

Hajj tips part 3: The 5 days

- **Taqwa:** CONSTANTLY keep in mind: the best provision for Hajj is taqwa. For every step, every difficulty, and all your sacrifices and discomfort, keep in mind: "This is for Allah."
- **Dua list:** If you haven't already prepared your dua list for Arafah, do it as soon as possible. And for people who asked you to make specific duas for them, if you didn't write those down, summarise them to in general dua asking Allah to fulfill the duas that others asked you to make for them.

Day 1: Yaum-al-Tarwiyyah

- Take time to get used to Mina – but don't go overboard. You won't be here long before leaving for Arafah – and you'll be back here after Muzdalifah, so minimise your 'exploration time', and maximise your personal reflection and preparation for Arafah.
- If you're a male, and you see urinals in the toilet areas, DO NOT use them unless you can absolutely ensure you remain clean.
- Be very careful about the soap at the sinks on Mina. You may see scented soaps there, but you still can't use them until you're out of ihraam. Take your own, unscented soap for now.
- On this day, you'll notice the small space allocated for each person in the tent; and hopefully you'll be around people that are focusing their effort and time on deen rather than dunya. Let these thoughts remind you of your true priorities in life: we are only here for a short time, and in it we have to prepare for the biggest meeting of our lives. Today, it's preparing for Arafah – but in the bigger picture, we're preparing for Qiyamah.
- You may find yourself around people that want to do things you don't really benefit from – such as worldly conversation, congregational thikr, or other things. If these activities aren't the best use of your time, leave them and try to find another place / other people who will be more conducive to your spiritual preparation for tomorrow. It's hard to find private space on Mina – but make dua for it, and ask Allah to guide you to what / who is best.
- Don't over-exert yourself today. Do your preparation, but get enough rest. You may not get to sleep for a while after today.
- Pack your bag for Arafah & Muzdalifah – taking only essentials. You'll be travelling a long time, so don't take anything unnecessary.

Day 2: Arafah

- If possible, try to leave Mina only *after* having made Fajr – because if you're on the bus through Fajr, you may miss the waqt. (Yes – it can happen.)
- If possible, find out from your group the schedule for the day – including when they plan to leave Arafah (which may well be before sunset). Plan your toilet breaks around that – bearing in mind that you will probably face long toilet queues.
- At lunchtime, don't go overboard and don't waste time. Eat something – but only what you need, and be quick. Lunch comes during wuqoof time – so you want to maximise dua time, and minimise other things.
- If your group is having a program at some point during wuqoof, and you don't want to be part of it because you want to focus on your own duas, don't be afraid to go off on your own. Tell someone you're going to find private space, keep your phone on (silent) in case they need to contact you, then go to find place. It may take a little while, but insha-Allah you can find a private spot.
- Wuqoof is the biggest meeting of your life – the most important dua time of your life; so be alone with Allah and pour your heart and soul out to Him. Use your dua list, but don't be limited by it. Make dua for whatever you want – even if it isn't on the list.
- If you're with your spouse, take some time to find a quiet spot and make duas TOGETHER – for your marriage, family, and whatever else. It's a great blessing to be on Arafah together, so take advantage of it by supplicating to Allah as the couple that you are.
- If you're not yet finished with your duas and your group wants to leave for Muzdalifah before sunset, stay behind – and go with a later walking group if you have the option. They may tell you that you can make dua as you walk – since it's a long walk to get off Arafah – but that walk can be

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stressful, so the conditions aren't very good for making your duas. Rather stay and get the most time out of your wuqoof – because it's the whole essence of Hajj. You don't want to lose precious hours just because of the group's logistical convenience.

Evening 2: Muzdalifah

- On the walk to Muzdalifah, you may notice a lot of garbage on the road. Don't add to it – keep your own dirt until you find a bin.
- Remember to collect your pebbles. Also collect extras – both for yourself, and for others who may need them.
- Get some sleep after you've made your salaahs. And if you move around, don't disturb others that are resting.

