

Hajj and its effects from the perspective of the holy Quran and Nahj al-Balagha

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Abstract: Hajj is one of the transcendent minor parts of Islam. Hajj is clear proof of Muslims' attempt to maintain one pillar of the human society and attend to social, political and cultural issues that is as widespread as other Islamic issues. All doings of the hajj ceremony by the participation of people with various cultures and complexions creates a considerable stir alongside this-worldly and other-worldly effects.

The fundamental substantial effect of this divine ceremony is to recognize people of the Islamic- human society from each other, insomuch that if the hajj doings are effectively implemented, the great Islamic world will be able to achieve unity.

The substantiation of the resurrection and the humility of everything towards God can be mentioned as otherworldly effects of hajj. The present research is aimed to assess the effects of the hajj from the viewpoint of revelation and from the language of Ali (PBUH), the cousin and son-in-law of the prophet Mohammed, and to propagate the rich culture.

Key words: Holy Quran, Nahj al-Balagha, hajj, effects of hajj

INTRODUCTION

The holy Quran not only recognizes the Kaaba as the first servitude house for people of the world (*The first House ever to be built for people was that at Makkah (Mecca) blessed and a guidance for the worlds¹*), but also it is widely revered by Quran that is a reason for the popular uprising (*Allah has made the Ka'bah the Sacred House, as an establishment for people²*).

The fundamental factor for the popular uprising is circumambulate of Kaaba, in which people praise God, try to revolve divine verses in their minds and find their origin by referring to their own nature. The presence of Muslims in the ceremony of hajj with inexpensive clothing while they are saying Labaik proves the following verse.

(And the Horn will be blown; and at once from the graves to their Lord they will hasten³).

Indeed, God with a worship entitled hajj schedules a plan for the human through which they will be immune to the polytheism and the call of La Ilaha ill-Allah (there is no god except the unique God) will be heard by people of the world.

Muslims are asked to take part in the hajj ceremony, not only to visit God, but also to profit from its effects and advantages. This devotional action has valuable effects from various aspects in the individual and social human life that have been addressed in Quran and Nahj al-Balagha and can be applied as a guideline for educative programs.

The topic of hajj has been studied by many researchers that some of them are mentioned. For instance, in the Mighat-e- Hajj journal, issue 75, Mohammad Khatibi Koushkak has assessed the mysteries and

¹ Al-e-Imran, 96.

² Al-Maeda, 97

³ Ya-Sin, 51

education of hajj in the Nahj al-Balagha. Again, in the abovementioned journal, issue 74, Hamid Negaresh has analyzed the political secrets of hajj in the viewpoint of Imam Khomeini and the supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei. An article entitled "Hajj capacities to realize Islamic awakening" written by Mohsen Mohammadi and Mohammad Hadi Fallah Zadeh has published in the journal of "Islamic Republic Studies" in 2013. Equally, among researches has been done on the hajj topic the article "a secret among hajj mysteries" written by Ali Godarzi can be mentioned that was published in the Mighat-e-hajj journal in 2007.

By comparison with the mentioned researches, this study has assessed the hajj issue from the perspective of Quran and Nahj al-Balagha.

The literal meaning of hajj

Hajj has several different meanings, including starting on a journey⁴, to forbid⁵, to go on a pilgrimage⁶ as well as intending to do something⁷.

The idiomatic meaning of hajj

Hajj means to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca alongside specific doings in particular time and in various places in order to get access to God⁸. Again, according to the tradition, the term hajj has been interpreted as going on a pilgrimage to Mecca to hold hajj ceremonies⁹.

Given above mentioned points, it can be concluded that, hajj as one of the most important worships, means to start on a journey towards the only God that all goals are summarized in his divine nature and human gives up to worship other gods and is forbidden from doing offences and by praising this god.

Effects of hajj in the viewpoint of Quran

Quran epitomizes the sacred essence of God that is compatible with the human nature and guides them. Quran is comprised of morality, doings and beliefs and all of them are related to human being. So, to clarify whatever is referred to Quran, it acts like an illustrative way and leads human from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. Hajj and its effects are considered as devotional doings that have been mentioned in Quran.

According to Quran, Islam as a united nation needs to provide a background for the realization of the unity aspiration, and hajj is considered as a real instance of the united nation and it is a practical experience to move towards the aim that has been destined by God.

