



## The Reformatory Role of Hajj: A Study of MaulanaAbul Hassan Ali Nadwi's Perspective

Mohd. Azam<sup>1</sup>, Dr.Naseem Gul<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Islamic Studies, School of Social Sciences, Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU), Rajouri, Jammu and Kashmir

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, School of Social Sciences, Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU), Rajouri, Jammu and Kashmir

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding Author

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### ABSTRACT:

Islam plays a reformatory role in pilgrimage by transforming it into a deeply spiritual, egalitarian, and monotheistic practice that aligns with its core principles. Pilgrimage is one of the fifth pillars of Islam, and is not purely a customary but a transformative trip that infuses spiritual, ethical, and social reform. MaulanaAbul Hassan Ali Nadwi (1914-1999) was popularly known as Ali Miyan in the Indian Subcontinent [1]. He was a thoughtful scholar of Islam and had an outstanding place not only in India but also in the Islamic world. He was a great Islamic thinker, preacher, writer, and socio-religious reformer of the 20th century. He influenced the whole Muslim world and deserves special attention [2]. It is therefore worthwhile to be familiar with his significant works on diverse aspects of Islam, many of which were reliable analyses of the diverse problems faced by the Muslim Ummah. Almost two hundred books to his credit on different aspects that revive the faith in the hearts of millions of Muslims. His main focus was to reform Muslim society at large, particularly its social, religious, and educational aspects, and to revive the glorious past of the Muslims all over the globe. Therefore, the paper will highlight the reformatory role of pilgrimage [3].

### I. Introduction:

Hajj, or pilgrimage, is the fifth pillar of Islam and an obligation once in a lifetime for every Muslim who is physically and financially able to perform it. Abul Hassan Ali was a prominent Islamic scholar who extensively discussed the deeper significance of Hajj in shaping individual and collective Muslim consciousness. The study explores Nadwi's insight on the reformatory essence of Hajj, focusing on its role in fostering unity, humility, discipline, and renewal of faith.

MaulanaNadwi described it as a practical embodiment of Islamic values that eradicate the discrimination of status, race, and color while reinforcing the principle of Tawhid. He emphasized how pilgrimage revives the core theme of Prophet Ibrahim and his family members, who had firmly stood on Tawhid. Pilgrimage revives the Muslim Ummah through spiritual purification and moral rectitude.

Before the advent of the Prophet Muhammad, the pilgrimage to the Ka'bah in Makkah was practiced by Arab tribes in a distorted form that contradicted Tawhid, which spread idolatry, superstition, and social inequality. Islam restored it into a pure and pristine form, eliminating the rituals that contradict Islamic teaching. MaulanaNadwi believed that pilgrimage is not just the name of some rituals but a means of self-purification and renewal of faith. Muhammad (pbuh) renewed the rituals of Hajj and Umrah, after the conquest of Makkah and to ensure they aligned with the practices of Prophet Ibrahim.

### II. Spiritual and Moral Transformation:

Hajj teaches ethical behaviour, requiring pilgrims to avoid disputes, harm, and immoral actions, and encourages charity, unity, and social justice. Islam made pilgrimage a powerful spiritual journey that strengthens faith, promotes unity, and fosters moral development among believers. Pilgrimage unites Muslims from all racial, ethnic, and social backgrounds into equality before Allah. Pilgrims wear the Ihram, a simple white garment, symbolizing humility and unity that removes distinctions of wealth and status. Pilgrimage transformed from a prejudiced thought into a deeply spiritual and moral discipline. Pilgrimage is the victory of brotherhood against the national ethnic, linguistic, and regional nationalities under



various factors and pressures. It is a manifestation and declaration of Islamic nationality. At the occasion of pilgrimage, all Islamic nations freed from their national costumes that had become their identity, and many nations are attached to the extent of prejudice, adopt a national costume of Islam, which is called Ihram, and a single anthem and slogan are sung in one language.

### **2.1 Hajj demonstrates Global Brotherhood:**

Pilgrimage breaks the concept of prejudiced nationality that has existed among the Muslims through narrow thoughts such as ethnic, linguistic, and regional nationalities under various factors, pressures, and victims. There is no distinction between ruler and ruled, master and servant, rich and poor white and black all are in the same dress and repeat same slogan in the other acts of pilgrimage for example worship, rituals, ceremonies and place of Hajj where people of every nation and country are seen side by side and all distinctions between Arab and Ajam near and far are erased. They all run together between the two hills of Safa and Marwa, travel together to Mina, go to Arfat, and all gather in the same place. The Imam of the Millat Ibrahim Hazrat Ibrahim is one of the most important objectives of Hajj. A major and fundamental objective of pilgrimage is to renew the connection with the Hazrat Ibrahim and to protect his legacy [4].