Day 3 to 6: Eid and days of tashreeq

- **Be smart:** Day 3 (Eid ul-adha) is the biggest day in terms of what you need to do: Stoning, Tawwaf ifadah and Sa'i, and cutting / shaving the hair. For all these actions, be sensible and take the advice of your trusted and knowledgeable group leaders. For example, remember that if the haram is too packed, you don't *have* to do your ifadah on this day – you can delay it to a better time.
- **Don't be fooled – stay clean:** Once the stress of getting all that is done, it may finally sink in that you've pretty much completed Hajj. You may find a much more relaxed atmosphere in the tents on Mina and among your companions. While that's fine, *don't* let shaytaan fool you into thinking you've completed your mission in life and you can now relax. You've now been cleared of your lifetime's mountain of sin and mistakes, but it's so easy to start building them again. Shaytaan is angry that all his hard work of corrupting you was wiped out on Arafah – so he'll come at you with a vengeance from now on. So in these days especially, be on guard. And remember that whatever sins you accumulate can be easily wiped out by the simple acts of Islam – wudu, salaah, istighfaar, etc; so try to keep 'cleaning' yourself spiritually with these a few times a day. You won't stay clean your whole life once you get home, but for now – and while these feelings are high – try to stay pure.
- **Stick to Mina:** You still have a few days of pelting and being on Mina. You may get to go to your room in Aziziah at times, but try to get a lot of time in on Mina – because the comforts of Aziziah can be found at home or elsewhere, but anywhere else, you CANNOT attain the spiritual benefits that you get from Mina in these days of Hajj. And try not to over-indulge on food and drink. Just like Ramadan is supposed to be a time of spiritual exertion rather than worldly indulgence, treat these days on Mina the same – and more so, since you might never go on Hajj again in your life.
- **Build a mountain:** Once we leave these blessed lands – challenges and devils (both of man and jinn) and our own bad inclinations will dirty these souls of ours again. So in these days – still on the incredible, blessed journey of Hajj and in this amazing state of purity – build a mountain of good deeds to act as protection against the sins and mistakes that await you in future. Others may be relaxing - but you should gather as much of this spiritual provision, good habits, etc, as you can - to take home with you as a stockpile. (And encourage others to do the same.) As time and situations erode away at your purity later on, this stockpile will insha-Allah help protect you from ever getting spiritually low (or even reaching a zero balance or deficit). We need those personal mountains so that every time we lose a degree or step of the height of that mountain, the goodness we get from this journey reminds us to do good – whether through action, thikr, or other – to replace that lost step with a new one. Insha-Allah we'll not only stay at the high level, but even build more and more – a slow but steady progress to better and better states of our souls.
- **Pelting for life:** Remember the spiritual significance of pelting the jamaraat. And with each time, make an intention that this pelting should also serve as a protection – a self-purification; a CHOICE inside – to cast away the evils of your own souls inside, and keep the devils away from you. So when – in future – temptation comes, in your mind you can imagine this shaytaan trying to tempt you, remember your pelting, and remember that as you pelted him in Makkah – so too can you symbolically pelt him now and chase him away.

Going home:

- **Impact:** It's very, very sad to leave – especially the last time you tawwaf and leave the haram. Let those feelings make a deep impact on your heart and soul and mind, and build a commitment that you want to be back here. And a gratitude for what Allah has allowed you to experience. That gratitude must be more than just words, though: if you want to come back again, APPRECIATE what you had by trying to LIVE your Hajj. Like a verse in the Quran says – if you're grateful, Allah will give you more. So move beyond just nostalgia and emotional yearning to come back again; make it a practical exercise that will please Allah and insha-Allah earn you an invitation to come back here.
- **Plan ahead:** *Living* your Hajj is the challenge for the rest of your life, so while you're still pure and fresh from Hajj, plan how you can maintain your Hajj. For example:
 - Hajj is the ultimate form of repentance, and one of the greatest ways to maintain the Hajj is to live a life of repentance – each day seeking Allah's forgiveness for the wrongs you may have done, and each day returning to your covenant with Him.
 - Focus on maintaining and improving your salaah – as it's a critical pillar of deen.
 - Try to regularly take account of yourself – seeing where you were, where you want to be, and what you can do to be better.
 - Strive to improve in character, and repairing your relationships with others.
- **Back home:** In the airports and once you're back home, you may be shocked by the impurity of the rest of the world – the crude music, indecency, sexual advertisements, etc. This is what the world – outside of Madinah and Makkah – is largely flooded with, and you have to learn to live in this world trying to not fall into those evils, and trying to not let them influence you. Protect your senses from those things – for example stay away from sights and sounds that would corrupt your heart, and if you do see or hear them, immediately try to replace those experiences with something better. For example, if you see a non-mahram of the opposite sex in indecent clothing, immediately look at something else (halaal) and try to make THAT the image that sticks in your mind so that you forget the haram image. If you hear dirty music, listen to Quran immediately (or soon) and let THAT push the music out of your memory. Remember that your enemy – shaytaan – is going to work on you, and he'll use your senses as the gateway to corrupting your heart in a slow, gradual but effective way. Close those gates, and be on guard.

Also, make frequent and sincere duas asking Allah to protect you, help you live your Hajj, and help you make a positive impact in helping to clean up the society you live in – even if it's in a small way that you yourself won't notice.

May Allah grant you immense benefits and lessons from this Hajj, and make it the fuel that'll drive you to Allah's pleasure, and into Jannah.