

E Innal-Hamdu lillah was-Salaatu was-Salaam `alaa Rasoolillah

Praise be to Allaah Who has created Time and has made some times better than others, some months and days and nights better than others, when rewards are multiplied many times, as a mercy towards His slaves. This encourages them to do more righteous deeds and makes them more eager to worship Him, so that the Muslim renews his efforts to gain a greater share of reward, prepare himself for death and supply himself in readiness for the Day of Judgement. We pray we all make it to Jannah, Ameen.

WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT THE FIRST 10 DAYS OF DHUL HIJJAH?

Adapted from: "Virtues of the Ten Days of Dhul Hijjah" by Shaykh Muhammad Salih al-Munajjid and "Superiority of the first Ten Days of Dhul Hijjah" by Shaykh ibn al-Uthaymeen

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- ✚ Dhul Hijjah is the 12th Month of the Islamic Calendar.
 - ✚ 9th of Dhul Hijjah - Day of Arafah, Allah sent down the following ayat: "This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." (5:3)
 - ✚ 10th of Dhul Hijjah - Eid ul-Adha (Day of sacrifice), The Prophet Muhammad (sa) gave his farewell speech

THE VIRTUES – THE BEST 10 DAYS OF THE YEAR!

The first ten days of this month are full of blessings and are very special for many reasons, as followed:

- ✚ **Allaah swears an oath by these 10 days**, and when Allah swears an oath by something it indicates its importance and great benefit.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "By the dawn; by the ten nights" [al-Fajr 89:1-2].

Ibn 'Abbaas, Ibn al-Zubayr, Mujaahid and others of the earlier and later generations said that this refers to the first ten days of Dhu'l-Hijjah. Ibn Katheer said: "This is the correct opinion." (Tafseer Ibn Katheer, 8/413)

- ✚ The Prophet (sa) testified that these are **the best days of this world** and Allah has preferred them over all the other days of the year
- ✚ The Prophet (sa) commanded us to recite a lot of **Dhikr (remembrance) of Allah**, example – Allahu Akbar, La elaha ilallah, Alhamdulillah, Subhaanallah
- ✚ These days include the **Day of Arafah**, on which Allaah perfected / completed the religion of Islaam and fasting on this day will expiate for the sins of two years
- ✚ These days include the **pilgrims (hujja) performing Hajj in Mecca**
- ✚ These days include the **Day of Sacrifice – Eid ul Adhaa**

Evidence from the Sunnah:

Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (sa) said: "There are no days in which righteous deeds are more beloved to Allaah than these ten days." The people asked, "Not even jihaad for the sake of Allaah?" He said, "Not even jihaad for the sake of Allaah, except in the case of a man who went out to fight giving himself and his wealth up for the cause, and came back with nothing." (Reported by al-Bukhaari)

Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) also reported that the Prophet (sa) said: "There is no deed more precious in the sight of Allaah, nor greater in reward, than a good deed done during the ten days of Sacrifice." He was asked, "Not even jihaad for the sake of Allaah?" He said, "Not even jihaad for the sake of Allaah, except in the case of a man who went out to fight giving himself and his wealth up for the cause, and came back with nothing." (Reported by al-Daarimi).

These texts and others indicate that these ten days are better than all the other days of the year, with no exceptions, not even the last ten days of Ramadaan. **But the last ten *nights* of Ramadaan are better, because they include *Laylat al-Qadr* (The Night of Power), which is better than a thousand months. (See *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 5/412).**

WHAT GOOD DEEDS CAN WE DO IN THESE FIRST 10 DAYS?

(1) FASTING

Fasting is one of the best of deeds as Allaah has chosen fasting for Himself, as is stated in the *hadeeth qudsi*: "Allaah says: 'All the deeds of the son of Adam are for him, except for fasting, which is for Me and I am the One Who will reward him for it.'" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 1805).

Fasting the first 10 days of Dhul Hijjah is a Sunnah of our Prophet Muhammad (sa), and so is to fast on the ninth day of Dhu'l-Hijjah, the Prophet (sa) used to fast on this day, it is known as the Day of Arafah.

