



# Hajj, Its Rituals and Discourse

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The arrival of the blessed and spiritual days of Hajj has brought the pilgrims of God's house from all over the world to the land of revelation. Hajj comprises some religious rituals that some Pre-Islamic divine prophets, too, had performed. Even the polytheists of Mecca used to perform Hajj and circumambulation of the Ka'ba before the advent of Islam and had their own traditions, some of which were not approved by Islam. Some Muslim thinkers have tried to explain the philosophy of the Hajj pilgrimage by referring to Qur'anic verses and hadiths. Undoubtedly, "conceiving the truth of monotheism and negation of polytheism" is one of the most important reasons for making the Abrahamic Hajj obligatory. However, in addition to its religious aspect, Hajj was also of special political importance for the newly established Islamic government during the time of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The role of Mecca and Medina in spreading the important news of the situation of Muslims, at the beginning of the advent of Islam, had turned Hajj into a political event.

In describing this dimension of Hajj, we come across such key-

words as "the need to know about the affairs of Muslims", "recognition and retribution of the enemy", and "the need to clarify the facts of Islamic societies". To put it in a brief phrase, we can refer to it as the "Hajj of Clarification".

In this approach, Hajj has a capacity that is beyond mere religious rituals. As regards what is the reality of "Hajj of Clarification", what it means, and what are its manifestations, there are some points that we need to pay attention to:

In verses 27 and 28 of Surah Al-Hajj, God Almighty tells His Messenger: "And proclaim the Hajj to all the people...that they may witness the (worldly and otherworldly) benefits for them." The term "benefits", which has been mentioned in a plural form has a comprehensive meaning and includes all worldly and otherworldly benefits. According to these verses, Hajj is a congregation and a place where Muslims can examine and observe their material and spiritual benefits.

In one of his statements about the philosophy of Hajj, the late Imam Khomeini (RA) had said: "The political aspect of this gathering is that, first of all, (the pil-

grims to God's house) should get to know about each other's situations, come to an understanding, be brothers with each other, fraternize with each other, and discuss the problems of their countries and find solutions for them. If we had performed Hajj in the way that the spirit of Hajj requires, the Muslim world would not be facing the numerous problems it is facing now." (Sahifeh-ye Imam, Vol. 13, pp. 324-325)

The second point is related to the duties of the Iranian pilgrims in clarifying the facts of the Islamic Republic system and displaying the characteristics of the Iranians of the Islamic Revolution Standard.

Iranians who attend the Hajj pilgrimage should be earnest representatives of the Iranian nation. From this point of view, Hajj is an opportunity to express the truths of Islamic Iran and the achievements of the Islamic Revolution. In this regard, Imam Khomeini (RA) had said: "You are the bearer of the message of a nation that, with its Revolution, saved a country that was sinking into atheism, corruption, and indecency - promoted by the Eastern and, more so, Western cultures - and re-

placed the existing evil tyrannical rule by the Islamic government. You are the representatives of the people whose Islamic revolution, with its short life and the excruciating troubles resulting from its confrontation with two superpowers of East and West, and the vandalism of terrorists affiliated with these two oppressing fronts have, only and only with the blessing of Islam, been able to shake the Islamic countries and the oppressed people of the world and attract them to Islam."

The last point is related to the "Unity of the Word" and the opportunity that Hajj provides to demonstrate the brotherhood and unity of the Islamic Ummah; disrupting the evil plots of the enemies of Islam. In this regard, too, Imam Khomeini has said: "O Muslims of the world and followers of the school of monotheism! The secret behind all the problems of Islamic countries is the lack of unity and harmony, and the cause of victory would be the 'unity of the word' and promotion of harmony."

It is expected that Iranian and non-Iranian pilgrims would, by taking into consideration the conditions of time and place, convey to the world the strength and solidarity of the "Islamic Ummah" from the land of revelation. And, by demonstrating the true "Islamic way of life", present a worthy image of the Islamic society. Undoubtedly, such a message is like water that is poured on the fire of "Islamophobia" at regional and global levels, and will through light on the merciful essence of dear Islam.

