

Islam: Does completing Hajj make a person a better Muslim?

What is the significance of Hajj?

A pilgrimage is a journey made by believers to a place of religious significance. Muslims try to make this journey to Mecca at least once in their life.

Once completed, you are a Hajji (male) or Hajja (female). Everyone is treated as equal and there is a great sense of unity.

Their sins are wiped away and they can wipe the slate clean.

Over 2,000,000 Muslims from across the world complete a pilgrimage. It is very diverse.

Muslims deepen their devotion to Allah. It takes a total of 5 days.



What do Muslims learn from completing Hajj?

When Muslims complete a Hajj, Allah blesses them and accepts their offering of time and dedication.

Hajj promotes spirituality and gives children time to reflect and think on their own lives.

It reminds Muslims of the Islamic key belief: all humankind are equal before Allah because each person takes part in the same way.

Artefacts and symbols

Visa	For their pilgrimage, Muslims need to apply for a 'pass' which allows them to enter Mecca.
Male Ihram clothing	White unsewn clothes worn by male pilgrims to indicate brotherhood, equality and purity.
Female Ihram clothing	A long plain dress and head covering. This is so all are seen as equal.
Shaved head	Men shave their hair which is a sign of transformation and their renewed commitment to Allah.

What happens on the 5-6 day Hajj?

1,000s of people gather around the Kaaba (which is believed to have been the middle of the Grand Mosque in Mecca).

On the first day, pilgrims should enter ihram: a holy state. They remember Allah, pray and journey 8km.

On the second day, they visit Arafat. This is believed to be where Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) held his last sermon. Many Muslims choose to fast on day two. They then collect pebbles on their 9km trip and sleep under the stars.

On day three, pilgrims throw seven pebbles at the largest column. This symbolises getting rid of the Devil and shows their commitment to Allah.

To finish the Hajj, many Muslims circle the Kaaba.

Key Vocabulary

ihram	A state of holiness which Muslims are in when they perform a hajj (or pilgrimage to Mecca).
the Kaaba	A cube-shaped building in the centre of the 'Great Mosque' in Mecca.
ummah	The worldwide community of Islam.

