

Core Curriculum

3 Foundations of Islam - Obligatory Acts

3.8 **The Hajj Pilgrimage**

The word Hajj literally means “pilgrimage”. The Hajj season begins in the last month of the Islamic calendar. This month is called Dhū al-Hijjah and it begins on the 8th of the month and ends on the 12th. The ninth day of the month is called the Day of Arafah. This is the central day of the Hajj and is the day where everyone must perform the Hajj rituals.

The Hajj is the largest annual gathering of people on earth. It is also the world's largest pilgrimage. During the week of Hajj, Muslims perform a series of rituals. Among these rituals, Muslims walk counter-clockwise around the Ka'ba seven times.

The Hajj pilgrimage was made obligatory upon Muslims during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (s). The pilgrimage itself, however, goes back as far as the time of the Prophet Abraham (as). In Islamic history, God wanted to create a new center for His community of believers in an ancient location called Mecca.

The Hajj, aside its ritual significance, is meant to establish a universal brotherhood and sisterhood of equality among all Muslims in the Islamic community. It is meant to bring people together as Muslims irrespective of their cultural, tribal or national loyalties.