



The Abrahamic Hajj and the Global Future Paradigm

By: Dr. Mahmoud Vaezi (University of Tehran)

In the doctrine of Islam Hajj is one of the most comprehensive and the most profound rituals that has been designed and arranged very precisely. All acts and rituals during the Hajj period, and even before and after it, including the obligatory, recommended, prohibited, and reprehensible practices, are nothing but exalted ethical and human issues.



As the book of peace , the book of dialogue , the book of ethical and human virtues , and the book of rationality the Holy Qur'an is the only comprehensive text by adhering to the teachings of which all humans from any race or ethnic group can peacefully coexist and have mutual respect with each other.

Abrahamic Haj is not merely a simple ritual or an act of worship , but it is the most significant and comprehensive congregation that has the unique capacity to generate the "fourth global wave" as an evolutionary program for humanity and a model for all intellect-oriented humans.

In his book "The Third Wave", Alvin Toffler names the first wave as the agricultural wave, the second global wave as the industrial wave, and the third one as the age of electronics. He believes the civilization of the new age will deconstruction and break down the regular and old values and traditions in all sectors of society, which encompass both the family and the governance .

However, reviewing different dimensions of global civilizations and the conditions of the age, the present futurist scholars draw a different future of the humanity and portray the fourth wave in another way. For instance, Dr. Sohail Inayatullah, one of the well-known researchers at world level has, in an article entitled, "Times Have Changed", writ-

ten: "Recently, The Westpac Bank has adopted a new approach toward traditional standards by way of which progress is measured by three standards: Welfare, Social justice, and Environment...Organizations now believe that apart from interests, there have other obligations, which include social justice and social measures. They also believe that they have responsibility towards the sustainable development of the earth. In other words, the environmental issues are not issues outside the organizations but they have a detrimental role in the success of an organization.

He further adds, "The triple bottom line movement has started, which is not due to the generosity of companies and institutions but it is due to the change in the beneficiaries. This means that the shareholders are not the only beneficiaries but the managers, staffs and area beyond the organization such as environment have effective roles and they need to be noticed as well.

"Concurrent with the move of countries towards the post-modern economy, the significance of other issues increase. One of these issues is spirituality, a spirituality that is not related to the spiritual affairs and feudal religions but is related to the meaning of life and full happiness or a fortune beyond pain and pleasure."

Furthermore, he puts forth the question: "Can the spirituality be basically the fourth wave? And in response, he refers to two important points:

Firstly, we should respond to this question: Is it possible to measure an unmeasurable issue? In a detailed discussion, he says: I remember the words of the master of spirituality, (P.R. Sarhur) on the nature of the Almighty God well and believe that it is not possible to express these vocabularies through language. That is to say, it is not possible to measure it .

The second point is put forth by him through this question: Has the issue of spirituality an attraction and can it attract the views towards itself? He then responds that there are some evidences for it.

For example, as a personal experience on holding various workshops in Croatia, Pakistan, Malaysia, Australia, Thailand and Germany, Taiwan, New Zea-

land and Hawaii, I have found out that the future of spirituality is ideal and attractive. (For further studies, please see: www.metafuture.org).

The general characteristics of this future in the view of Dr. Inayatullah are as follows:

1. Individual spirituality
2. General participation
3. Sustainable ecologic communities
4. Localized technology but not of the type of propellant
5. Economic substitutions from the viewpoint of capitalism
6. Global governance

This matter is observable in details in the article by Dr. Sohail Inayatullah "Spirituality as the Forth Bottom Line"

The noticeable point is that the perspective of spirituality confirms the researches made by Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson. They have documented a new phenomenon and that is the increase of cultural creators. They believe that these individuals will solve the problems of the day by modern changes and challenging the traditional viewpoints.

Anderson even moves further and says that at present about 25% of the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries have accepted the gender local spiritual contribution.

However, they reiterate that the cultural creators do not depend on a specific social or political movement or group but, in fact, they are the representative of a paradigm and a change in values.

There is some information which shows the materialism and objectivism do not lead to happiness. A study which has been made by Dr. Tim Kasser in Knox College shows that the middle aged individuals who focus on money and reputation are more depressed and have a less joy and motivation for life. They mostly display physical symptoms such as headache, and sore throat .

