

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL

So That Our Hajj May Be Accepted

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This is an adapted translation of the article from Al Bayan magazine, "Hatta Yakoona Hajjuna Mabroora" by Faysal bin `Ali Al-Ba`dani.

Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala has assigned a great reward for Hajj mabroor, as evidenced by the saying of the Messenger, sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam, "...There is no reward for Hajj Mabroor except Paradise." (1)

The meaning of birr (from which the word "mabroor" is derived) involves the following two:

1. Good behaviour towards people, fulfilling ones duties towards others and giving them their rights. In the Hadith, "Al Birr is good behaviour." (3) In the Musnad, from Jabir, marfoo` naration states, "They said: 'What makes Hajj mabroor, O Rasulallah – sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam?' He said: 'Providing food to people and spreading (the greeting of) salaam'." (4)
2. Doing much worship and the trait of Taqwa, as opposed to sinfulness. Allah ta'ala says, "Do you order people towards al-birr (righteousness) while you forget (it) yourselves?" (2:44) Al-Qurtubi said, "Sayings mentioned in Tafseer of this verse are close in meaning, that is, (birr is) performance of Hajj in which its rules are fulfilled and which is done in the most complete manner."

Not everyone who makes Hajj will have his Hajj accepted. As Ibn `Umar, radhiallahu `anhu, said to Mujahid, when he said, "How many Hujjaj", "How few. Rather say, how many riders." (6)

I will highlight here some matters that help one ensure that his or her Hajj will be accepted, in shaa' Allah.

First: Sincerity and Following of the Sunnah

Sincerity to Allah and seeking His reward and pleasure alone: Allah says in the Hadith Qudsi, "Whoever does an action for other than me, I will leave him and his shirk." (7) The Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, supplicated, "Allahumma hajjatan la riyaa'a feeha wa la sum'a" (O Allah, (enable me to make) hajj with no riyaa' (show-off in the sense of desire that others witness one's good acts) or sum'a (show-off related to desire that others hear about one's good acts) in it." (8)

Following of the Messenger, sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam, in all matters: He said, "Whoever does an action not in accordance with our matter (Deen), it will be rejected." (9) Also, "Take your rituals (from me), for I do not know whether I will perform Hajj after this one." (10) The Sahaaba, radhiallahu `anhum, comprehended this matter well. `Umar said when he kissed the black stone, "By Allah, I know that you are a stone, you neither bring harm nor benefit, and if I had not seen the Messenger of Allah - sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam, kiss you, I would not have kissed you." (11)

Second: Preparation for Hajj

Servant's preparation for Hajj is from the most important matters that helps in performing the pilgrimage in the legislated manner and ensuring that one's hajj is in shaa' Allah accepted. From matters that require emphasis in preparation for Hajj are the following:

1. Examining and rectifying one's relationship with Allah ta'ala, by sincerely repenting and fulfilling the well-known conditions of repentance.
2. Seeking His help and guidance, manifesting one's need of Him, fear of Him and hope in His reward. This is from the most important matters, for it is not permissible for a person to rely solely on his material means.
3. Relieving oneself of one's obligations towards others, one's trusts and debts.
4. Writing of one's will, as travel exposes one to various dangers.
5. Preparation of provisions for those the pilgrim is responsible for until he returns, advising them with good and appointing someone to take care of their matters, so that his concern and attention be devoted to performance of the pilgrimage.
6. Taking a convenient journey and good, halaal provision. For provision obtained through haraam is from matters that cause one's worship not to be accepted. It is related from At-Tabaraani in a marfoo' tradition, "When a person leaves for Hajj with good provision, places his foot in the stirrup (of his mount) and calls, "Labbayka Allahumma Labbayk" Here I am at Your service, O Allah! Here I am at Your service], he is called from the heavens: "Labbayka wa Sa'dayk [may your call be replied and happiness be your reward], your sustenance is halaal, your journeying is halaal, and your Hajj is accepted." And when he leaves with corrupt provisions and places his foot in the stirrup (of his mount) and says, "Labbayk", he is called from the heavens, "La Labbayka wa la sa'dayk [may your call not be responded to and happiness not be your reward], your provision is haraam, your sustenance is haraam and your Hajj is not accepted." (13)

Today we live at a time when haraam earnings have become widespread, and when questionable wealth has increased, except for those that Allah has mercy upon. So let every servant fear His Lord and remember his saying, "Allah is Good (Tayyib) and does not accept except what is good." (13)

It is recommended for a servant to increase one's halaal provisions according to his abilities, so that one does not depend on others and in order to show kindness to the weak (by giving money in charity).