### **2.2 Hajj is an annual gathering of the Ummah:**

During the Hajj all pilgrims gather on a platform in the best religious and spiritual environment with particular belief, purpose, and passion, and from this they gain new strength and new spirit. They eradicate the corruption and weakness that arise in their beliefs due to the influence of the environment. They correct it in the light of pilgrimage, and they get an opportunity to drive religious from this source of purity, which is clean and safe from all kinds of pollution and distortion from the point of view of reason and the teaching of Islam [5]. On the occasion of a pilgrimage, the pilgrims face certain kinds of situations and come into contact with different people. The pilgrims stay in the company of new people for a long time, various matters come to the fore, and all these things can lead to many prohibitions, wrong kinds of incentives, and conflicts with each other. The prohibition of these things in Hajj has come specifically due to the possibility of this increase in it. During Hajj, pilgrims wear a simple, uniform garment called Ihram, symbolizing equality before Allāh, as

Muslims from diverse backgrounds and nationalities stand side by side in repentance and prayer. The Qur'an states, "And to Allāh, from the people, is a pilgrimage to the House for whoever can find a way thereto [6].

Hajj breaks down barriers of nationalism, race, language, and territorial divisions, drawing Muslims together on a single platform with a common purpose. In this rare religious atmosphere, the Muslim Ummah renews its strength, inspired by a sense of unity. Pilgrims undergo various experiences, interact with others from different cultures, and live among strangers, fostering bonds of brotherhood. Muhammad (pbuh) also warned against journeys solely to visit tombs or shrines, emphasizing those only three mosques—Masjid al-Haram, Masjid al-Nabawi, and Masjid al-Aqsa—merit such intentions, thus protecting the Muslim community from practices that could lead to polytheism or idolatry [7].

### **2.3 Hajj is one of the Basic Practices of Islam:**

The Qur'an is the most important classical masterpiece in Islam. The Hajj is mentioned several times in different chapters of the Qur'an. These chapters have detailed provisions on the time, place, rituals, and sacrifice during the Hajj, of which the specific time and place are the most important. Both the primary source, Qur'an and Hadith together constitute the documents of legitimacy for the fundamental practice of Hajj, and the Qur'an is the permanent safeguard for the unchangeable basic practices of Hajj [8]. God is the designer of the basic system of pilgrimage, and Muslims are practitioners of formality and one-directionality; namely, the transfer of norms of pilgrimage as a unidirectional process from God to Muslims Ummah, while the reverse amendment is impossible. Muslims must comply with the institutions of Hajj and can't modify or abolish them. As it is one of the fundamental institutions in Islam. It is the fifth of the five pillars of Islam, which are the core acts of worship and the foundation of a Muslim's faith and practice. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: whoever performs the hajj for the sake of Allah and does not utter any obscene speech or do any evil deed, will return as his mother bore him. Pilgrimage is not only a performance of adoration but also an insightful spiritual journey that personifies the principles of justice, devotion, equality, and submission to Allah. It stands as a testament to the unity and universality of the Islamic faith [9].



### **III. Hajj and the Holy Land- Saudi Arab:**

Since the establishment of the third Saudi State, the Islamic holy city of Mecca has been under the effective governance of the royal family, the clergy, and the government. Therefore, after the abolition of the caliphate in Turkey in 1926 by Kemal Atatürk, Saudi Arabia gradually titled itself as the "Leader of Islam" due to its unique status, and thus is at the heart of the Hajj management institutions. Saudi Arab not only set up the Ministry of Hajj within the central government but has also spent a huge amount of money to repair Al Masjid al Haram (Sacred Mosque), the Ka'bah, and other sites in Mecca. It has developed a differentiated policy of hajj for Muslims in Saudi Arab, in other Islamic countries, and non-Islamic countries. Its core principle is that Saudi Muslims should leave more opportunities for foreign Muslims [10]. For example, since 1999, the Saudis have been allowed to perform hajj only once in five years and there is a quota allocation for Muslims in other Muslim countries; but for Muslims in non-Islamic countries, there is no quota restriction in principle. Saudi Arab has established the Islamic international system based on the control over the Holy land, Mecca is the destination of the hajj, and Muslims Worldwide view Mecca as the centre of the World. Nowadays, Saudi Arab actively conducts a Saudi-led Islamic international system based on the control of hajj over the Holy land [11]. Hajj is very important for Saudi Arabia. The hajj-related tourism, industries, and infrastructure construction are also a considerable source of income for Saudi Arab. The role of revenues from hajj helps in maintaining Saudi Arab's national independence status, and based on this, to promote its great diplomatic influence as the "Leader of the Islamic World". Hajj has provided an opportunity for Saudi Arabia to improve relations with other countries. Due to the differences in religions, ideologies, and social systems, there are many potential conflicts in Saudi Arabia's relations with other countries. Pilgrimage generally assists as a platform for religious and political communication in terms of Saudi relations with the Islamic countries, particularly with Shiite countries [12].

### **IV. Legacy of Prophet Ibrahim and his Family Members:**

The Qur'an recounts Allāh's call to Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim), saying, "O Ibrahim! You have fulfilled the vision. Indeed, we thus reward the doers of good. Indeed, this was the clear trial." The pilgrimage commemorates the legacy of Prophet Ibrahim and his family, particularly Hazrat

Ismail and his mother, Hazrat Hajira, whose devout actions are now an essential religious duty for all Muslims [13]. When Prophet Ibrahim prepared to sacrifice his beloved son Ismail in obedience to Allāh's command, Ismail responded with unwavering faith, saying, "O my father, do as you are commanded. You will find me, if Allāh wills, among the steadfast" [14]. Maulana Nadwi describes these moments as deeply inspirational, demonstrating Ibrahim's commitment to Allāh and Ismail's steadfastness. Satan (devil) attempted multiple times to mislead Ibrahim, but he remained resolute. These acts now form part of the Hajj rituals and foster unity among Muslims [15].