Kaaba is a center for all Muslims that physically and divinely causes to return them to their own primary theism and nature and it is considered as a safe asylum for them (*And [mention] when we made the House a place of return for the people and [a place of] security*¹⁰).

Again, in proximity of divine mercy dissension and conflict will minimize and Muslims can show solidarity.

The Kaaba as the first shrine was founded to guide people and to worship God (*The first House ever to be built for people was that at Mecca blessed and guidance for the worlds*¹¹).

People are asked to attend the theism, loyalty and to express solidarity in the hajj ceremony. Inasmuch as promoting solidarity among human is considered as one of the important goals of Islam; therefore,

⁴ Ibne Fares, Maghaeis al-loghat, 2nd edition, p.29; Ibne Mnsour, Lisanol Arab, 2nd edition, p. 226.

⁵ Hosseini Zodeidi, Tajol Arous Men Javareol Ghamous, 3rd edition, p.314.

⁶ Ragheb Isfahani, Mofradatol Alfazel Quran, p.218.

⁷ Jezri, Alnahayat Fi Gharibal Hadisol Asar, 1st edition, p.340.

⁸ Tarihi, Majmaol Bahrein, 2nd edition, p.285.

⁹ Ragheb Isfahani, Mofradatol Alfazel Quran, p.218.

¹⁰ Al- Baqarah,125.

¹¹ Al-e-Imran, 96.

Muslims get together every year to keep this ancient tradition alive (*You shall never find any change in the way of Allah*¹²).

The hajj ceremony through its pillars and doings represents a complete course of the Abraham way to invite people to the theism and prevent them from being polytheism (*And when we settled for Abraham (and Ishmael) the place of the Holy Mosque, (We said): 'You shall not associate with me anything*¹³).

Accordingly, as a leader he announces the hajj ceremony (*Proclaim the pilgrimage to the people. They will come to you on foot and on every lean camel; they shall come from every deep ravine*¹⁴).

Hence, people can directly observe substantial and spiritual advantages (*That they witness profitable things for them*¹⁵).

It should be noted that, absolute interests were only specified in the abovementioned sentence not temporal or spiritual ones. There are two kinds of interests, including, temporal and spiritual. Humankind enjoys temporal interests in the social life to satisfy their needs. But spiritual interests refer to the existence of all kinds of access. It implies that some approaches visualize the human thralldom and their effects will be apparent in their action and speech. The hajj ceremony includes all kind of worship because it consists of leaving some pleasures of life, substantial doings and endeavors for life as well as tolerating hardships, circumambulating around Kaaba, praying, sacrificing, nourishing, fasting and such like¹⁶.

So it can be said that, the hajj ceremony provides someone with a good background to realize a social circumstances and by interpreting Quran verses, it can be understood that, hajj is considered as a fundamental factor for the Islamic solidarity.

Besides enjoying financial advantages (*It shall be no offense for you to seek the bounty of your Lord*¹⁷), having security in the Kaaba is considered as an important endowment during the hajj ceremony that reminds the Abraham prayer when Abraham said: 'My Lord, make this a land secure¹⁸ , whereas we see increased insecurity and abduction around it (Do they not see how we appointed a safe Sanctuary while all around them people are snatched away?¹⁹)

One of the most important presents of the aggregation in the hajj ceremony is to remind Muslims about the doomsday, a day in which all gather in front of the God. Indeed, hajj is considered as a reminder of the hereafter. During the hajj, anybody who respects the hajj rites extols the virtue (All that; and, he who venerates the way marks of Allah, surely it is from the piety of the hearts²⁰).

Again, anybody who believes the resurrection day as a principle of God, it is an indicative of their virtue (And fear Allah, and know that you shall be assembled unto Him²¹).

Such an individual knows that the best provision for the hereafter is to have virtue (Provide well for yourselves, the best provision is piety²²).

During this spiritual journey, after imparting from Arafat, pilgrims are called to think about God, then they are invited to recant, which is tantamount to avoid from conceit and to make a confession, and consequently, they take step to achieve loyalty and virtue and the heaven will be the souvenir of the

¹² Fatir. 43

¹³ AL-Hajj, 26.

¹⁴ AL-Hajj, 27

¹⁵ AL-Hajj, 28

¹⁶ Tabatabaei, Al-Mizan, 14th edition, p.369.

