

Importance of the First 10 Days of Dhul Hijjah

All praises be to Allaah, Lord and Sustainer of the worlds, and may the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and upon his family and companions.

Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: *“There are no days in which the righteous deeds are more beloved to Allaah than these ten days (the first ten days of the month of Dhul Hijjah), they said: O Messenger of Allaah! Not even jihaad for the sake of Allaah? The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: Not even jihaad for the sake of Allaah, except for a man who goes out with his wealth and soul, and returns with neither.”* (narrated by al-Tirmidhi. With a some variation of words this is also reported by Imam Bukhari, Abu-Dawood, Ibn-Maajah, Ahmad and Al-Daarami)

These days are also mentioned in the verses of Quraan. Allaah says in soorat al Hajj:

“ That they may witness things that are of benefit to them (i.e. reward of Hajj in the Hereafter, and also some worldly gain from trade), and mention the Name of Allaah on appointed days ” [al-Hajj 22:28]

Imam Bukhari reported in a suspended report that Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allaah be pleased with him) said that the appointed days are the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah and the counted days are the days of Tashreeq and Abu Hurairah and ibn Umar (may Allaah be pleased with them) used to go out to the market place saying the takbeeraat and then people would join in with them.

And in soorat al Fajr:

“ By the dawn; By the ten nights (i.e. the first ten days of the month of Dhul Hijjah) And by the even and the odd ” [al-Fajr 89:1]

Ibn ‘Abbaas, Ibn al-Zubayr, Mujaahid and others said: *“This refers to the ten days of Dhu'l-Hijjah”*. Ibn Katheer said: *“This is the correct view.”* (Tafseer Ibn Katheer , 8/413)

Imam Ahmad reported from Jabir (may Allaah be pleased with him) who said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: *“Indeed the ten are the ten of Al-Adhaa, the odd is the day of 'Arafah (9th Dhul-hijjah) and the even is the day of sacrifice (10th Dhul-hijjah).”*

Righteous Deeds in These Ten Days

If we take the "righteous deeds" in general meaning, then the most important righteous deeds which bring a slave closer to his Lord are the obligatory duties followed by non-obligatory righteous acts, as indicated by the following report:

Abu Hurayrah said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: *“Whosoever shows enmity to someone devoted to Me, I shall be at war with him . My servant draws not near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with non-obligatory works so that I shall love him. When I love him I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask [something] of Me, I*

would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it. I do not hesitate about anything as much as I hesitate about [seizing] the soul of My faithful servant: he hates death and I hate hurting him.” (narrated Al-Bukhaari (6502))

More specific actions for these days are those which are mentioned in various narrations regarding these ten days. These include:

- Takbeeraat
- Fasting
- Hajj
- Sacrifice

Takbeeraat

Takbeeraat in these days are of two kinds: unrestricted and restricted.

The unrestricted takbeeraat is a Sunnah that is completely forgotten by Muslims. These are to be pronounced all the time and are mentioned in the following text:

Allaah (Subhaanahu wa ta'alaah) says:

“and mention the Name of Allaah on appointed days...” [Al Hajj: 28]

Imam Bukhari reported in a suspended report that Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allaah be pleased with him) said that the appointed days are the first ten days of Zul Hijjah and the counted days are the days of Tashreeq and Abu Hurairah and ibn Umar (may Allaah be pleased with them) used to go out to the market place saying the takbeeraat and then people would join in with them.

Abdullaah ibn Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: ***“There are no days greater in the sight of Allaah and none in which the deeds are more beloved to Allaah than these ten days, so increase in them the tahleel (Lailahaillallah), takbeer (Allaahu Akbar) and tahmeed (Alhamdulillah).”*** (Narrated by Ahmad)

The restricted takbeeraat are pronounced after each obligatory prayer from Fajr prayer on the day of Arafah till after Asr prayer on the last day of Tashreeq, i.e. 13 th Dhul Hijjah; though there is some difference of opinion amongst Scholars about the timings and number of days these Takbeeraat are pronounced.

