



Hajj is an Obligation

"Therein are manifest signs; one of them being the station of Ibrahim and whoso enters this Sanctuary shall be secure from all danger and on mankind is enjoined pilgrimage to this House for the sake of Allah - on him who can afford to make a journey to it. And whoso denies (inspite of it), then surely Allah is Independent of all the worlds" (Surah Al- Imran, Ayah 97)

Hajj means "visit to the revered place". In Shariah it denotes a compulsory Islamic practice that includes the visit to the Holy Kabah and other specific sacred places around it, following a specific procedure in a particular time during the year. Haii is the most significant manifestation of Iman and unity of the Muslim Ummah in the world. For those Muslims who are able to undertake the journey to Makkah, the Hajj is the peak of their religious life. Haii is an obligation only for those who are physically and financially able to perform it. Millions of people go to Makkah each year from every corner of the globe providing a unique opportunity for those of different nations to meet one another which is what makes it the worlds largest display of unity. Although Makkah is always filled with visitors.

Hujjaj wear special but simple garments which strip away distinctions of class and culture, so that all stand before **الله**, and the actual performance of prayers take place at the sacred Kabah in Makkah and nearby locations (Mina, Muzdalifah and Arafah) Peace is the most dominant theme during Hajj. Peace with **الله**, with one's own soul, with one another and with all living creatures. To disturb the peace of anyone or any creature in any form is strictly prohibited.

Haji is also to remember the great assembly of the great day of Judgement when people will stand equal before **الله**. The Hajj started with Ibrahim **عليه السلام** and Ismail **عليه السلام** and continued unbroken ever since. Unfortunately, however, the people after many generations slipped again into shirk, and transformed the House of **الله** into a house of idols. Each tribe of those mushriks arabs took an idol, gave it a name, and placed it in the Kabah. The Hajj season remained in observance, but instead of worshipping **الله** it became a season of festivities. New rituals were improvised such as encircling the Kabah with no clothes on, whilst clapping, singing and whistling. It was a great financial bonanza for the people of Makkah, whose economy was some how based on this season.

For hundreds of years that state of affairs continued until the dawn of Islam appeared and the practtce of Hajj was restored to its pure form and source by our beloved Rasul **ﷺ**

Hajj has uncountable benefits and blessings in it. Our beloved Rasul **ﷺ** says: "the reward of maqbool [accepted] hajj is Jannah." In another Hadith the beloved Rasul **ﷺ** says: "O people! If the hajj is compulsory upon you then rush to perform it, certainly no one of you knows what [hindrance] lies ahead for him."

Muslims from all walks of life, from every corner of the globe assemble in response to the call of **الله when He asked Ibrahim **عليه السلام** "to proclaim among people the Pilgrimage. They will come to you on foot and mounted on any lean camel coming from every distant track." (Surah 22, Ayah 27)**