¹⁷ Al-Baqarah, 198

¹⁸ Al-Ibrahim, 35

¹⁹ Al-Ankaboot, 67

²⁰ Al-hajj, 32

²¹ Al-Baqara, 203

²² Al-Baqara, 197

journey (When you surge on from Arafat, remember Allah as you approach the Holy Mountain of Mash'ar. Remember Him as it is He who guided you though before that you were amongst the astray. Then surge on from where the people surge and ask Allah for forgiveness. He is Forgiving and the Most Merciful²³).

By paying attention to the end of verses, it is pointed out that in addition to the remission of sins, the mercy has also been promised in this journey. Therefore, during the hajj ceremony, hajjis not only avoid from committing crime, but also they will receive God's mercy (Then, let the pilgrims accomplish their acts of cleansing²⁴).

It should be noted that, during the hajj ceremony, hajjis need to be aware of the poor (and feed the wretched poor²⁵).

Hence, not only one of commandments has been complied, but also the poverty and insolvency will be decreased.

Effects of hajj in the Nahj al-Balagha

Hajj is the secret of breaking all imaginary and actual bonds and barriers. To circumambulate around a house, is the mystery of a unit purpose and idea. Managing to stay in a desert, doing the same action and moving together is the symbol of moving in a unit way and having consistency in a single basis²⁶.

Having a look at the most comprehensive government that was formed by a pious man like Ali (PBUH) is considered as an appropriate pattern to demonstrate hajj effects. Reasonable and intelligent instructions of Ali in the Nahj al-Balagha address issues with a valid look.

According to the following sermon, Imam Ali argued that the hajj ceremony is considered as one instance of the God mercy towards his worshippers (*Allah has made it a means to his mercy*²⁷).

Hajjis can remove themselves from sins during the hajj ceremony (*The performance of hajj of the house of Allah and its umrah can wash away sins*²⁸).

Indeed, each of the hajj customs and their accomplishment saves human from any filth and ugliness and provides an opportunity to practice humanity, it means that the worship allows them to fill themselves with humility and piety and they can decide to obey the God.

The journey of people to the God is a fundamental factor to reinforce the human belief and to purify their soul. And some people were elected (*Allah has made obligatory upon you the pilgrimage (hajj) to his sacred house.... He selected from among his creation those who on listening to his call and responded to it*²⁹).

And hajj is considered as a great example to purify the soul, to complement human virtues and to reinforce the foundations of loyalty (*He made that house sacred and the hajj ceremony is considered to refine and to remove sins*³⁰).

The primary effects of piety and devotion in hajj are appeared when people move into the house of God while they are saying Labaik and they find themselves in the vicinity of God (*The best means by which seekers of nearness to Allah can access is the performance of hajj of the house of Allah and its umrah*³¹).

Accordingly, human are obliged to take part in the hajj ceremony once in their life and consequently they prepare themselves to reach the heaven (*Allah has made it an approach to his paradise*³²).

²³ Al-Baqara, 198-199

²⁴ Al-Hajj, 29

²⁵ Al-Hajj, 28

²⁶ Motahari, Hajj, p.68.

²⁷ Sayyed Razi, Nahj al-Balagha, sermon 192

²⁸ Idem, Sermon 110.

²⁹ Idem, sermon 1.

³⁰ Idem, sermon 192.

³¹ Idem, sermon 110.

In each of the hajj rites the unity, origin and destination are clearly shown. Indeed, the Kaaba has been founded on the basis of theism and is aimed to fight against the polytheism and to attract people to worship the single God that is considered as the main purpose of the hajj and can be led to a single nation.

The journey is the ultimate expression of human courtesy to God and indeed removes arrogance from human (*Allah made hajj a sign of people courtesy before his greatness*³³).

Inattention to the world externals they are like thirsty who come towards God eagerly (They have marred the beauty of their face by leaving the hair uncut³⁴).

Again, they recognize the Kaaba as an asylum in which they are secure, equally it is considered as a reminder of doomsday in which people stand in front of God (Allah the glorified made it his sacred house) an object of respect for those who turn to it³⁵).

Hajj is the greatest human devotional representation and is considered as a center to familiarize the great Islamic nation and to develop their relationship with each other. Again, the hajj can be introduced as the best camp which provides the background to foster self-constituted people and tries to educate them. Similar to Jihad, hajj is also the habitude of prophets (*He selected among his creation those who listened to his call and responded to it and testified his word. they stood in the position of his prophets*³⁶).