Allaah says:

“And remember Allaah during the counted Days ...” [al-Baqarah: 203]

There is no dispute amongst Scholars as regard to the "counted days" that these are the days of Tashreeq and remembering Allaah here includes the restricted Takbeeraat pronounced during these days.

There are various ways of pronouncing these takbeeraat such as saying:

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ , اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ , اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ كَبِيرًا

Or saying:

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ , اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ , لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ , اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ , وَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ

“Allaah is the Greatest, Allaah is the Greatest, There is no-one worthy of worship except Allaah, Allaah is the Greatest, Allaah is the Greatest and unto Allaah is all the Praise.”

Or saying:

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ , اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ , اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ , اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ , لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ , وَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ

Fasting

Fasting is considered as one of the best righteous deeds, however whether one should fast throughout the ten days or not is a matter of difference of opinion amongst Scholars.

Some scholars are of the view that one should not fast during these days at all. They base their opinion on what is recorded from Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) who said: ***“I did not see the Messenger of Allaah fasting in these ten days at all.”*** (narrated by Muslim)

However, Imam Nawawi, while explaining this hadeeth, said that this does not necessitate not fasting in these days, rather it indicates that Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) did not see the Messenger of Allaah fasting, this does not mean fasting in these days is prohibited. What is evident on this is the hadeeth of Hunaydah ibn Khaalid from his wife that some of the wives of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: ***“The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to fast on the ninth of Dhu'l-Hijjah, on the day of ‘Aashooraa’, on three days of each month, and on the first two Mondays and Thursdays of each month.”*** (Reported by al-Nisaa' 4/205 and Abu Dawud).

So, it seems that fasting of these days is recommended because of fasting being included in righteous deeds but perhaps not all ten days.

There is no dispute on the fact that the fast of the day of ‘Eid which is the last of these ten days is haraam.

As for the fasting of the day of Arafah, this is highly recommended as it is known that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) would fast on that day, except when he was doing Hajj and also there are various reports from the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) indicating a very high reward of fasting on this day.

Abu Qataadah (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: ***“For the fasting of the day of Arafah, I hope from Allaah an expiation for the year that has passed and for the year to come.”*** (narrated by at-Tirmidhi)

According to the majority of Scholars this means the expiation for minor sins.

Haji

Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) narrated that Allaah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, ***“An Umrah to another Umrah is an expiation for what is (all minor sins) between them. And the reward of Hajj Mabroor (the one that is accepted by Allaah) is nothing except Paradise.”*** (Agreed upon)

Therefore Hajj is probably one of the best deed one can do in these blessed days.

Sacrifice

Sacrificing an animal on the day of Eid ul Adhaa which is the last of these ten days is a sunnah of Prophet Ibraheem (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and a sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him).

Every Muslim whom Allaah has given the ability should fulfil this duty *as Allaah says*:

“Therefore turn in prayer to your Lord and sacrifice.” [Al-Kawthar 108:2]

And Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that Allaah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, ***“Whoever can afford to offer a sacrifice but does not do so, let him not approach our place or prayer.”*** (Reported by Ahmad and Ibn Maajah; classed as saheeh by al-Haakim. Hafiz Ibn Hajr said in *Fath al-Baari* that its men are thiqaat).

It is necessary for the one who intends to offer the sacrifice that he/she does not remove any hair, nail or skin from the sunset on last day of Dhul- Qa'dah until the sacrifice is done on the Eid day.

Umm-Salamah (may Allaah be pleased with her) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: ***“When you see the new moon of Zhu'l-Hijjah, and if any one of you intends to offer a sacrifice, let him not remove anything from his hair or nails until he has offered his sacrifice.”*** (Narrated by Muslim)

This hadeeth is reported by all the famous muhadditheen apart from al-Bukhaari.

We ask Allaah to help and guide us to do all that He is pleased with and his Peace and blessings be upon His last Prophet Muhammad.