

## THE REASON FOR PILGRIMAGE

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ. وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا  
وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ  
لَهُ.

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا  
عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ  
وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى فِي كِتَابِهِ الْعَزِيزِ  
أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي لَلَّذِي بَبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾  
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَ أَوْصِيكُمْ وَآيَايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

Let us all increase our devotion towards Allah the Almighty by performing all that He has decreed and abstaining from all that He has prohibited. Hopefully, we will be blessed in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At this time, pilgrims from all over the world are flocking to the holy city of Makkah with one purpose and one purpose alone: to complete the pilgrimage. With a

bittersweet feeling they left their relatives and beloved homeland to fulfill the fifth pillar of Islam. Surely every lucky individual chosen to perform the pilgrimage wishes to achieve the highest level of pilgrimage which is *Hajj Mabruk*. *Hajj Mabruk* is defined by some scholars as a pilgrimage which is ‘*maqbul*’ or accepted by Allah the Almighty. *Imam* an-Nawawi said that *Hajj Mabruk* means pilgrimage that is not tainted by sin.

The Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said in a *Hadith* narrated by *Imam* al-Bukhari and *Imam* Muslim:

الْعُمْرَةُ إِلَى الْعُمْرَةِ كَفَّارَةٌ لِمَا بَيْنَهُمَا، وَالْحَجُّ الْمَبْرُورُ لَيْسَ لَهُ جَزَاءٌ إِلَّا الْجَنَّةَ

Which means: “*The performance of 'Umrah is an expiation for all the sins committed (between this 'Umrah and the previous one), and the reward for Hajj Mabruk (the one accepted by Allah or the one which was performed without doing any wrong) is nothing save Paradise.*”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Indeed, pilgrimage is not merely a ritual worship, but in fact many lessons can be gained from it. Right from the start when making intentions for ‘*ihram*’, there is a great lesson to be appreciated. When in ‘*ihram*’, the pilgrims must abstain from doing things that are prohibited by Him for a certain period of time.

‘*Tawaf*’ (the movement around the Kaabah seven times) brings a message that this life must be lived according to rules determined by Allah the Almighty. ‘*Sa'i*’ (the action of going to and from Safa Hill and Marwah Hill seven times) is a symbol of struggling without giving up. It commemorates the incident of Siti Hajar (Hagar) going back and forth to find water for her son Ismail (Ishmael). This incident also teaches us that we must struggle in everything we do because Allah the Almighty promises us relief and ease after going through hardships and difficulty as stated in His words:

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿٥﴾ إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿٦﴾

Which means: *So, verily, with every difficulty, there is relief: Verily, with every difficulty there is relief.*

‘Wukuf’ in Arafah illustrates the condition of human beings when brought forth in front of Allah the Almighty at the Fields of ‘Mahsyar’. Millions of pilgrims flood Arafah in hot weather during the hajj season. It sends us a message that every one of us will be waiting for a turn in the human sea to be judged in the hereafter without exception. It motivates us and makes us realize how small and insignificant we are in the presence of Allah the Almighty in addition to encouraging us to prepare for death.

The practice of throwing stones at the Jamrah is a symbol of our struggle against the tricks of the devil. It is also our pledge that Satan is the real enemy to mankind. Allah the Almighty says in the Quran in Chapter 35 (Surah Fatir), verse (ayat) 6:

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا ج

Which means: *Verily Satan is an enemy to you: so treat him as an enemy. He only invites his adherents, that they may become Companions of the Blazing Fire.*

Finally, the ‘tahallul’ symbolizes that pilgrims have completed their spiritual training (i.e Hajj). It teaches the soul to continue to be consistent in obedience even after returning home. This is because a person who performs the pilgrimage completely are forgiven of all their sins, not unlike a newborn baby. The Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said in a *Hadith* narrated by Imam al-Bukhari and Muslim:

مَنْ حَجَّ فَلَمْ يَرْفُثْ، وَلَمْ يَفْسُقْ، رَجَعَ كَيَوْمِ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ

Which means: "Whoever performs Hajj for Allah's pleasure and does not do evil or sins, then he will return (after Hajj free from all sins) as if he were born anew."

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In this glorious month of *Zulhijjah*, let us together pray for the well-being, health and safety of pilgrims who are in the holy land of *Makkah*. In addition, for those of us who have not performed the pilgrimage, let us pledge to do everything in our power so that we will be able to one day go and perform Hajj. One way to do so is to save some of our income to perform *Hajj* and immediately register with the Hajj Fund (Tabung Haji). Pray earnestly so that Allah the Almighty will make it easy for us to realize the dream of performing Hajj while we are still alive because performing Hajj is an obligation for Muslims (those who can afford it) as mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 3 (Surah Ali Imran), verse (*ayat*) 97:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ  
فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مِّمَّا مَكَرَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ  
الْبَيْتِ مَنْ أَسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾

Which means: *In it are Signs Manifest; (for example), the Station of Abraham; whoever enters it attains security; Pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to Allah, - those who can afford the journey; but if any deny faith, Allah stands not in need of any of His creatures.*

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيْمِ، وَنَفَعَنِيْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيْهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ  
وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيْمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّيْ وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيْمُ. أَقُوْلُ  
قَوْلِيْ هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيْمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ،  
وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوْهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ.