

The Sleeping Giant: Hajj's Call to Unity

Each year, more than two million Muslims from across the globe converge upon a sacred stretch of land to perform one of the greatest acts of collective worship: Hajj. The pilgrims arrive wearing the same white garments, chanting the same words, and performing the same rituals - a living testament to a Deen that transcends nationality, language, culture, and social standing - all with a singular purpose: the worship of Allah (swt).

Hajj is one of the great pillars of Islam; it is an act of worship - much like the five daily prayers which serve to purify the soul, renew one's connection with Allah (swt). The Prophet (saw) said: «مَنْ حَجَّ لِلَّهِ فَلَمْ يَرْفُثْ وَلَمْ يَفْسُقْ رَجَعَ كَيَوْمِ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ» **“Whoever performs Hajj for the sake of Allah and does not commit any obscenity (rafath) or wrongdoing (fusooq) will return free of sin, just as he was on the day his mother gave birth to him.”** (Sahih Bukhari) Beyond this immense reward, Hajj serves as an annual renewal of core Islamic values, foremost among them, unity and sacrifice.

Unity: The Strength of an Ummah

At a time when the Muslim world faces relentless colonialism, massacres, and nationalism that has fragmented much of the Muslim Ummah, Hajj arrives each year as a timely reminder that Muslim unity is a Shari' obligation and political imperative. The mere sight of the pilgrims - even from a distance - inspires a sense of awe: millions moving as one body, characterized by discipline, devotion, and a singular shared objective.

In many ways, the gathering resembles a vast assembly of strength and synchronization - a visible demonstration that when Muslims unite under one Talbiya Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik and a common purpose, the result is awe-inspiring.

The Prophet (saw) once described our current era - a time when the Muslim Ummah would be great in number yet weak **“like the foam of the sea.”** Much of the weakness today stems from political division: indeed, it is an Ummah spread across 57 nation states each with separate governments, armies, and foreign policies.

But consider the potential of a united Muslim world:

- **Geographic Reach:** The combined territory of Muslim countries spans approximately 12 million square miles making it nearly twice the size of Russia, more than three times the size of the United States, and constituting approximately 21% of the world's total land area, thereby endowing them with immense potential for renewable energy production.

- **Agricultural Abundance:** This vast and ecologically diverse land enables the production of most of the world's major crops, alongside vast livestock wealth that serves as a cornerstone of food security and the economy.

- **A Young and Dynamic Population:** The Muslim population stands at approximately 2 billion people, representing nearly 26% of the world's population, with a median age of roughly 24 years – constituting the world's largest workforce and one of its most dynamic workforce.

- **Strategic Maritime Influence:** Muslim countries border five of the seven major global oil transit chokepoints as identified by the U.S. Energy Information Administration including the Strait of Hormuz, the Bab el-Mandeb, the Suez Canal, the Strait of Malacca, and the Bosphorus. Influence over these critical waterways would provide enormous financial and geopolitical advantages.

- **Energy Dominance:** Islamic countries possess approximately 60–65% of global oil reserves, in addition to vast natural resources and rare minerals.

- **Military Potential:** A unified Ummah would command one of the largest military forces in the world, with an estimated combined active and reserve personnel of 20–25 million.

Sacrifice: The Heart of Hajj

Sacrifice is the second great value exemplified through Hajj - a value that has resonated throughout the ages.

The tradition of sacrifice in Islam traces back to Prophet Ibrahim (as), who demonstrated the highest form of sacrifice and devotion: a willingness to sacrifice his beloved son born only after a long and arduous wait; to leave his wife Hajar and their newborn in a barren desert valley, trusting entirely in Allah's provision; and to abandon comfort, family, and certainty for the sake of obedience to his Lord.

The same applies to the pilgrims; the sacrifices of Hajj begin long before reaching Makkah as they leave behind their businesses, livelihoods, and families and they shoulder significant financial burdens.

Upon arrival, the sacrifices continue. Pilgrims perform the sacred rites beneath the scorching heat, driven by nothing but love for Allah (swt) and their obedience to Him alone. After the completion of Hajj, pilgrims sacrifice an animal and shave their heads - outward acts that mark an inward renewal of the renewal of their allegiance to Allah and their renunciation of all else.

Thus, Muslims should never hesitate to make sacrifices when they are undertaken for the sake of Allah (swt).

As the Hajj season approaches, we recall the sacrifices of those who came before us: we remember the Prophet (saw) during the boycott of Banu Hashim; Sumayyah (ra) the first martyr of Islam, the steadfastness of the Companions during the Battle of the Trench; and Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (ra) who was laid to rest near the walls of Constantinople.

These are but a few examples. Yet, their message did not end with their passing or their martyrdom; rather it continues with us, affirming that the realization of this message it will require sacrifice of the same magnitude.

For instance, the political disunity that has crippled the Ummah will not dissolve without sacrifice. The artificial borders drawn by colonial powers will not fall without sacrifice. The tyrant rulers will not be removed without sacrifice. And the establishment of a Khilafah (Caliphate) —the crown of all obligations—will not come without sacrifice.

Hajj serves as an annual reminder that we were not created to be divided but rather to constitute a single Ummah—believing in one Lord, one Deen, one Ummah. The path back to that unity lies through sacrifice.

The Path to Revival

The questions worth reflecting upon are: What if the Muslim Ummah were to politically unite, as it does spiritually at Hajj each year? Is the Ummah capable of unity and independence? Are we willing to unite and sacrifice?

The answer is unambiguous: the Ummah possesses every resource, every demographic advantage, and every geographic asset required to build a modern, sovereign, and prosperous state – a state that harnesses its vast potential to establish a system of governance that pleases Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw). Under a just system rooted in Divine Revelation, oppression would find no sanctuary, and no violation of the sanctity of Muslims – their lives, wealth or honor - would be permitted. Such a state would present Islam to the world through the undeniable contrast between the justice and integrity of governance under Islam and the greed, inequality, and moral decay in which the prevailing secular-capitalist order is mired, on the other.

The path to revival is not merely a matter of political reform or economic development; rather it entails the resumption of an Islamic way of life, and the establishment of governance according to what Allah has revealed, under the governance upon the methodology of the Prophethood: a Khilafah that unites the Ummah, restores its dignity, and positions it to the station as what Allah (swt) declared it to be - the best nation brought forth for humankind.

The Ummah must make sacrifices and demonstrate sincerity in its pursuit of this revival, and in the unwavering pursuit of Allah's pleasure. Indeed, the victory of this world and the divine reward of the Hereafter await those who answer the call.

﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾

“Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession (to authority) upon the earth, just as He granted it to those before them, and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has approved for them, and that He will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security - for they worship Me, not associating anything with Me. But whoever disbelieves after this promise, it is they who are the rebellious.”

[An-Nur: 55]

24 Dhul Qi'dah 1447 AH

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Hizb ut Tahrir

America