7. Selection of a righteous company that will help one in moments of weakness, remind him when he forgets, teach him when he does not know, order him to good and forbid him from evil. So let the servant beware of the following two types of companies: a corrupt company that leads to sinfulness and falsehood, and a company that spends its time in what brings no benefit in the hereafter.
8. Learning rules of Hajj and its manners, as well as rules related to travel, including al qasr (shortening prayers), al jam` (joining prayers), at tayammum, al mash (wiping) etc. The Prophet, sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam, said, "Whoever Allah wishes good, He gives him understanding of the Deen." (14)

What helps a person in this is obtaining books and tapes by people of knowledge, and accompanying them while performing pilgrimage. Likewise, accompanying people who are familiar with the places and times of different Hajj rituals.

Third: Servant's awareness of the true reality of Hajj and wisdoms for which the Hajj rituals have been legislated.

This is similar to khushoo` (humble submission) in Prayer, for whoever has greater khushoo`, chances of his prayer being accepted are greater. Likewise with Hajj, the more a person comprehends the reality and spirit of Hajj, the wisdoms and goals for which it has been legislated, and takes that as a means of correcting one's creed and way, the more likely his Hajj is to be accepted and the greater his reward. One will not be able to achieve this except by

preparation and drowning in contemplation and research about true realities and wisdoms of Hajj. As for one who is not like this, it is feared that his action is a mixture of tourism and hardship.

Wisdom and Aims of Hajj

From the most important wisdoms and goals of Hajj which the pilgrim must be aware of are the following:

First: Realization of at-Taqwa (piety, fearful awareness of Allah)

The goal of Hajj is realization of Taqwa. This is why we find the link between Hajj and Taqwa in many verses: Allah ta'ala said: "And complete the Hajj and Umrah for Allah...And fear Allah..." (2:196) "And take provisions, but indeed, the best provision is fear of Allah." (2:197)

Second: Affirmation of Tawheed

Hajj is based on making one's intention sincere for Allah ta'ala and seeking with one's act the pleasure of Allah and none other. Allah ta'ala said, "And complete the Hajj and Umrah for Allah." (2:196) And He said, within the verses speaking of Hajj, "So avoid the uncleanness of idols and avoid false statement, inclining [only] to Allah, not associating [anything] with Him." (22:30-31) Likewise, in Talibiya, which is the slogan of Hajj, singling Allah in one's rituals is made clear: "Labbayka Allahumma Labbayk, Labbayka Laa shareeka laka Labbayk, Innal-Hamda wan ni'mata, laka wal-mulk, laa shareeka lak." [Here I am at Your service, O Allah! You have no partner. Here I am at your service, O Allah. Verily, all the praise, the grace belongs to You and the kingdom. You have no partner] (15). Hajj is based on Tawheed and following of the Messenger "sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam" and not falling into shirk of obedience, as there is no place in acts of worship for any rituals based on desires.

Third: Reverence of Allah's symbols (rites) and sanctities

From the most apparent of goals and wisdoms of Hajj is cultivation of the servant upon appreciation, esteem and love of Allah's symbols and sanctities. Allah says, "That [is so]. And whoever honours the symbols [i.e. rites] of Allah – indeed, it is from the piety of hearts." (22:32)

Fourth: Cultivation upon good and praiseworthy characteristics

1) Decency and chastity. "Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever has made hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihram], there is [to be for him] no Rafath..." (2:197)

Ar-Rafath is sexual intercourse or what leads to it from sayings or actions.

2) Suppressing anger, leaving argumentation and disputes. Allah ta'ala says, "...and no (Jidaal) disputing during Hajj." (2:197) 'Ataa' said, Al-Jidaal is that you dispute your companion until you anger him and he angers you.

3) Gentleness, softness and calmness. When he heard strong rebuking, hitting and shouts at a camel while moving from Muzdalifa, "O people, you must be calm, for rush and hurrying is not righteousness." (16)

4) Not being concerned only about oneself and associating with people. During Hajj, the servant is not only concerned about oneself, rather he mixes with his pilgrim brothers and shares with them in clothing, recitation of Talbiya, transportation and acts.

