

Jābir narrated:

1

I saw the Prophet (peace be upon him) stoning while riding his she-camel on the Day of Sacrifice,

2

and he said: 'Learn your rituals.

3

I do not know but I may not perform the hajj after this hajj of mine'.⁽¹⁾

From the Qur'an

- ﴿Give glory to God during certain appointed days. Those who hasten their departure after two days incur no sin, and those who stay longer incur no sin, provided that they are truly God-fearing. Have fear of God and know well that you shall all be gathered before Him.﴾ (2: 203)
- ﴿He who obeys the Messenger obeys God thereby. As for those who turn away – We have not sent you to be their keeper.﴾ (4: 80)
- ﴿We have now bestowed on you the reminder so that you may elucidate to mankind all that has been bestowed on them, and that they may take thought.﴾ (16: 44)
- ﴿Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatever he forbids you, abstain from it.﴾ (59: 7)

The Narrator

Abu 'Abdullāh Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn Ḥarām al-Anṣārī belonged to the Salimah clan of the Anṣār. He attended the second pledge given by the Anṣār to the Prophet at Aqabah. He was a youth at the time, accompanying his father who was one of the twelve representatives. His father took part in the battles of Badr and Uḥud. It is reported that Jābir took part in the Battle of Ṣiffīn alongside 'Alī ibn Abi Ṭālib. He was the mufti of Madinah during his lifetime. He died in Year 78 AH, 698 CE. Thus, he was the last survivor of the Prophet's companions who attended the second Aqabah pledge of the Anṣār.

Summary

The Prophet (peace be upon him) did the duty of stoning at the grand Jamrah at Aqabah and was riding his she-camel as he did it. He ordered his companions to learn their rituals of pilgrimage from him. He told them that he might not perform the hajj a second time. This was what actually happened.

1 Related by Muslim, 1297.



Message and Meaning

This hadith states a very important Islamic rule, namely, that what the Prophet did serves as evidence, and that, like his statements, they provide the lead to be followed.



Jābir reports that he saw the Prophet (peace be upon him) performing the ritual of stoning on the Day of Eid al-Aḍḥā and that he was riding his she-camel at the time. The Prophet wanted his companions to see how he performed the hajj rituals and to show them, at this instance, how he did the stoning, and what he said as he threw each stone. He also wanted them to know that the stoning could be performed on foot or whilst riding.



The Prophet (peace be upon him) then ordered us that we should learn the rituals of hajj from him. We should do as he did, ignore what he ignored, and put forward or delay as he did.

The Prophet's actions that are meant as explanatory of religious duties stated in general terms, such as prayer, zakat and hajj, are obligatory to emulate. Hence, he said: 'Pray as you have seen me pray'.⁽¹⁾ Exceptions are only made on the basis of clear evidence.

The Prophet says in this hadith: 'Learn your rituals'. He uses the imperative form, thus he means that whatever he used of words, actions and conditions are parts of the hajj, and that these are the believers' rituals. Learn them from him, practise them and teach them to other people. This hadith is a fundamental principle of the hajj, akin to his order concerning prayer: 'Pray as you have seen me pray'.⁽²⁾



The Prophet (peace be upon him) explained his order to follow his example saying that he thought that most probably, or perhaps certainly, this would be his only hajj.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was given signs indicating that he was approaching the end of his life. One of these was that on the Day of Arafat, during his hajj, he received Qur'anic revelations saying: 'This day I have perfected your religion for you and have bestowed on you the full measure of My blessings and have chosen Islam as a religion for you'. (5: 3) Another indication was reported by his daughter Fāṭimah when she said that during his last illness: 'He told me that Gabriel used to recite the Qur'an with him once every year, but this year, he did so twice, and I feel that my end is close'.⁽³⁾ Perhaps he said this on the basis of such information, or he might have been informed by God, Sublime and Exalted, that this would be his only hajj.

Indeed this was the only time the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed the hajj after he migrated from Makkah and after the establishment of the hajj as an Islamic duty. Hence, it is named the Farewell Pilgrimage, because when he said that he might not perform the hajj again, he was bidding farewell to his companions.

1 Related by al-Bukhari, 6008.

2 Al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Vol. 9, p. 45. English edition, Kube Publishing & ICMG, Leicestershire, 2022, Vol. 7, pp. -410 411.

3 Related by al-Bukhari, 3624; Muslim, 2450.

Implementation

- 1 Advocates of Islam and educators should perform some acts of worship openly, in front of people, so that they learn from them.
- 2 Scholars and advocates of Islam must be at the forefront during public occasions, so that people may put their questions to them and learn Islamic rulings.
- 3 Doing something practically and telling people to do it in the same way may be a better substitute to explaining it verbally.
- 4 Advocates of Islam should give more attention to immediate practical issues. They may delay what people do not need at present. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not mention the details of the hajj rituals until he led the people in performing hajj.
- 5 Every Muslim should always endeavour to follow what the Prophet said and did. His is the best guidance.
- 6 Advocates of Islam and educators should encourage their students and audience to learn from them whatever they are teaching them. If they delay doing so, they may have other preoccupations or something different may happen to distract them.
- 7 It is permissible to predict something that may happen in the future, if such prediction is based on certain preliminaries. However, one must not state this as a certainty, or as someone who knows what will be coming. He should make clear that he is only making an informed suggestion on the basis of interrelated signs, but ultimately, all matters are in God's hand.