As we know, the flag of each country reflects its life. The Kaaba is introduced by Imam Ali (PBUH) as the flag of Islam (*Allah the glorified made it (his sacred house) an emblem for Islam*³⁷).

Since the life of any nation is dependent on its flag, so the survival and independence of the Islamic world depends on the survival of the hajj ceremony. Accordingly, the hajj is considered as a fundamental factor to strengthen the religion (*Hajj (pilgrimage to the house of Allah in Mecca) is considered as a support for religion*³⁸).

Therefore, this devotional act is a great truth of a big society that can be considered as a valuable source of social effects as well as charity and interests for the Islamic society. The fact represents the great movement of Islam to show the world that Muslims are united against the enemies of Islam in order to maintain their right.

In this way, God tests his servants. They are tested to being extricate from arrogance and selfishness and these negative attributes are displaced by the humility (*He made its sacred house as a matter of great test, several tribulations and an open trial*³⁹).

And this trial is accomplished to open doors of grace and mercy.

The most important economic goals in the hajj issue is to enhance the economic power in the Islamic countries, accordingly they become independent of foreign governments and Muslims will be able to introduce themselves as a powerful leverage in the world. Again, when economic wheels of a society are turned, the poverty will be eliminated and displaced by the prosperity (*The performance of hajj of the house of Allah and its umrah are both considered as destroyers of poverty*⁴⁰).

Moreover, it is considered as an effective factor for Islamic nations to enhance their economic relations and productions and to have the information interchange.

³² Idem, sermon 192.

³³ Idem, sermon 1.

³⁴ Idem, sermon 192.

³⁵ Idem.

³⁶ Idem.

³⁷ Idem.

³⁸ Idem, philosophy 252.

³⁹ Idem, sermon 192.

⁴⁰ Idem, sermon 110.

The hajj is considered as a cultural meeting for the brainstorming among Islamic thinkers and to familiarize them with others dictums. Altogether, the hajj ceremony is the most important advertisement base for the recognition of the religious facts and educations (*Make arrangements for hajj by people explain the law to the seekers as well as teach the ignorant and discuss with the learned*⁴¹).

Islam as a school that invites human to the morality and faith, regardless of race, religion and language, has introduced the hajj ceremony as an educational course that its aim is to acquaint human with the theism and wants to make all Islamic countries independent of foreigners and their adversaries in social, cultural and political issue. The hajj ceremony is considered as a basic factor to fight against the national-racism fanaticisms and nothing costs in the hajj exclusive of the virtue, again hajjis clothing doesn't show their personality (*They throw their pieces of cloth on their backs*⁴²).

In a general attitude, what can be concluded from the hajj effects is that both Quran and Nahj al-Balagha are full of moral and social provisions to purify human spirit and the hajj ceremony is considered as a comprehensive and global instruction included all principles of the human life which arouses many freedom movements and great crusades against the cruelty and iniquity. Common effects of the hajj in Quran and Nahj al-Balagha are consist of reminding the doomsday, to confess sins, to approach to the heaven, to generate the solidarity and correlation, the divine remission, to recourse to God, inattention to the externals of the world, teaching, courtesy, looking after the poor, the tendency to the position of the prophets, to reinforce the religion, being an asylum for human, advertisements in the hajj ceremony, divine mercy, economical, social, cultural and political growth, divine trial and to affirm the divine word.

Conclusion

Islam as a school includes all human virtues and contains some programs that have been utilized throughout history and have developed and appeared in the direction of human excellence. The secret of its eternity is that, Islam is a religion for efflorescence of human nature without paying any attention to racial and ethnic effects. Hajj is one important symbol of Islam which is considered as Islamic bases and has various traditions and mysteries. In the hajj ceremony, hajjis are invited by the divine mercy to watch illustrative signs of God. Both Quran, as a guidebook, and Nahj al-Balagha have a comprehensive view towards the specific oath between God and human.

Altogether, it can be concluded that, to foster the thought of death and resurrection in our spirit, we need to stabilize the Islamic culture throughout the world, insomuch the Muslims community will reach the independence, solidarity, freedom and sovereignty in order to solve economical, cultural and social problems and consequently Muslims are asked to hold the hajj ceremony to raise the flag of Islam.

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⁴¹ Idem, letter 67.

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