5) Cultivation upon taking responsibility for one's mistakes. This becomes evident in the case of obligatory atonement for one who makes an intentional mistake that violates the state of ihram, or leaves for Muzdalifah before sunset, etc.

6) Cultivation upon humbleness. This becomes evident in the unity between all Hujjaaj in rituals and feelings, and the negation of traces of material differences between them, such as language, nationality, wealth, etc. The Prophet

sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam, said during his last farewell Hajj, "O people! Verily, your Lord is one, and your father (Adam) is one, verily the Arab is not superior to the non-Arab, nor the non-Arab to the Arab, nor the white to the black, nor the black to the white, except by Taqwa (piety, fearful awareness of Allah)." (17)

7) Cultivation upon different types of patience. The servant restrains oneself from one's desires by leaving acts that are prohibited while in the state of ihram, and also by leaving some permissible acts while not in the state of ihram. He exposes oneself to hardship and fatigue in fulfilling the orders of Allah by performing the rituals, so that this be a motive for leaving sins, doing righteous acts and bearing inconveniences after Hajj.

8) Generosity and openhandedness. This is clear in the servant's bearing expenditures for Hajj.

Fifth: Reminder of the Last Day

Hajj reminds the servant of the Last Day and its states and conditions in a clear manner, including the following:

- His departure from his country and separation from his family reminds him of his separation from them when leaving this world for the Hereafter.
- Removal of stitched clothing and lack of adornment reminds him of coffin and resurrection of servants from their graves on the Day of Resurrection barefoot and naked.
- Journey and fatigue remind him of weakness and hardship of the Day of Resurrection, to the point that some will drown in sweat to their necks.

Sixth: Cultivation upon submission and surrender to Allah ta'ala

Pilgrim is trained upon submission, surrender and complete obedience to Allah Lord of the worlds, as, for example, in the case of to actions of Hajj, such as abandonment of stitched clothing and adornment, Tawaaf, Sa'ee, standing on `Arafat, stoning, lodging and shaving or cutting of one's hair and other such matters that do not have an obvious meaning.

Seventh: Deepening of Brotherhood based on faith and Islamic unity

Pilgrims, with all their differences in tongues, races and nationalities, gather in one same place at one same time, in one same appearance, pronouncing the same call of Talbiya, and for the same purpose: belief in Allah ta'ala, fulfilment of His order and leaving of sinfulness, all of which develops deep love between them, which, in turn, becomes a motive for them to know each other, to cooperate, exchange thoughts, advice, news and experiences, reinforcing in them uprightness upon this Deen which joined them together, as well as performing acts aiming to reach higher levels.

Eighth: Strengthening the attachment of Hujjaj to the predecessors

Actions of Hajj remind of the past, from the migration of Ibrahim, `alaihi salaam, with his wife and infant, to Hijaz, his story when he was ordered to sacrifice his son, his building of the Ka'bah and his call to people to make Hajj. Likewise, Hajj is a reminder of the rising of our Prophet Muhammad, sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam" and his farewell pilgrimage with more than one hundred thousand Companions; when he said to them, "Take from me your rites (of Hajj)". Since then ages have passed, and at the present time the number of pilgrims is more than a million. This causes the pilgrim to remember the generations that have witnessed this land before him...and to remember that the final destination is the same for all.

Ninth: Increase in remembrance of Allah ta'ala

The servant who contemplates during rituals of Hajj about Talbiya, takbir, tahlil (saying La ilaha ill Allah), supplication, as well as the two revelations (Qur'an and Sunnah) which speak about them, will find that an increase in remembrance of Allah ta'ala is from the greatest wisdoms and aims of Hajj. From those texts is the saying of Allah ta'ala, "Remember Allah at al-Mash'ar al-Haram (Muzdalifah)." [2:198] And his saying, "Circumambulation of the

house, [going] between as-Safa and al-Marwa and stoning have only been legislated for establishment of remembrance of Allah on the Earth.” (18)

Tenth: Getting used to a system and training upon discipline

Eleventh: Other benefits

Other benefits are related to both dunya and the hereafter that are individual and collective.

