



Abrahamic Hajj Rituals and the Elevation of the Position of Muslims in the World

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Hajj rituals are one of the biggest acts of worship in the world. In this great congregation, Muslims from all over the world gather and perform certain rituals and practices. This is done by the order of God, who says in the Holy Qur'an:

وَلِلّٰهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ
«اَسْتَطَاعَ اِلَيْهِ سَبِيْلًا» (And it is the duty of mankind toward Allah to make pilgrimage to the House—for those who can afford the journey to it..., 3:97)

The presence of Muslims from all over the Islamic states in the Land of Revelation and the performance of the Abrahamic Hajj rites, along with worshipping and gaining enlightenment and spirituality and the hereafter reward, has many worldly benefits for Muslims.

وَاَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا
عَلٰى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِيَنَّ مِنْ كُلِّ فِجٍّ عَمِيقٍ،

«لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ» (And proclaim the Hajj to all the people: they will come to you on foot and on lean camels, coming from distant places..., 22:27-28)

One of the various benefits of Hajj, which is vitally important for Muslims, is its political dimension. In today's world, Muslims are present as one of the largest human groups consisting of dozens of countries with more than one billion people. It is natural that Muslims, with this huge population and having many natural facilities, along with benefiting from the life-giving teachings of Islam, seek to gain a worthy place in today's world. Elevating the position of Muslims in today's world is very necessary and it is necessary to use the many levers available in it. And Hajj is one of these levers. And Hajj is one of these levers. Hajj rites can improve the

position of Muslims in the world in various ways. Here are some of the most important ones.

1. Hajj and strengthening social solidarity

Social solidarity and cohesion are the feeling of community members' integration, friendly and affectionate social relations, and group interactions based on common and coherent values (Niyazi, 2007, P. 6). It is obvious that the consistency of any society and its movement towards excellence depends on this factor. Among other things, the Islamic nation is naturally exposed to divisions and separations due to the existence of ethnicities, races, geographical regions, cultures, habits, and tastes. The growth of these differences breaks the greatness of the Islamic nation. Meanwhile, Hajj rituals can play a prominent role in strengthening the cohe-



sion of Islamic society.

Religious rituals make a community the center of unity, and it can extend its jurisdiction to other communities and become a wider and more powerful territory. Based on this, Hajj can heal natural, artificial, and imposed separations by creating moral agreements and requirements with a sense of harmony and trust. Imam Ali (AS) in his words, while expressing the philosophy of some of the Islamic regulations, says about Hajj: «فَرَضَ اللَّهُ: تَعَالَى... وَ الْحَجَّ تَقْوِيَةً لِلدِّينِ», which means the philosophy of Hajj is to strengthen religion. It means that with the gathering of Hajj,

the relations of Muslims become stronger and the faith of Muslims becomes stronger, and by this means, Islam becomes stronger. (Motahhari, 2012, Vol. 25, P. 48). The main purpose of the enactment of Hajj is that Muslims gather under the banner of the Kaaba as a single people and a single nation with the same determination (Ibid., P. 49).

The crowd present at the Hajj ceremony, not only may not have the same thoughts and tastes, they even have different beliefs in some cases, but paying attention to the transcendental essence and moving in the path of divine worship, they move on a single

path and towards a single goal.

2-Hajj and strengthening social dynamics

Human societies can be divided into two separate categories: static society and dynamic society. It is a dynamic society that is constantly changing and evolving; Social mobility and class mobility are relatively easily realized in it; Critical thinking, innovation, and even deviation from social norms are abundant; New ideas and young people are considered the center of social activity, and the ever-changing life of society makes everyone struggle (Ogburn and Nimkoff, 1978). Dynamic societies have

good growth and development compared to static societies. In Islamic societies, Hajj can play a positive role in the social dynamics of Islamic society in various ways:

A. From the moment people register for Hajj to the time they return home after performing Hajj, there is a wave of activity and effort. It is not only the pilgrims who are involved in this pilgrimage but a large part of the society is involved in it. In Iran, the Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization, pilgrimage and tourism companies, caravan managers, ground and air transport companies, airports and passenger terminals, and many others deal with Hajj. Also, markets, hotels, clothing manufacturers, etc., family members and relatives, and friends of pilgrims are involved in this spiritual journey. It can be seen that the annual Hajj entails the dynamism and effort of a large part of Islamic society.

