prophet ﷺ said, "There are no days in which good deeds are dearer to Allah than these ten days [of *Dhul-Hijjah*]." His companions enquired, "Not even *jihaad* in the way of Allah?" He replied, "Not even *jihaad* in the way of Allah, except for someone who goes out for *jihaad*, sacrificing both his life and property, and returns with neither of them." (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 926; *Sunan At-Tirmidhee*: 757)
- 2 It is "the day of the greater pilgrimage" in which the greatest *Hajj* rites are carried out, the foremost and most exalted of which are walking round the Ka'bah (*tawaaf*), slaughtering sacrificial animals and throwing pebbles at the largest pillar in Mina, known as *Jamrat-ul-'Aqabah*.

What Should Be Done On 'Eed Day?

On this day, a Muslim who is not performing *hajj* engages in the same activities he normally does on the Festival of Fast Breaking ('*Eed-ul-Fitr*), with the exception of paying *Zakaat-ul-Fitr*, which applies only to '*Eed-ul-Fitr*.

A distinctive feature of '*Eed-ul-Adhāa* is the slaughtering of a sacrificial animal, which is considered to be a highly recommended act of worship.

***Ud-hiyah*, or sacrificial animal**, refers to any of the pastoral animals (sheep, cows or camels) that are slaughtered during the Festival of Sacrifice ('*Eed-ul-Adhāa*) with the intention of seeking closeness to Allah. The time for offering a sacrifice begins after the '*Eed-ul-Adhāa* prayer and lasts until the sunset of the 13th day of *Dhul-Hijjah*. As the Qur'an states, "Pray to your Lord and sacrifice to Him alone." (*Soorat Al-Kawthar*, 108:2) Prayer mentioned here has been interpreted to mean the '*Eed-ul-Adhāa* prayer and sacrifice has been interpreted to refer to *ud-hiyah*, or the sacrificial animal.

Islamic ruling regarding *ud-hiyah*:

Slaughtering a sacrificial animal during the Festival of Sacrifice ('*Eed-ul-Adhāa*) is a practice which the Prophet ﷺ regularly did and encouraged (*sunnah mu'akkadah*) for those who can afford to do so. The head of the household may offer a sacrifice for himself and on behalf of his dependents.

A Muslim who intends to offer a sacrifice must refrain from cutting his hair, clipping his nails or picking his skin from the first day of *Dhul-Hijjah* until he slaughters the sacrificial animal on the 10th of *Dhul-Hijjah*.

The Conditions that the Sacrificial Animal Must Satisfy

1 It is not lawful to offer a sacrifice of any animal or bird except pastoral animals, namely sheep, cows or camels.

One sheep or goat would suffice for a man and his household, and seven different households may share a cow or a camel.

2 The sacrificial animal must be of the right age. A sheep must be at least six months, a goat one year old, a cow two years old, and a camel five years old.

3 It should be free from apparent defects, because the Prophet ﷺ said, “There are four [types of animals] that will not do for sacrifice: a one-eyed or blind animal whose defect is obvious, a sick animal whose

sickness is obvious, a lame animal whose lameness is obvious and an emaciated animal that has no marrow in its bones.” (*Sunan An-Nasaa’ee*: 4371; *Sunan At-Tirmidhee*, 1497)

What Should Be Done with the Sacrificial Animal?

- It is forbidden to sell any part of the sacrificial animal.
- It is recommended to divide it into three parts: one third for eating, one third to be given as gifts and one third to be given in charity to the poor and the needy.
- It is permissible to authorise someone to slaughter a sacrificial animal on one’s behalf, such as trustworthy charitable societies that undertake the slaughter of sacrificial animals and distribute them to the needy.



> Islam stipulates that sacrificial animals must be free from defects.

Visiting Madeenah

Madeenah is the city to which Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ emigrated, leaving his native city of Makkah after he had suffered at the hands of the polytheists there.

Upon reaching Madeenah, the Prophet ﷺ set about constructing his mosque which became a major centre of knowledge and served to call people to Islam and teach them its lofty principles.

It is highly recommended to visit the Prophet's Mosque in Madeenah during the *Hajj* season or any other time of the year.

It is worth noting, however, that visiting the Prophet's Mosque has nothing to do with the *Hajj* rituals and is not confined to any particular time.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "There are only three mosques to which you should embark on a journey: the Sacred Mosque [in Makkah], this mosque of mine [in Madeenah] and Al-Aqṣaa Mosque [in Jerusalem]." (*Saḥeeḥ Al-Bukhaaree*: 1139; *Saḥeeḥ Muslim*: 1397; *Sunan Abu Daawood*: 2033)

He also said on a different occasion, "One prayer in my mosque is better than one thousand prayers in any other mosque except in the Sacred Mosque [in Makkah]." (*Saḥeeḥ Al-Bukhaaree*: 1133; *Saḥeeḥ Muslim*: 1394)



Places in Madeenah that Are Worth Visiting

A Muslim who visits Madeenah must intend to visit the Prophet's Mosque there and offer prayers in it. He may also visit other places including the following:

1 The heart of the Prophet's Mosque houses a very special but small area known as *ar-Rawḍah ash-Shareefah* (Literally, 'the noble garden'), which extends from the Prophet's tomb, where one of his rooms used to be, to his pulpit. Offering prayers in this area has great merits, as the Prophet ﷺ said, "Between my house and my pulpit lies a garden from the gardens of Paradise." (*Saḥeeḥ Al-Bukhaaree*: 1137; *Saḥeeḥ Muslim*: 1390)

2 Sending greetings of peace to Allah's Messenger ﷺ: One should stand in front of the grave of the Prophet ﷺ, facing the grave with one's back to the *qiblah* and say, with all graciousness and in a quiet voice: *Assalaamu 'alayka yaa rasoolallaahi wa rahmatullaahi wa barakaatuhu. Ash-hadu annaka qad ballaght-ar-risaalata, wa addayt-al-amaanata, wa nasaht-al-ummata, wa jaahadta fillaahi haqqa jihaadih, fa jazaak-Allaahu 'an*

ummatika afdala maa jazaa nabiyyan 'an ummatih (May Allah's peace, blessings and mercy be upon you, O Messenger of Allah. I bear witness that you have conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, sincerely advised the Muslim community and striven hard for the sake of Allah as is His due. May Allah reward you on our behalf better than the reward that any prophet received on behalf of his community).

The Prophet ﷺ said in this respect, "No one sends greetings of peace upon me but Allah returns my soul to me so that I may return his greetings." (*Sunan Abu Daawood*: 2041)

One then takes one step to the right and sends greetings of peace to Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ, the Prophet's successor and the best of all his companions.

Then one takes one further step to the right and sends greetings of peace to 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ, the second rightly-guided caliph and the best of all the Prophet's companions after Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ.

It is worth noting here that despite the fact Allah's Messenger ﷺ is the best of all mankind, he can do neither harm nor good and thus one must not invoke him or seek his help. Instead, one must invoke Allah and direct all forms of worship to Him alone.

3

Visiting Qubaa' Mosque: Qubaa' Mosque is the first mosque built in Islam; indeed, it was built even before the Prophet ﷺ built his own mosque in Madeenah. Pilgrims visiting Madeenah are highly recommended to visit it, as was the practice of the Prophet ﷺ who once

said "Whoever makes ablutions (*wudoo'*) at home and then goes to Qubaa' Mosque and prays in it, he will have a reward like that of performing *'umrah*." (*Sunan Ibn Maajah*: 1412)



> A pilgrim visiting Madeenah is highly recommended to visit *Qubaa'* Mosque and pray in it, as was the practice of the Prophet ﷺ.