Fourth: Warning against sinfulness and falling into error

Servant does not earn Hajj Mabroor except by leaving sins. While falling into sin is prohibited at all times, Allah ta’ala gives a specific order to the pilgrims to leave sins. He says, “Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever has made hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihram], there is [to be for him] no sexual relations and no disobedience and no disputing during hajj.” (2:197). This is due to nobility of the time and greatness of the place. Allah ta’ala says, “Whoever intends [a deed] therein [i.e. in the Haram] of deviation [in religion] or wrongdoing – We will make him taste of a painful punishment.” (22:25). How could there be reward for one who commits sins?!

Contemplation about the state of people during Hajj causes one to realize the many evil deeds and mistakes, which are the results of: weak fear of Allah, lack of consideration of the sacredness of the time and place, ignorance of the Shari’ah and following of customs. Perhaps from the most widespread evil actions and mistakes in Hajj are the following: intentionally committing prohibited acts while in the state of ihram without a valid excuse, harming Muslims with one’s sayings and actions, leaving of mutual advising and ordering of good and forbidding evil, delaying prayer from its due time, backbiting, slander, vain talk, argumentation, hearsay, extravagance, miserliness in spending, wasting food, bad behaviour towards others, negligence with regards to sins, such as listening to what is not allowed, uncovering what is not allowed to be uncover, hurry or delay in performance of rituals, lack of observance of spatial limits which may not be overstepped in performance of actions of Hajj, etc.

Who is more deprived than one who sacrifices his soul, his wealth and leaves his previous state and his adornment and then returns with forbidden actions and the anger of the Merciful?

A poet said,

He went to Hajj so that Allah forgives his sins
And returned with even more sins

Fifth: Striving hard in obedience of Allah and proper use of time

In the verses about Hajj there are signs that exhort the servant to make a lot of righteous actions while performing the pilgrimage. From it is the saying of Allah `azza wa jall, “And whatever good you do – Allah knows it.” (2:197) Perhaps from the most important righteous actions which the servant should do plenty of and keep busy with while at Hajj are the following:

a) Actions of the heart

Sincerity, love of Allah, relying on Him, fear of Him, hoping in His reward, glorification and respect of Him, submission and surrender, expressing one’s need of Him, truthfulness in supplication, repentance, patience, being pleased with Allah, tranquillity etc. are from the most important actions of the heart that the servant should occupy himself with in his Hajj, for Islam is centred around them. Ibn ul Qayyim said, “Whoever contemplates the aims and means of the Shari’ah will know the correlation between actions of the body and actions of the heart and (will understand) that the former are of no benefit without the latter.” (19)

b) Recitation of the Qur'an, remembrance of Allah and seeking forgiveness

Allah has ordered the pilgrims in the verses about Hajj to engage in remembrance (dhikr) and seeking of forgiveness. It is related that the Prophet, sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam, was asked, "What Hajj is the best? He said, "That in which there is most dhikr (remembrance of Allah)." (20)

c) Goodness towards people

In the Hadith, "It was said, 'O Messenger of Allah, which people are dearest to Allah?' He said, 'Dearest people to Allah are those who are the most useful to (other) people.'"

d) Calling to Allah `azza wa jall

Ignorance, innovations, evil actions and mistakes have widely spread among the pilgrims, and from what is obligatory upon scholars and callers is guiding and advising others, ordering them to good and forbidding them from evil with wisdom, good exhortation and arguing in a better way. Shuja` bin al Waleed said, "I was making Hajj with Sufyan, and his tongue hardly ceased to enjoin good and forbid evil, both while going and coming back." (21)

e) Supplicating to Allah and asking Him

Hajj is one of the great occasions to ask Allah ta'ala and to supplicate to Him, it s an occasion that requires usage of the opportunity and submissiveness before Allah. The Prophet, sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam, said, "The best supplication is supplication on `Arafat." (22) "Those making Hajj and `Umrah are delegates (guests) of Allah, He called them and they answered, they ask him and He gives them." (23)

Sixth: Steadfastness...Steadfastness (after Hajj)

