



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Commonalities Between Fasting and Hajj

Shaykh Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Nadwī رحمته الله

﴿ الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَةٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ ﴾

*“The Hajj (is to be performed in) the well-known months. So whoever undertakes Hajj in them, there should be no obscenity nor abuse nor quarrel in the Hajj. Whatever good you do, Allāh will know it. Take provisions along, for the merit of (having) provision is to abstain (from begging); and fear Me, O men of understanding!”<sup>(1)</sup>*

Within His creation, Allāh ﷻ has designated seasons. These seasons are moments wherein the springs of the hearts, souls, faith and morals blossom. They are times when the breeze of mercy blows and the aroma of love exhales – so gentle and clean; so delicate, yet profound; so strong and alive; and so fresh and beloved.

Among the most virtuous of these divine, spiritual seasons and festivals are Ramaḍān, the month of fasting; and the months of Hajj, especially Dhū 'l-Ḥijjah. Allāh ﷻ has mentioned these in His book, one after the other; and has emphatically mentioned them, elevating their lofty nature.

Three things unite them: obedience, love and virtue of the time or place. No fast is a fast if there is no obedience, love and altruism of Allāh's ﷻ pleasure over one's own. Likewise is the case with Hajj: the fasting person gives up his food, beverage and other desires to please Allāh ﷻ and not himself; similarly, the one embarking on Hajj gives up his home country, his home, his wife and comfort, solely to please Allāh ﷻ and none other than Him.

Ramaḍān is the most virtuous time to fast; Makkah and its surroundings [in Dhū 'l-Ḥijjah] is the most virtuous time and place to perform Hajj. Therefore, fasting goes hand in hand with Hajj, and Hajj also resembles fasting - both entail asceticism (*Zuhd*), patience (*Ṣabr*), altruism (*Īthār*) and abstinence (*Hijrah*): the fasting one runs between abstaining from food and eating [in the evenings], and frequents the house of Allāh ﷻ; the pilgrim, on the other hand, runs between Ṣafā and Marwah, and between Minā and 'Arafāt; and circumambulates the house of Allāh ﷻ. Both have an 'Īd, a *Fidyah* and a welcoming.

Whilst fasting, Allāh ﷻ has forbidden one from backbiting, dishonest speech and argumentation of a particular type. The Prophet ﷺ has censured these; he said:

<sup>(1)</sup> [Al-Baqarah: 2/97].

«من لم يدع قول الزور والعمل به ، فليس لله حاجة في أن يدع طعامه وشرابه»

*“Whoever does not cease dishonest speech and evil actions, Allāh is not in need of him refraining from food and drink.”<sup>(2)</sup>*

The Prophet ﷺ has also said:

«إذا كان يوم صوم أحدكم ، فلا يرفث ولا يصخب ؛ فإن سابّه أحد أو قاتله ، فليقل إني امرؤ صائم»

*“When it is the day for you to fast, do not be obscene and do not shout; and if someone quarrels or fights with him, let him say: “I am fasting.””<sup>(3)</sup>*

He ﷺ also said:

«رُبَّ صَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ صِيَامِهِ إِلَّا الْجُوعُ»

*“There are so many of those who fast who gain nothing from their fasts but hunger.”<sup>(4)</sup>*

Allāh ﷻ has, likewise, prohibited obscenity, sin and argumentation in Ḥajj; He says:

﴿ الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَةٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ ﴾

*“The Ḥajj (is to be performed in) the well-known months. So whoever undertakes Ḥajj in them, there should be no obscenity nor abuse nor quarrel in the Ḥajj.”<sup>(5)</sup>*

In these āyāt and orientations, the miracle of revelation and divine legislation is displayed. Fasting is, due to its difficulty upon a person and his distance from his habits and desires, a time prone to backbiting, with which a person would satisfy himself and kill his time; and delving into argumentation due to one’s fury and anger for the most pettiest of reasons. Hence, one has been [explicitly] prohibited from it.

Similar is the case with Ḥajj: the pilgrim is prone to obscenity, sins and argumentation due to his distance from his wife, the lengthy journey, arising of troubles, encountering diverse situations and having to socialise with peers to whom one is not accustomed. This is why Allāh ﷻ has warned of all such things the pilgrim, who intends to visit His house. None can know of such intricacies except the One Whose knowledge encompasses all things, and is fully familiar with human disposition: his weakness and proneness to error.

<sup>(2)</sup> Al-Bukhārī (1903).

<sup>(3)</sup> Al-Bukhārī (1904) and Muslim (1151). In the original Arabic text of the article, there are slight differences in the wording of this ḥadīth. Since we could not locate the exact wording of the text, we asserted the wording of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī.

<sup>(4)</sup> Ibn Mājah (1690).

<sup>(5)</sup> [Al-Baqarah: 2/97].

﴿ أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

*“Is it (unimaginable) that He Who has created (them) will not have (such a) knowledge, while He is the Knower of the finest things, the All-Aware?”<sup>(6)</sup>*

Fasting and *Hajj* entail numerous types and styles of dutiful devotion and worships which are not included in their fundamental elements, for example: donating, consolation, compassion, service, kindness, prayer at night, *tasbīh* and recitation of the Qur’ān. These solidify the fasts and the *Hajj*, and increase their reward and virtue. The All-Knowing, All-Wise says:

﴿ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ ﴾

*“Whatever good you do, Allāh will know it.”<sup>(7)</sup>*

Allāh ﷻ has also urged [the pilgrims] to take along provisions in order to perform the *Hajj* with dignity and self-respect; and to take along provisions for the Hereafter by carrying out abundant good deeds and [different] types of worships. He ﷻ says:

﴿ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ ۗ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٧٧﴾ ﴾

*“Take provisions along, for the merit of (having) provision is to abstain (from begging); and fear Me, O men of understanding!”<sup>(8)</sup>*

The fasting one has been ordered to likewise take provisions for his fast - *Suḥūr*. This gives [one] the strength to fast and assists [him] in it. Similarly, the pilgrim takes provisions [of food] and a vehicle. This is where the fast and the *Hajj* unite: both run in the same contest.

Translated by Shahin-ur Rahman from *Ta’ammulāt fi ’l-Qur’ān al-Karīm* pp. 27-29.

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<sup>(6)</sup> [Al-Mulk: 67/14].

<sup>(7)</sup> [Al-Baqarah: 2/97].

<sup>(8)</sup> [Al-Baqarah: 2/97].