

## The excellence of *Zul-Hijjah*

Allah (SWT) says: “*The number of months in the sight of Allah is twelve (in a year) - so ordained by Him the day He created the heavens and the earth; of them four are sacred. That is the straight religion.*” (9: 36)

The four sacred months mentioned in the above verse are, in fact, *Zul-Qa’dah*, *Zul-Hijjah*, *Muharram* and *Rajab*.

The month of *Zul-Hijjah*, which begins on 12 December 2007 this year in Hong Kong, is a sacred and blessed month. There are many blessings during the month of *Zul-Hijjah*. The following are some of them.

1. During this month, the performance of *hajj* is prescribed. The performance of *hajj* is of great significance to the Muslim individual as well as to the *ummah* as a whole. It is the fifth pillar in Islam.
2. Great benefits are gained by those who perform *hajj*, such as purifying from sins, fulfilling the fifth pillar of Islam, getting to know one another and solving many problems of the Muslim world.
3. The performance of *hajj* will be accepted by Allah (SWT) if the money used in it is *halal*.
4. The pilgrim is given the privilege to ask for forgiveness for others. The Prophet (SWT) said: “*Allah forgives the pilgrim and whom the pilgrim asked for forgiveness for.*” (Ibnu Khuzaimah)
5. Each fasting day in the first ten days of *Zul-Hijjah* is equivalent to one year; each night of worship during these ten

days is equivalent to *Lailatul-Qadr*. The Prophet (SWT) said: “*No one day is liked by Allah more than those of the ten days of Zul-Hijjah when people worship Him. Each fasting day is equivalent to one year fasting, and each night prayer is equivalent to Lailatul-Qadr.*”

6. Whoever fasts on the day of *Arafah* (the day before *Eid-ul-Adha*), Allah will forgive him for two years: one year before and one year to come.
7. Doing good deeds in these ten days is liked by Allah more than anything else. They are even more important than *jihad* (in the sense of fighting) in the way of Allah.
8. Muslims are asked to say *tahlil* (*la ilaha illallah*), *takbir* (*Allahu Akbar*) and *tahmid* (*Alhamdulillah*) for the great blessings of these ten days.
9. Muslims are encouraged to visit graveyards and make *du’a* for the deceased. Visiting graveyards also reminds us of our new phase of life when we will be living under the soil.

May Allah (SWT) give us the privileges and the blessings of the month of *Zul-Hijjah*.

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