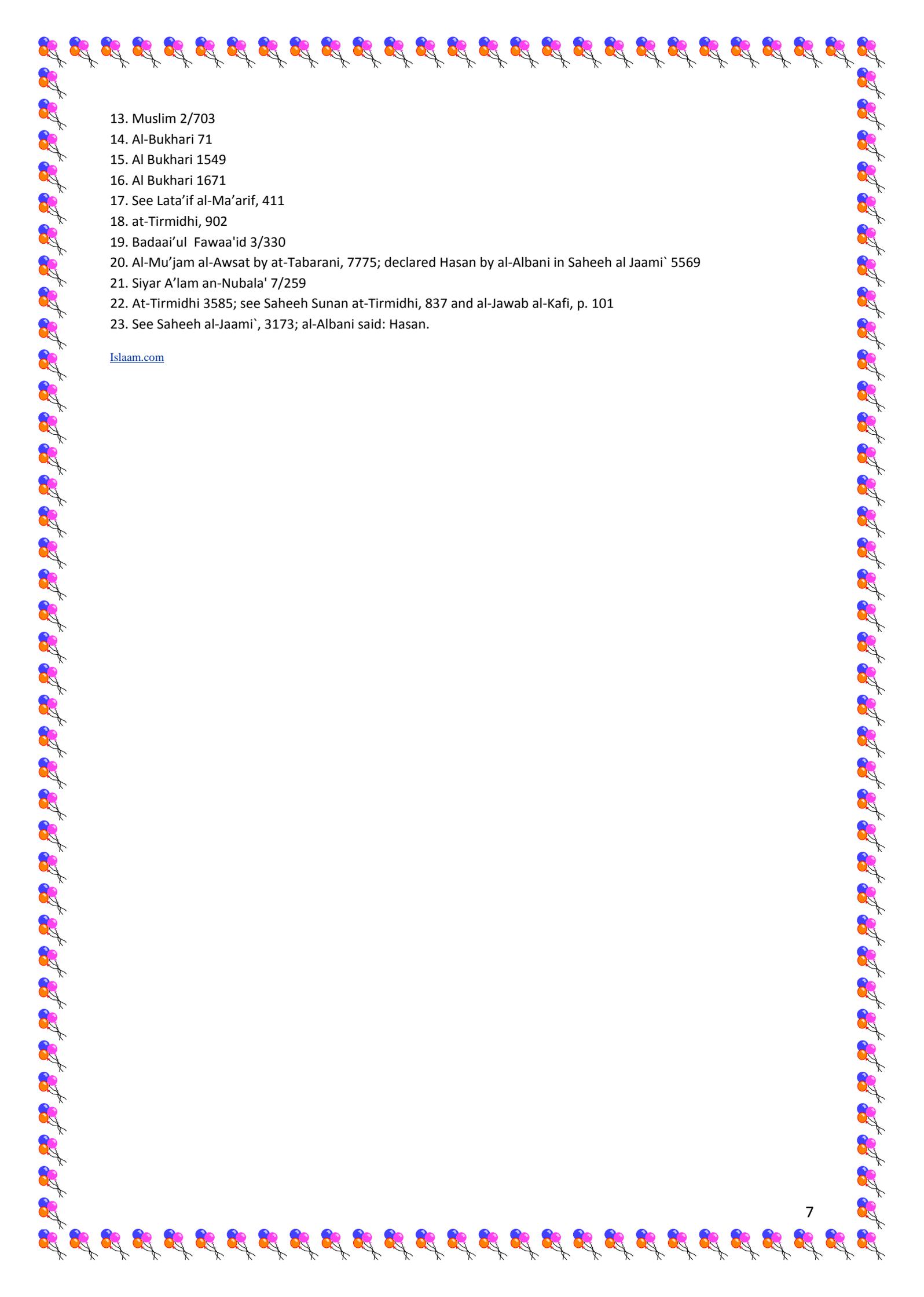
The evidence of Hajj Mabroor is steadfastness of the servant after Hajj, his practice of righteous acts and leaving of the sins. Al-Hasan al-Basri said, "Al-Hajj al-Mabroor is to return abstinent from this world and desiring the hereafter. This is witnessed to in His saying, "And those who are guided – He increases them in guidance and gives them their righteousness (Taqwa, fearful awareness of Allah, care to avoid His displeasure)." (47:17)

So beware, my brother, of destroying what you build, dispersing what you gather, eliminating what you gain, regressing after guidance, and deterioration after refinement.

Remember that Hajj nullifies what precedes it from sins and that because of Hajj you return in a state like that on the day your mother bore you. So beware of opposing Allah with sins after this blessing. Open a new page in your life and fill it with righteous actions in steadfastness upon His Deen.

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