

The Importance of Hajj from the Viewpoint of the Holy Qur'an, the Messenger of Allah, and the Infallible Imams ^(AS)

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The aim of this article is to examine and analyze the importance of Hajj from the viewpoint of the Holy Qur'an and hadiths.

A) The Holy Qur'an and Hajj

There are a number of verses in the Holy Qur'an, which reflect upon the loft status of Hajj that need to be taken into consideration,

1- The Role of Hajj in Communicating the Divine Message

Unlike other divine obligations for which Almighty

God directly addresses His servant, in the case of Hajj, Allah had commanded Prophet Ibrahim (AS) to convey the message to people and invite them to perform the Hajj pilgrimage. In the words of the Holy Qur'an: "And proclaim the Hajj to all the people: they will come to you on foot and on lean camels (vehicles), coming from distant places" (Surah Al-Hajj, Verse 27).

2- Hajj and Muslims in General

One of the differences of Hajj with other religious duties is the way it is expressed in the Qur'an. In the case of other acts of worship, the Holy Quran has addressed the believers in the form of an imperative sentence. For instance: "And maintain the prayer/ Salat" (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 43). Or it has been expressed in the form of a blessing "for the prayer is indeed a timed prescription for the faithful" (Surah Al-Nisa', Verse 103). Similarly, as regards the obligation of fasting the Holy Qur'an has addressed Muslims with the quality of faith "O you who have faith! Prescribed for you is fasting as it was prescribed for those who were before you, so that you may be God-wary" (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 183). However, in the case of Hajj Muslims have been addressed in General "And it is the duty of mankind toward Allah to make pilgrimage to the House/Ka'ba" (Surah Aal-e Imran, Verse 97). The reason for these different ways of addressing Muslims indicates the secret that exists in Hajj. In the case of every other act of worship, if a person performs his/her duty with the same quality that he/she has been invited to do, he/she has fulfilled the duty. However, in the case of Hajj all people (believers) are invited to perform it. Such a characteristic cannot be found in the case of other obligations than Hajj. And it is for this reason that Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS) has said: "A dead person who is in the grave wishes that he had performed Hajj by foregoing the whole world and whatever was in it for him" (See Man la Yahduruh al-Faqih, Vol. 2, P. 226).

3- Hajj and History

The Holy Qur'an has also referred to Hajj as a means for measuring the length of years, the appointment. In narrating the story of the interaction between Prophet Moses and Prophet Shu'ayb (AS) the Qur'an has stated: "He (Shu'ayb) said, Indeed I desire to marry you to one of these two daughters of mine, on condition that you hire yourself to me for eight Hajj (years) but if you complete ten, it will be out of your own free will." (Surah I-Qasas, Verse, 27).

4- Hajj and Determination of the Level of Faith

As a divine duty performing Hajj has been made

obligatory and those who purposefully abandon it have been referred to as infidels. In the words of the Holy Qur'an: "pilgrimage to the House is incumbent upon men for the sake of Allah, (upon) everyone who is able to undertake the journey to it; and whoever disbelieves, then surely Allah is Self-sufficient, above any need of the worlds" (Surah Aal-e Imran, Verse 97)

