

# 10 Good Manners for Hajj

by Imam al-Ghazali  
Translation by  
Shaykh Abdul Hakim Murad

There are ten good manners which the pilgrim should observe:

**Firstly,** the money he spends must come from halal sources. He must strive, likewise, to avoid carrying on any business while on Hajj, such as would occupy the heart and distract his attention; for his purpose should be solely to remember Allah and to honour His rites. It is related that 'at the end of time, four types of people will perform Hajj: the rulers (for enjoyment), the wealthy (to do business), the poor (to beg), and the Quran-reciters (to show off).' This report indicates the kind of worldly purposes which can lie behind people's Hajj, and they all destroy the Hajj's merit and prevent people from performing the ceremony in its inward reality. Particularly devoid of benefit is the Hajj made by someone on another's behalf in exchange for money, for such a pilgrimage is done for the sake of this world, not the next. Scrupulous believers and people of pure heart have said that the only exception which ever occurs to this is when the intention is to stay in Makka for some time, and the only way to afford the journey is this kind of surrogate Hajj. If this is the intention, namely, that one is using dunya to pursue din, and not the other way around, then such a paid pilgrimage is not wrong. But the intention should be stated as 'visiting Allah's pure House, and helping an incapable Muslim brother to discharge an obligation'.

**Secondly,** the pilgrim must not assist Allah's enemies by paying them unlawful taxes and levies. Such people are considered among 'those who obstruct God's path', and include the desert Arabs who ambush pilgrims along the route. Because to hand them money is to give support to injustice, one must find ruses and tricks to avoid this as much as one can. Wearing poor and humble clothes will often help. But if this is not possible, then some scholars have said that if the Hajj is a second or subsequent one, then it is best to return home without making the payment. Such charges are a disgraceful innovation, and to submit to them gives them the appearance of legitimate custom, and brings only humiliation and abasement to the Muslims.

**Thirdly,** one should bring much food with one, and be open-hearted and generous in sharing it with others. But one should not go to wasteful extremes in enjoying delectable kinds of food and drink, as those who live in luxury do. Other than this, one cannot be too generous and liberal in feeding other pilgrims, for 'goodness knows no extravagance'. To share one's food supply with others during the Hajj is to spend in God's path; as Ibn Umar said: 'The best pilgrim is the noblest in intention, the purest in giving, and the greatest in certainty.' The Prophet, upon him be blessings and peace, once said: 'A fulfilled Hajj has no reward other than Paradise.' He was asked, 'O Messenger of God, and what is the "fulfillment" of Hajj?' and he replied: 'Speaking good words, and giving out food.'

**Fourthly,** during the Hajj one must renounce all rafath, fusuq, and jidal, as the Quran says. 'Rafath' is an inclusive term for loose and obscene talk. It includes flirting with women and mentioning anything connected with sexual desire. 'Fusuq' is a term for any departure from obedience to Allah, while 'jidal' means boastful and argumentative talk of the kind that provokes rancour, scatters one's intention, and violates the rules of good manners and behaviour. It is reprehensible, therefore, to criticise or go against the wishes of one's companions, for one should always be gentle and respectful of travellers to God's House. Good character is not the repayment of harm, but the endurance of it. It is said that travel (safar) received its name because it unveils (sufur) people's character traits, which is why Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) told a man who claimed that he knew a friend well, 'Have you travelled with him?' When the man replied that he had not, Umar simply said, 'Then you do not know him.'

**Fifthly,** one should perform as much of the Hajj as possible on foot. On his deathbed, Ibn Abbas told his sons: 'My sons, you should make Hajj on foot, for the walking pilgrim receives seven hundred blessings from the Sacred Sanctuary with every step he takes.' One should take particular care to walk during the important rituals, such as the movement from Makka to Arafat and to Mina. Some ulema, however, have held that riding is better, because this allows one better to assist others, is safer, and keeps one away from situations which may provoke anger and resentment in one's heart. In reality, this view is not in conflict with the former opinion: one should simply use one's discernment, so that one walks if one finds walking easy, but rides if one is weak or fears that walking will worsen one's behaviour and damage the quality of one's actions. When performing the rites of Umra, it is best to walk, and to spend the money thus saved in good works.

**Sixthly,** the pilgrim who chooses to ride should ride on a saddle rather than in a canopied howdah. The only exception is the pilgrim who is weak or unused to riding, and fears that he may fall off the normal camel-saddle. There are two considerations here. Firstly, one should give ease to the camel, and howdahs are uncomfortable for them to bear; and secondly, one should avoid imitating the appearance of the proud and wealthy. The Prophet, upon him be peace, made Hajj riding, in order that people could follow him and note his actions, but he rode on an old cloth-saddle which had cost only four dirhams. In later times, caravans became splendid affairs, so that Ibn Umar, beholding one of them, said: 'Few pilgrims, but so many beasts!' He then noticed a pauper in rags, and said, 'Here is a hajji that is magnificent indeed!'

**Seventhly,** one should have a ragged, dusty, untidy appearance, with uncombed hair, without much external ornament or any inclination to pomp and show. For otherwise, one might be inscribed among the proud and haughty who live in luxury, rather than among the weak, poor, and pure in heart. The Prophet (upon whom be peace) observed that 'the [true] hajji is untidy of hair and unkempt'. And Allah the Exalted declares: 'Behold the visitors to My House. They have come to Me dusty and with unkempt hair, from every deep valley.' And He says: 'Then let them end their unkemptness' - by shaving their heads and trimming their nails.

**Eighthly,** one must be gentle with the animals one rides. It is not allowable to overburden them, or to sleep on them. The pious Muslims of old never slept on animals, except for accidental dozing; neither did they sit on them for extended periods without a break. Allah's Messenger, upon him be peace, has said: 'Do not treat your animals as chairs'. It is recommended, and this is the Sunna, that one dismount from time to time to allow the animal to rest. When on his deathbed, Abu'l-Darda said to his camel: 'My camel, I never overloaded you, so do not complain of me before your Lord!' Allah rewards people for kindnesses shown to any living thing; so we must uphold the beast's right, and the right of the owner of the beast who rented it out. To descend for a while and walk beside it gives relief to the animal, and pleasure to the camel-agent. A man once asked Ibn al-Mubarak to take a book with him and deliver it at his destination. 'I shall ask the agent's permission', he said, 'for I have already agreed on an animal and a fee.' See how scrupulous he was over carrying a single book, whose weight was negligible. For if one opens the door to a little, then after a time, much will flow through it.

**Ninthly,** the pilgrim should seek to please Allah by offering a sacrifice, even if this is not obligatory upon him. He should strive to ensure that it is a plump and valuable animal. If the sacrifice is optional, he should eat from it, but not if it is obligatory. What is intended is not the supply of great quantities of meat, but the purification of the soul and the suppression of the ego's love of avarice. 'Their meat and flesh do not reach God; but the piety from you reaches Him.'

**Tenthly,** one must be pleased by the expenditures and sacrifices one makes, and the losses one suffers to one's money or person; for such trials are a sign that one's Hajj has been accepted by God. A misfortune on the way to Hajj is like one of the difficulties which confront the warrior in Jihad, so that for every pain one feels, and for every loss one sustains, one has a reward - and Allah does not allow the reward of any good person to be lost