

On Pilgrimage

“And for God, the pilgrimage of the house (of Allah) is obligatory upon the people who have strength to go their”. (Qur’an 3:97).

Pilgrimage to the house of Allah, in Mecca, is one of the pillars of Islam. Every Muslim fulfilling certain conditions; is obliged to go for Hajj, at least once in life. What are the lessons of Hajj?

The first thing to attract the eyes is the simple uniformity of tens of thousands of people, wearing white unstitched cotton robes. Their purpose is one and their appearance is one. Here you will find the unity and brotherhood of Islam demonstrated in its brightest color – angelic white.

Then, pondering upon this point, you will realize that to acquire this uniformity, every person had to discard every mark of distinction, every sign of his worldly position – political, social, financial or otherwise. May be a man whom you are talking with, is the president of a country; and, on the other hand, he may be an obscure laborer in a lonely place. There is nothing to distinguish between them in this house of God. The temporal distinctions have no value in the eyes of God. Here all human-beings have one – only one – rank.

Here they are the believed servants of Allah, coming to offer their sincere prayers in His house. We are His servants; He is our Master. It is the only relationship which counts here. All other distinctions and ranks are artificial.

Mecca has no tourists’ attraction. There are no beautiful sceneries. A place surrounded by barren rocks and hills! According to Imam Ali bin Abi Talib, it would have been as easy for Allah to select a beautiful place for His house. But he selected the barren rocks and stone walls, so that people should come here without any worldly motive. They cannot be attracted by pleasures because there is none; they cannot think about business, because Mecca has nothing to produce. Therefore, anybody coming to Mecca, must come, by virtue of necessity, with pure intention and untinted purpose. He must come for pilgrimage – and pilgrimage only.

How can a poor man be arrogant? Wealthy people are the ones who suffer most from this spiritual

disease. It is, perhaps, for this reason that Hajj is obligatory for those only who are rich enough to afford the journey to Mecca. They are more exposed to the killing germs of “pride” and “ego”; they have been asked to go to pilgrimage, so that they may be cured of these maladies.

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