After analysis and review of the materials of Anderson, he refers to an important point that a part of the future challenge is a change in the life model. The existing model includes: being a student, housekeeping, serving to the society and monasticism. However, in a spiritual model, spirituality will be present in all of these stages pervasively. In ad-

dition, the studentship period will never have an end and the lifelong learning will continue in the life of individuals. In addition, the work will be constantly. Serving to the society will be on a daily basis and perpetual. Every day is a day to find a way to serve the others. Thus, taking into consideration the spirituality as the fourth wave, it means to make a change in the infrastructural model of our life.

Another point is that for those individuals who study the macro history of the big models of change, this change is not strange. However, this modernism, progress and dazzling technologies have merely brought about the surface civilization and it is amazing that spirituality, as an emotional and humane element is not seen in this civilization.

The alert is that the new wave of spirituality does not necessarily mean the establishment of a utopia. That is to say if its main indicators and components are not controlled and planned, and if the improper and strict prejudices and also the gender discriminations are not omitted, it will go back to the Middle Ages. The message of the history is important but there is no need to return to the cave dwelling ages.

The last very important point is that it is necessary to take the reminder of Dr. Ashis Nandy seriously who says, "The important point is that there are ways to escape from our perspective and conflicting viewpoints about this subject-matter is seen. Thus, in these areas, we are in need of rival views on spiritual issues, for the fear that the spiritual issues and spirituality do not become ceremonial and neutral .

Therefore, the global future paradigm or in a sense the global modern civilization will take shape upon the pivot of spirituality rather than materialism. What is important is that we should not ignore the rival and should not permit the spirituality to be presented to humanity inappropriately and inefficiently.

Hajj in Islam

The Hajj is an annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, and a mandatory religious duty for Muslims that must be performed at least once in their lifetime by all adult Muslims who are physically and financially capable of undertaking the journey, and can support their family during their absence. It is one of the five pillars of Islam , alongside Shahadah, Salat,

Zakat, and Sawm etc. It is very important that the pilgrim should prepare his life Before Leaving for Hajj.

Hajj Preparations

In a Prophetic Hadith, it is narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) referred to pilgrims who go for Hajj or Umrah as the guests of Allah.

“He called them and they responded; they ask of Him and He will give them,” the Hadith further reads.

“As a guest of The Almighty, then, it is only proper that we come fully prepared to meet the Host in the best of our physical, mental and spiritual states.”

To get succeeded in accomplishing the fifth pillar of Islam and to make this one a lifetime experience for Muslims, it requires both spiritual and physical preparation.

‘Hajj’ is a Must for These Folks

The Muslims who by heart, soul and body can deliver utmost at performing the rites of pilgrimage should follow these thriving conditions.

- He must have control over his mental functioning and must be of sound, mind, and movement.
- Out of what he is doing, he must be mature enough to understand the purpose and significance.
- He must financially afford to bear all Hajj expenses and provide sufficiently to his dependents during his absence.

The Prophet Abraham (AS) in Islam

Muslims trust that the prophet Abraham PBUH was a renowned personality in Islamic history. His exemplary character, bravery, and pious deeds have given him due to fame.

Designated title of Khalilullah - the Arabic term for the friend of Allah. Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) was the forefather to a number of great prophets. This is the reason why he is held in the highest regard and great esteem by a number of revealed religions. All pilgrims during the ceremony of Hajj are struggling against their desires and lust to become the good follower of Khalilullah in monotheism, in worshipping omnipotent Allah, in social moralities and ethics towards others.

Abrahamic Hajj and Comprehensive Standards

Abrahamic Hajj provides a complete way of living through its ethical standards and values provided in the Holy Quran. It has described moral values and ethics in a proper way and has emphasized the Muslims to follow him in order to please the Almighty Allah. The Creator of this world and the eternal one has allowed human beings to choose their living style according to their will. The reason behind this freedom is that Allah has described this worldly life as a test in the Holy Quran to earn a reward on the Day of Judgment according to the deeds.

Islam has provided fundamental rights to all the living things in the world. Therefore, these rights of all living things must be well observed according to the ethical principle and values of Islam. In the Holy Quran Almighty Allah says:

“Piety is not to turn your faces to the east or the west; rather, piety is [personified by] those who have faith in Allah and the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets, and who give their wealth, for the love of Him, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler and the beggar, and for [the freeing of] the slaves, and maintain the prayer and give the zakat, and those who fulfill their covenants, when they pledge themselves, and those who are patient in stress and distress, and in the heat of battle. They are the ones who are true [to their covenant], and it is they who are the Godwary.” (Al-Baqarah:177)

The most glorifying example of practicing Islamic values and ethics as the Last Prophet of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) prides to be good follower of Abraham. He (SAW) set standards and provided guidelines to the followers to practice in life. He (SAW) ended the ill customs and traditions found in the Arabic world and other regions regarding racism, killing of daughters, alcohol, fraud, interest, adultery and brutal killings.