Abu Hurairah relates that the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said, "There are no days more loved to Allaah for you to worship Him therein than the ten days of Dhul Hijja. Fasting any day during it is equivalent to fasting one year..." [This is related by at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, and al-Baihaqi]

Abu Qatadah reported that the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said, "Fasting on the day of 'Arafah (9th of Dhul Hijjah) is an expiation for two years, the year preceding it and the year following it..." [This is related by "the group," except for al-Bukhari and at-Tirmidhi]

Hunaydah ibn Khaalid reported from his wife that some of the wives of the Prophet (sa) said: "The Prophet (sa) used to fast on the ninth of Dhu'l-Hijjah (Arafah), 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'i and by Abu Dawud; classified by Albaani as *Saheeh*)

Abu Hurairah stated: "The Messenger of Allah forbade fasting on the day of 'Arafah for one who is actually at 'Arafah." This is related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, an-Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah.

NB: Those who are performing Hajj, they can not fast on this day as a mercy from Allah. As for those who are not performing Hajj Al-Imâm an-Nawawî said that fasting in these ten days is extremely recommended.

(2) INCREASE YOUR PRAYS

It is highly recommended to perform the obligatory acts at their prescribed times (as early as possible). To increase oneself in the superogatory acts (extra voluntary prayers, the night prayer, etc) for indeed, this is what brings a person closer to their Lord.

The Messenger of Allah (sa) said: "Upon you is to increase in your prostration to Allah, for verily you do not prostrate to Allah with even one prostration, except that He raises you in degrees and decreases your sins because of it." [Reported by Muslim]

Abu Hurairah relates that the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said, "There are no days more loved to Allaah for you to worship Him therein than the ten days of Dhul Hijja.... To offer salatul tahajjud (late-night prayer) during one of its nights is like performing the late night prayer on the night of power. [i.e., Lailatul Qadr]." [This is related by at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, and al-Baihaqi]

(3) TO MAKE A LOT OF DHIKR OF ALLAH

"... and remember the name of Allah in the appointed days." [Al-Qur'ân 2:203]

Ibn Abbâs and Ibn Kathîr said this means in the ten days of Dhul-Hijjah.

Abdullaah ibn 'Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (sa) said: "There are no days greater in the sight of Allaah and in which righteous deeds are more beloved to Him than these ten days, so during this time recite a great deal of *Tahleel* ("La ilaaha ill-Allaah"), *Takbeer* and *Tahmeed*." (Reported by Ahmad, 7/224; Ahmad Shaakir stated that it is *saheeh*).

Allah says in the interpretation of the meaning: **"We hear and we Obey"** [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:285]

It is Sunnah to say the following during the first ten days of Dhu'l-Hijjah, and to say it loudly in the mosque, the home, the street and every place where it is permitted to remember Allaah and mention His name out loud, as an act of worship and as a proclamation of the greatness of Allaah.

✚ Tahleel:	La ilaha ill-Allaah	(None has the right to be worshipped but Allah)
✚ Takbeer :	Allaahu Akbar	(Allah is The Greatest)
✚ Tahmeed:	Al-hamdu Lillaah	(All praise goes to Allah)

NB: Men should recite these phrases out loud, and women should recite them quietly when in the presence of non-mahram men.

Takbeer at this time is an aspect of the Sunnah that has been forgotten, so much so that one hardly ever hears *Takbeer*, except from a few people. This *Takbeer* should be pronounced loudly, in order to revive the Sunnah and as a reminder to the negligent. There is sound evidence that Ibn 'Umar and Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with them) used to go out in the marketplace during the first ten days of Dhu'l-Hijjah, reciting *Takbeer*, and the people would recite *Takbeer* when they heard them.

NB: The idea behind reminding the people to recite *Takbeer* is that each one should recite it individually, not in unison, as there is no basis in Sharee'ah for doing this.

Reviving aspects of the Sunnah that have been virtually forgotten is a deed that will bring an immense reward, as is indicated by the words of the Prophet (sa): **"Whoever revives an aspect of my Sunnah that is forgotten after my death, he will have a reward equivalent to that of the people who follow him, without it detracting in the least from their reward."** (Reported by al-Tirmidhi)

(4) PERFORMING HAJJ / UMRAH

One of the best deeds that one can do during these ten days is to perform Hajj to the Sacred House of Allaah. The one whom Allaah helps to go on Hajj to His House and to perform all the rituals properly is included in the words of the Prophet (sa):

"An accepted Hajj brings no less a reward than Paradise."