5- Hajj and Its Material and Spiritual Effects

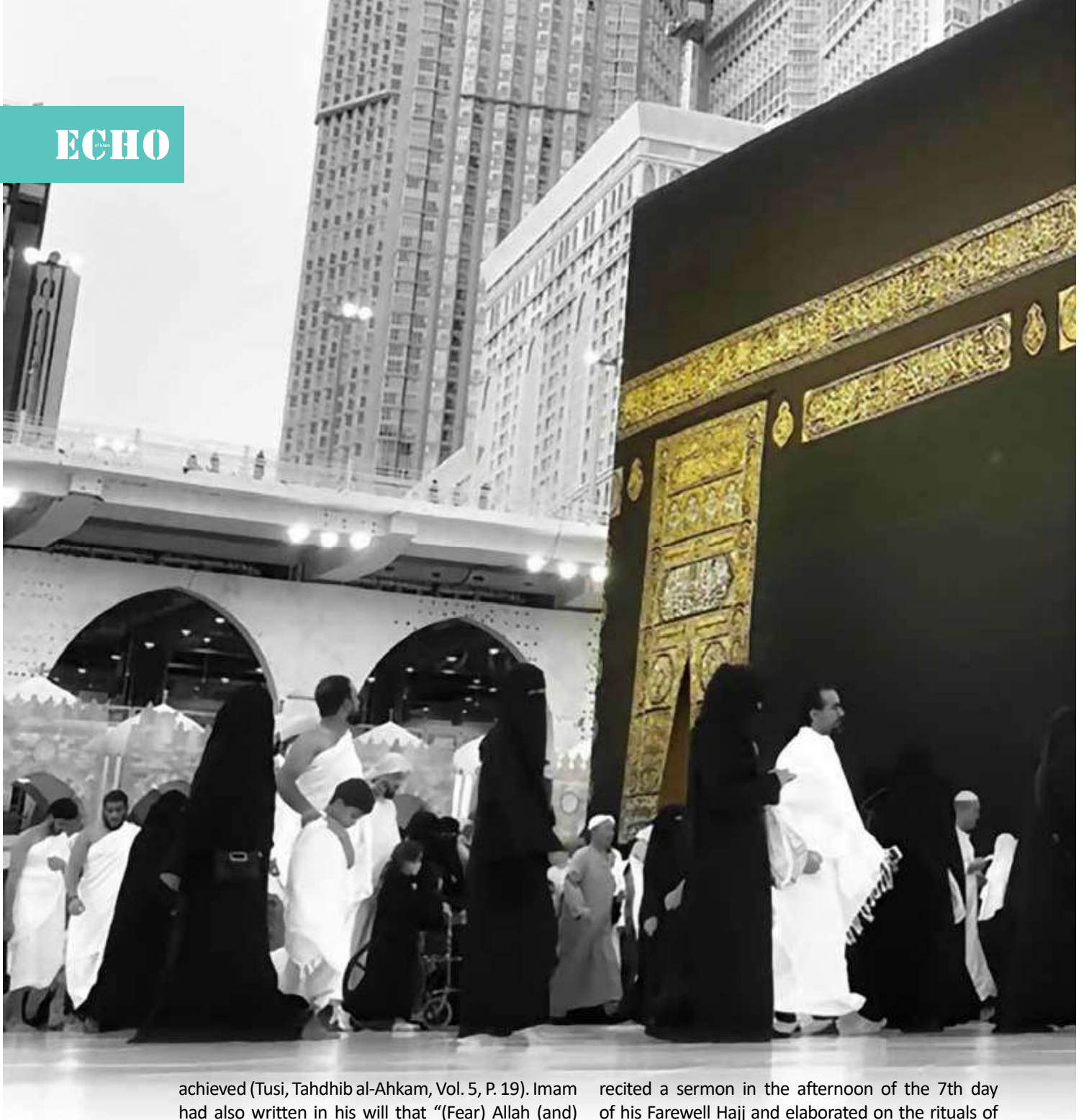
Hajj is an opportunity to witness and realize the material and spiritual benefits of Islam. The Holy Qur'an has elaborated on this aspect of Hajj in these words: "that they may witness the benefits for them, and mention Allah's Name during the known days over the livestock He has provided them." (Surah Al-Hajj, Verse 28). In the narrations quoted from the infallible Imams about this verse, it has been said that the verse refers to the material and spiritual benefits of Hajj.

B) Hajj from the Viewpoint of the Messenger of Allah, and the Infallible Imams (AS)

Hajj has been the focus of attention of the Messenger of Allah and the infallible Imams from his household from several aspects'

1- Performing of Hajj

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and the infallible Imams from his household were very particular about Hajj and had performed it several times. The Messenger of Allah had performed 20 Hajj pilgrimage before he migrated to Median, and on pilgrimage after that (See Al-Kafi, Vol. 4, P. 252). Imam Ali, Imam Hasan, and Imam Husain (AS), too, performed Hajj a number of times. In some narrations, more than 25 Hajj pilgrimages have been mentioned for Imam Hasan and Imam Hussain (Ibn Shahrashub, Manaqib Aal-e Ali, Vol. 4, P. 69; Also Ibn al-Maghazili, Al-Manaqib, P. 71). They also encouraged people to perform Hajj pilgrimage. It has been quoted that the Messenger of Allah told a person who had missed the Farewell Pilgrimage of the Prophet: If you had gold equal to the weight of Mount Abu Qubais and you would distribute it in the way of God, even then you would not achieve what (reward) a pilgrim of this Hajj has



achieved (Tusi, Tahdhib al-Ahkam, Vol. 5, P. 19). Imam had also written in his will that “(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of your Lord’s House (Ka’ba). Do not forsake it so long as you live, because if it is abandoned you will not be spared” (See Al-Kafi, Vol. 5, P. 51).

2- Teaching Hajj Rituals

The Messenger of God and the infallible Imams gave a lot of importance to teaching the rules concerning the rituals of Hajj. The Messenger of God

recited a sermon in the afternoon of the 7th day of his Farewell Hajj and elaborated on the rituals of Hajj and after completing ‘Sa’y’ he climbed a hill in Marvah, addressed the pilgrims and delivered Allah’s command on the performance of Hajj and Umrah. It has been recorded that someone by the name of Su-raqa ibn Malik asked the Messenger of Allah if what the Prophet Had said only applied to that year’s Hajj or if it was forever. And the Prophet confirmed that was an everlasting command (Al-Kafi, Vol. 4, P. 246.

Nu’mān ibn Thābit, commonly known as Abu



Ḥanifa has been quoted stating: “Had it not been for Ja’far ibn Muhammad (i.e., Imam Ja’far Sadiq) people would not have understood the Hajj rituals (See *Man la Yahduruh al-Faqih*, Vol. 2, P. 519).

3- Explaining the Secrets and Philosophy of Hajj

One of the most important aspects of Hajj is the reason behind the obligation of Hajj pilgrimage, which can only be explained by the Messenger of God (PBUH) and the infallible Imams who are in

connection with the source of divine revelation. The Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (AS) has in some of his sermons pointed to the philosophy of Ka’ba being located in a dry land and has referred to it as a means of measuring the level of people’s faith (See *Nahj al-Balagha*, Sermons 1 and 192). Imam Sajjad and Imam Sadiq, too, had elaborated on the secrets of Hajj from the time of Ihram to the end for some of their companions (See *Mustadrak al-Wasa’il*, Vol. 10, P. 166 and *Misbah al-Shari’ah*, P. 47).