In the Holy Quran, Almighty Allah describes Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as, “And indeed, you are of a great moral character.” (68:4)

With contrast to other systems, the ethical system in Islam takes guidelines from the divine source of

teachings “The Noble Quran” and Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The ethical values set by Islam cannot be altered according to the will of human beings and the situation they are in. The system is working for thousands of years and it will do the same until the day of judgment. This system cannot be affected by the cultural norms, as Allah (SWT) is the one whose acceptance is most important when it comes to performing the deeds in this world.

In the Holy Quran, Almighty Allah has mentioned the following values that Muslims should practice in their lifetime.

- Almighty Allah is the only one to be worship.
- Parents must be dealt with kindness.
- Whenever a promise is made it, fulfill it.
- The poor and orphans are the responsibility of the society.
- Performing the religious duties set by Islam.
- Staying away from the deeds that are recommended as sin in Islam.
- Dear of Allah should be in the heart of everyone with the truth on the tongue.
- Killing a person is like killing the whole of humanity.
- Practice honesty in personal and professional life.

Characteristics of Abrahamic Hajj

1- The first step for Abrahamic Haji is nothing but intention, will, and awareness. Ignorance or not having clear decision makes it invalid.

2- Entering to the brightness, clearness and sincerity of oneness by state of white color of Ihram. This white dress code eliminates any sign of inferiority and superiority of one Muslim over another. All Muslims should take heed of the appropriate protocols of entering the state of ihram so that they may benefit undoubtedly.

3- The following list of deeds or actions term it to be void and hence must be avoided:

- Men wearing stitched clothing
- Women covering their face and men covering their heads
- The cutting of nails or the shaving of hair
- The hunting of animals
- The wearing of perfume
- The involvement in sexual relations with one's

spouse

4- Being aware of the enemy of inside and outside. As well as the holy Quran says: “those who are with him are hard against the faithless and merciful amongst themselves.” (48:29)

5- Being humble towards the other believers. By entering to the state of Ihram one ensures and serves as a constant reminder for the pilgrim to be humble. It makes no difference if a believer is rich or poor because, in the eyes of Allah, we are all equal. This sacred clothing eliminates any such thought, enjoining all Muslims in the bond of unity and brotherhood. It also reminds pilgrims to remain humble as we shall all taste death one day, clad in sheets of white cloth.

6- Fulfilling the Rights

Fulfilling the promises and rights is an important matter in Islam. Allah Orders in the holy Quran: “Complete the hajj and the ‘umrah for Allah’s sake, and if you are prevented, then [make] such [sacrificial] offering as is feasible. (Al-Baqrah:196)

Abdullah Ibn e Masood narrated that Prophet PBUH said: “keep on doing Hajj and Umrah, for they wipe out poverty and sin Just as the bawl eliminates defilement from iron and gold and silver”.

Paradigm of Spirituality and Full Spiritual Indexes of Hajj

If we accept the reasoning of Dr. Soheil Inayatollah and Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson, it seems that Hajj annual program and its preparations and its stability of advantages is one of the best grounds for renewal of spirituality, because:

- Hajj ritual is a universal program, no color, no ranking is acceptable except servicing to Allah and the society

- Hajj ritual is full of spirituality factors, from the first step of intention to returning to the family and society.

- Hajj is nothing but full of fraternity and brotherhood, in fact Hajj entirely makes Muslims realize that they are actually nothing but brothers to each other in the name of Islam. It eliminates all kinds of differences. It inaugurates a sincere brotherhood among the community and obviously manifests that Islam is a religion of unity and solidarity.

- Hajj ritual is an intellectual oriented program accompany with so much esoteric Symbols which have so many spiritual lessons for everyone, every time and everywhere.

- Hajj ritual is affirmed whatever the other religions clime about the rescue and salvation of humanity.

Now, it would be very appropriate to say that the Abrahamic Hajj ritual is a program, full of rationality, spirituality and culture, full of virtue, ethic and humanity. We hope the establishing of a civil society or utopia and achieving a pure life, reaching the seashore of peace, stability and salvation and toward a spiritual paradigm of the new world, as the Quran says: "Thus, we have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you". (Al-Baqarah:143)

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