Allah (swt) made the story of Prophet Ibrahim and his family members permanent and wanted to keep it. Allah commanded Ibrahim to throw stones at the devil that had blocked their path and to stop him from doing this act. Allah (swt) made it an act that is done every year during the days of pilgrimage. Its purpose is to create animosity for the devil to show his rebellion. This is the act in which believers feel great pleasure as provided by him that his faith is firm, his understanding is sound, and the passion for obedience to the divine command is in his heart [16].

#### **4.1 Abrahamic and Muhamaddan Traditions:**

Hajj is an annual gathering that protect pilgrims from evils and whose purpose is to promote the truth and purity of Islam, which plays a very crucial role in protecting it from the influence of ambiguity and distortion. Maulana Nadwi writes, keeping this Ummah connected and attached to its true source and exposing the conspiracies that have been the victims of the past, this gathering provides authentic information [17]. The Ummah still possesses this Abrahamic tradition with its original essence and temperament (which we have described with words like passionate, painful, faithful, loving, simple, and profound), and it has continued to deliver this heritage safely to its future generation. In this sense, pilgrimage is living, powerful, and heart-beating that keeps distributing fresh blood evenly in the veins of this Ummah. Due to this, the Ummah as a whole can review its history at the same time and in one place, it is an opportunity for the scholars to continue to purify it from the distortions and all kinds of superstitions and evaluate it by placing it on the standard of the original Abrahamic and the Muhammadan religious tradition [18].



#### 4.2 Responsibility of Muslim Ummah:

Now the responsibility lies upon the Muslims, though this Ummah, we can effectively protect its religious, intellectual, and cultural unity and can successfully combat regionalism and nationalism, which are rivals of Islamic unity and have also caused severe damage to previous religions. This Ummah lives in different environments and region of the earth and has to go through different periods, such as it show sign of life, movement, stagnation, neglect, violence, competition some time it faced with the problem of civilization, political incentive put it to the test and dominated by materialism and imposed on by a tyrannical rulers. But in all these situations, it always needs to rekindle the suppressed spark of faith to fan the passion of love, the lesson of loyalty and sacrifice. MaulanaNadwi describes pilgrimage as a springtime in which this evergreen tree of the Ummah flourishes and Muslims shed their old clothes and put on a new and beautiful dress [19].

Allah (swt) has made it a blessed city and the centre for pilgrimage. Forever, it has been declared a refuge and place of peace for every Muslim. They have come here with the thought that they are going to the city, which is the source of pure Islam, and the religion has spread throughout the world. Every Muslim, after reaching here naturally considers everything as proof, such as whatever he hears and sees, is the greatest and final standard of proof for him, because there is no more standard of truth than the actions of the people of Makkah and Madinah [20]. Allah (SWT) decided that in the most ignorant time He will not deprive this Ummah from pilgrimage and the blessed scholars of the truth, the atmosphere is filled with spirituality and enlightenment to such an extent that even the hardest of hearts become wax and those eyes that could never hold even two drops of love reach here and spontaneously burst into tears.

#### V. Conclusion:

Hajj, or pilgrimage, is the fifth pillar of Islam and an obligation once in a lifetime for every Muslim who is physically and financially able to perform it. It teaches ethical behaviour, requiring pilgrims to avoid disputes, harm, and immoral actions, and encourages charity, unity, and social justice. Islam made pilgrimage a powerful spiritual journey that strengthens faith, promotes unity, and fosters moral development among believers. Pilgrimage unites Muslims from all racial, ethnic, and social backgrounds into equality before Allah. Pilgrimage breaks the concept of prejudiced

nationality that has existed among the Muslims through narrow thoughts such as ethnic, linguistic, and regional nationalities under various factors, pressures, and victims. There is no distinction between ruler and ruled, master and servant, rich and poor, white and black; all are in the same dress and repeat the same slogan. In the other act of worship, rituals, ceremonies, and the place of Hajj, where people of several countries are seen side by side, and all distinctions between Arab and Ajam (non-Arab) near and far are erased. This Ummah lives in different environments and region of the earth and has to go through different periods, such as it show sign of life, movement, stagnation, neglect, violence, competition some time it faced with the problem of civilization, political incentive put it to the test and dominated by materialism and imposed on by a tyrannical rulers. But in all these situations, it always needs to rekindle the suppressed spark of faith to fan the passion of love, the lesson of loyalty and sacrifice. Allah (swt) decided that in the most ignorant time, He will not deprive this Ummah of pilgrimage and the blessed scholars of the truth, the atmosphere is filled with spirituality and enlightenment to such an extent that even the hardest of hearts become waxen.

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