(5) TO MAKE SINCERE REPENTANCE AND ASK FOR ALLAHS FORGIVENESS

One of the most important things to do during these ten days is to repent sincerely to Allaah and to give up all kinds of disobedience and sin. Repentance means coming back to Allaah and foregoing all the deeds, open and secret, that He dislikes, out of regret for what has passed, giving it up immediately and being determined never to return to it, but to adhere firmly to the Truth by doing what Allaah loves.

NB: Repentance is obligatory at all times, but when the Muslim combines sincere repentance with good deeds during the days of most virtue (such as these 10 days), this is a sign of success, in sha Allaah.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): **"But as for him who repented, believed and did righteous deeds, then he will be among those who are successful."** [al-Qasas 28:67]

"So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom, shall see it, And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom, shall see it." [al-Zalzalah 99:7-8]

(6) IN GENERAL PERFORM AS MANY GOOD DEEDS AS POSSIBLE

Good deeds are beloved by Allaah and will bring a great reward. Good deeds come in many forms, if one is unable to go to Hajj they can still occupy themselves at this blessed time worshipping Allaah, by:

- ✚ praying salaah (*obligatory and voluntary*)
- ✚ reading and listening to the Qur'aan
- ✚ remembering Allaah (*making Dhikr*)
- ✚ seeking knowledge – *attending Islamic classes, reading Hadith etc*
- ✚ teaching Islaam
- ✚ making supplication (*du'aa'*)
- ✚ giving in charity (*your wealth, time, talents for the sake of Allah, even a smile!*)
- ✚ honouring your parents
- ✚ spending time with your family, wife, children
- ✚ upholding the ties of kinship
- ✚ enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil
- ✚ *and the list goes on, etc!*

The noble companion Saïd bin Jubair (ra), when the days of Dhul-Hijjah began he would strive to increase in good actions with great intensity until he was unable to increase anymore. [Reported by ad-Dârimi]

EID-UL ADHAA (DAY OF SACRIFICE) – 10TH OF DHUL HIJJAH

The Prophet (sa) said: "For every nation there is a celebration and this (Eid) is our celebration" [Bukhari]

- ✚ In Islaam, we only have two 'Eids, and they are Eid al-Adha (The Festival of the Sacrifice) and Eid al-Fitr (Festival of the Breaking of the Fast.)
- ✚ The word 'Eid means celebration or festival.
- ✚ Definition of Eid: Something which is celebrated regularly and something which returns i.e. something repeatedly done yearly, monthly or weekly etc."

Eid-ul Adhaa marks the conclusion of the major rites of Hajj, and commemorates Allaah's bounty on His Messenger Ibraaheem, when He gave him a ram to sacrifice as ransom for his son Ismaa'eel, `alayhimassalaam.

NB: Our Eid are different to those of the kaafir and other religions, as they are not to do with worldly affairs, we celebrate only for the sake of Allah and even when we celebrate we remember, glorify and thank Allah subhaanahu wa ta'ala for His blessings. Our Eid is a celebration of victory and success achieved with Allah for the Muslims.

TO OFFER A SACRIFICE (UDHIYAH / QURBAN)

One of the good deeds that will bring a person closer to Allaah during these ten days is offering an animal in sacrifice, spending money for the sake of Allaah on the 10th of Dhul Hijjah.

The Prophet Muhammad (sa) was asked "What is Qurban?", He answered "It is the sunnah of your father Ibrahim Alayhi salam, for every hair of the Qurban you will receive a reward from Allah and for every hair in the wool you will receive a reward". (Ibn Maajah and Tirmidhi).

Ruling: The general consensus of the Muslim scholars is that the sacrifice is an important sunnah, and a worship called for in the Law of Allaah. However, they differ as to whether it is nafl (voluntary) or waajib (mandatory) for those who can afford it. Some scholars have explained the different ahaadeeth on the subject by stating that the sacrifice is obligatory on those who can afford it and not obligatory on those who cannot.

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Messenger, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, said: "He who has the capacity, and does not sacrifice, may not approach our musallaa (place of prayer - on the `Eed)." (Ibn Maajah, Ahmad and others, authenticated by Al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunan Ibn Maajah)

THE SUNNAH INDICATES THAT THE ONE WHO WANTS TO OFFER A SACRIFICE MUST STOP...

