

The Benefits of Umrah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿ إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴾
سورة البقرة، الآية ١٥٨

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ: أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالَ:

« الْحَجَّاجُ وَالْعَمَّارُ وَقَدْ لَهِبَ اللَّهُ، إِنْ دَعَا أَجَابَهُمْ، وَإِنْ اسْتَغْفَرُوا غُفِرَ لَهُمْ »
ابن ماجه، كتاب المناسك، حديث رقم 5

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

In a religious life, there are both material and spiritual journeys. The acts of Hajj and Umrah encompass both types of journeys. These journeys are not just physical travels of the body but also spiritual journeys. Umrah, often referred to as the "mini hajj," is not an ordinary trip. It is a sacred journey towards the House of Allah, the Ka'bah, which is the focal point of the world, where we direct our prayers and which was built for worship. This journey leads to Umm al-Qura, the mother of all cities, which is Makkah al-Mukarramah.

Mecca and Medina each hold special memories, with traces of many prophets, from Adam (as) to Ibrahim (as), Ismail (as), and finally the Prophet Muhammad (saw), who was sent as a mercy to the worlds. Mecca is the city where the Prophet Muhammad (saw) was born, lived, spent his childhood and youth, worked in trade and as a shepherd. It is also where he married and was assigned with prophethood at the age of 40. For 13 years, he carried out his mission of dawah and preaching, facing many challenges with his companions during this period.

In this sacred city, there are countless significant places with profound meaning. From the Cave of Hira to Mount Thawr, from Arafat to Muzdalifah, Mina, Bayt ul Ateeq, Safa and Marwah, the Black Stone (Hajr al-Aswad) to the Maqam Ibrahim, each place and each symbol carries its own value, history and lesson. Indeed, Allah (swt) says: **"Safa and Marwah are among the symbols of Allah. So, whoever performs Hajj or Umrah and walks between them, there is no blame upon him. And whoever volunteers good—then indeed, Allah is appreciative and knowing."**¹

Furthermore, in the blessed city conquered by the words of the Qur'an, Medina al-Munawwarah, there are places where our Prophet (saw) stepped, areas where he prayed and the blessed chamber of Saada (Hujrat al-Saada). From the battlefield of Uhud to the trench (Khandaq), from the Masjid al-Quba to the Masjid al-Qiblatain, and to Jannat al-Baqi, where nearly ten thousand of the noble Companions are buried. There are countless memories, beauties and lessons that provide reflection and guidance in this city.

Dear Jama'ah!

For our pilgrims to fully benefit from this spiritual atmosphere, they need to tune their frequencies to the spiritual environment. The condition for this is sincerity, devotion and having the right intention. Additionally, it is essential to stay away from negative characters such as arrogance, pride, belittling others, flashiness, hatred, envy and dishonesty. The act of Umrah can be a turning point in a Muslim's life. It is an important opportunity, especially for our youth, to develop and renew their spiritual world. This sacred journey must be performed with full awareness and mindfulness. If consciousness and awareness are lost, the worship loses its meaning and turns into a pointless journey. In this sacred journey, the pilgrim must be mentally, spiritually and intellectually prepared for this worship and its purpose. Allah (swt) says, **"Perform the Hajj and Umrah for Allah."**² As the Islamic Community Milli Gorus, we have been blessed for half a century to serve our brothers and sisters on their Hajj and Umrah journeys. We strive to provide guidance in accordance with Allah's pleasure on these blessed journeys. Particularly during the New Year's Umrah, we invite our youth to these sacred lands, calling them to experience a spiritual makeover.

Our Prophet Muhammed (saw) said: *"The pilgrims and those performing Umrah are the visitors of Allah's (House). If they pray to Him, He will respond to their prayers, and if they ask for forgiveness, He will forgive them."*³

May Allah (swt) accept the Umrah of those who are embarking on this sacred journey and reward them in the best way. Ameen.

¹ Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:158

² Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:196

³ Ibn Mâce, Menasik, 5