B. The government organizing Hajj and Hajj organizations of Islamic countries are always trying to organize Hajj better than in the past and in the best way. Therefore, every year, they formulate new plans and implement new programs. Anyone who revisits Hajj after a few years will see the change and improvement in the quality of its management and implementation.

C. Hajj practices and rituals are full of effort and activ-

ity. From the beginning of the journey to the land of revelation to the presence in the Miqat for Ihram, moving to Mecca and Masjid al-Haram, Tawaf, Sa'y, Wuquf, Rami, sacrifice, etc., all are associated with activity and dynamics. Dynamics and movement are mixed with the spirit of Hajj and there is no meaning in standing still. In addition, each of the Hajj rites contains secrets and concepts, the accuracy of which causes the dynamics of the minds and souls of the pilgrims.

D. Hajj makes people move and dynamic. People's understanding of servitude, efforts for the hereafter, and efforts to enrich the world for the happiness of people in this world and the hereafter, are all affected by performing Hajj.

3-Hajj and the representation and confirmation of the collective identity of the people

In sociological terms, identity is a set of important social, cultural, psychological, biological, and historical features and characteristics, which applies to the members of a group in a similar way and talks about their unity or similarity, and distinguishes them from other groups and it differentiates the people belonging to them (Altaei, 2017, P. 139). As individuals have their own identities, groups, and communities also have their

own identity, which is interpreted as "collective identity".

In Islamic society, common religious beliefs and practices have given Muslims a special identity and distinguished them from other identities. Hajj can be mentioned among those common religious practices. One of the favorite issues of sociologists of religion about Hajj is: How do people under the influence of Hajj renew their identity and personality? (Haidari, 2014, P. 33).

According to experts, when people with different characteristics but with common feelings come together, this gathering preserves and stabilizes their collective identity. Religious rituals that create a collective identity can maintain, expand and strengthen this identity (Hamilton, 2009).

4-Hajj and strengthening self-confidence and self-esteem of Muslims

Hajj is an extract and example of Islamic society all over the world, and in a way, it is the crystallization of Islamic society in one location. Hajj is the manifestation of the greatness of Islam and the manifestation of the power and capability of Muslims on the path of achieving honor in the world. The presence of millions of Muslims from all corners of the earth in the Hajj rituals and their huge gatherings in Mecca, Masjid al-Haram, and Mawaqif, along

with the awareness of the global view of Islam, has the capacity to make them aware of their power and status; To give them self-confidence in overcoming every demonic power and to give them the self-belief that they are able to achieve the honor and pride that God has promised them in the shadow of unity and solidarity and using the talents and facilities of Islamic countries and societies. to obtain in this way, God also helps them because:

فَإِنَّ يَدَ اللَّهِ مَعَ [عَلَى] الْجَمَاعَةِ (Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 127) Indeed, God's [helping] hand is with (on) the congregation [of believers].

In fact, when pilgrims of different nationalities, white and black, and with different languages, and social customs, gather in one place and at the same time and with a single dress, and they all perform customs together in a certain way. They do it every year, this can raise the morale of the Ummah to realize the lofty ideals of Islam and face oppression, disbelief, colonialism, and tyranny. The fact that the Almighty God has ordered the gathering of all Muslims at this point, in a set of certain days is so that Muslim people can find themselves next to each other; And in a wider dimension, as a result of the gathering of Muslim nations, the feeling of honor and greatness will prevail over everyone (Jami of the Authors, 1393, p. 74). With the increase in the self-esteem of Muslims in the shadow of the great rituals of Hajj, their position in the world is also improved.