- ✚ Cutting his hair and nails and
- ✚ Removing anything from his skin
- ✚ From the beginning of the ten days until after he has offered his sacrifice.

Evidence from the Sunnah:

The Prophet (sa) said: "When you see the new moon of Dhu'l-Hijjah, if any one of you wants to offer a sacrifice, then he should stop cutting his hair and nails until he has offered his sacrifice."

According to another report he said: "He should not remove (literally, touch) anything from his hair or skin." (reported by Muslim with four isnaads, 13/146)

If a person does any of these things deliberately, he must seek Allaah's forgiveness but is not required to offer (an extra) sacrifice in expiation; his sacrifice will be acceptable.

Allah says in the interpretation of the meaning: **"We hear and we Obey"** [Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:285]

Whoever needs to remove some hair, nails, etc. because it is harming him, such as having a broken nail or a wound in a site where there is hair, should do so, and there is nothing wrong with that.

There is nothing wrong with men or women washing their heads during the first ten days of Dhu'l-Hijjah, because the Prophet (sa) only forbade cutting the hair, not washing it.

If a person has cut his hair or nails during the first ten days of Dhu'l-Hijjah because he was not planning to offer a sacrifice, then he decides later, during the ten days, to offer a sacrifice, then he must refrain from cutting his hair and nails from the moment he makes this decision.

Some women may delegate their brothers or sons to make the sacrifice on their behalf, then cut their hair during these ten days. This is not correct, because the ruling applies to the one who is offering the sacrifice, whether or not he (or she) delegates someone else to carry out the actual deed. The prohibition does not apply to the person delegated, only to the person who is making the sacrifice, as is indicated in the hadeeth. The person who is sacrificing on behalf of someone else, for whatever reason, does not have to adhere to this prohibition, because the Prophet (sa) used to sacrifice "on behalf of the family of Muhammad," but there are no reports that say he forbade them to cut their hair or nails at that time.

The wisdom behind this prohibition of the one who wants to offer a sacrifice from cutting his hair etc., is so that he may resemble those in pilgrims performing Hajj in ihraam in some aspects of the rituals they perform, and so that he may draw closer to Allaah by offering the sacrifice. So he leaves his hair and nails alone until the time when he has offered his sacrifice, in the hope that Allaah will save him in his entirety from the Fire. And Allaah knows best.

NB: Udhiyah (or animal sacrifice) is an act of worship that reminds us of the great sacrifice that Prophet Ibrahim and Isma'il (peace and blessings be upon them) were willing to perform for the sake of Almighty Allah. It is not required for each working member of the house to sacrifice; one sacrifice is sufficient for the whole family. It is usually the head of the house hold who does this.

THE THREE DAYS FOLLOWING THE 'EID UL ADHAA ARE KNOWN AS THE DAYS OF TASHREEQ

It is *haram* to fast on the Days of Tashreeq, which are the three days after `Eid Al-Adha (11, 12 and 13 Dhul-Hijjah) because:

Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah (sa) sent 'Abdullah ibn Huzhaqah to announce at Mina: **"You are not to fast these days. They are days of eating and drinking and remembering Allah."** [This is related by Ahmad with a good chain.]

There is much to be gained, so make the most of the opportunity afforded by these invaluable and irreplaceable ten days. Hasten to do good works, before death strikes, before one can regret one's negligence and failure to act, before one is asked to return to a place where no prayers will be answered, before death intervenes between the hopeful one and the things he hopes for, before you are trapped with your deeds in the grave. O you whose hard heart is as dark as the night, is it not time that your heart was filled with light and became soft? Expose yourself to the gentle breeze of your Lord's mercy during these ten days, for Allaah will cause this breeze to touch whomever He wills, and whoever is touched by it will be happy on the Day of Judgement. - Shaykh Muhammad Salih al-Munajjid

جزاك الله كل خير

May Allah make us among those who do not waste our time in this world, and spend our time wisely doing the good deeds. May Allah accept our humble deeds, have mercy on us all, let us stand with the prophet Muhammad (sa) on the day of judgement, and make us from the people of Jannah. Ameen

- SERVANT OF ALLAH, QAMAR -

Allah says in the interpretation of the meaning:
"Every soul shall have taste of death; in the end to us shall ye be brought back" [Surah Al-'Ankabut, 29:57]