20653 - Should You Perform Hajj Every Five Years?

the question

We would like to know how to understand the hadith found in Sahih At-Targhib wat-Tarhib which states that (hadith qudsi) one whom Allah has granted good health etc.. and does not visit His house every five years is mahrum (deprived). Does it refer to Hajj or 'umrah or both? And whatever the case may be, what are we to take from the hadith?

Summary of answer

Some of the scholars have discussed the hadith which reads: “Allah says: ‘A person whose body I make healthy and to whom I grant ample provision but five years go by and he does not come to Me is indeed deprived.’” Some of them were of the view that it is fabricated. Others classed it as weak.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Hadith about the virtues of making hajj every five years

The text of the hadith:

It was narrated from Abu Sa’id al-Khudri that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Allah says: ‘A person whose body I make healthy and to whom I grant ample provision but five years go by and he does not come to Me is indeed deprived.’” (Narrated by Abu Ya’la, 2/304; al-Bayhaqi, 5/262)

Discussion of the hadith about the virtues of making hajj every five years

Some of the scholars have discussed this hadith. Some of them – such as Ibn al-‘Arabi al-Maliki –

were of the view that it is mawdu' (fabricated). Others classed it as da'if, such as al-Daraqutni, al-'Aqeeli and al-Subki. Ibn Hibban and Shaykh al-Albani in al-Silsilah al-Sahihah (1662) are of the view that it is sahih.

How scholars interpreted the hadith about virtues of making hajj every five years

Some of the scholars have interpreted this hadith as referring to Hajj or 'Umrah . Based on this, al-Haythami included this hadith in his book Mawarid al-Zam-an under the heading "Chapter concerning one who is well off but does not go for Hajj or 'Umrah in five years." (Mawarid al-Zam-an, p. 239)

Others interpreted it as referring to Hajj only, as al-Mundhiri included it in his book al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib under the heading, "Warning to one who is able to do Hajj but does not go for Hajj ."

Some of the scholars quoted this hadith as evidence that it is obligatory to perform Hajj once every five years for the one who is able to do that. This is a weak view, either because the hadith is weak (da'if) and not sahih, or because the hadith is to be understood as referring to what is mustahabb, not what is obligatory.

Al-Subki said:

The scholars are agreed that Hajj is an individual obligation upon every accountable, free Muslim who is able to do it, once in his or her lifetime, except for very few scholars who held different views, who said: It is obligatory once every five years, and they based that view on the report that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Every Muslim should come to the House of Allah every five years." This was narrated by Ibn al-'Arabi. We say: Narrating this hadith is haram, so how can a ruling be established based on it?

Al-Daraqutni said: "It was narrated through more than one isnad, none of which are sahih at all." (Fatawa al-Subki, 1/263)

Al-Hattab said:

“Some of those who held an odd view said that it is obligatory every year, and it was narrated from some of them that it is obligatory every five years, because of the report according to which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Every Muslim should come to the House of Allah every five years.” Ibn ‘Arabi said: Narrating this hadith is haram, so how can a ruling be established based on it? Meaning that it is mawdu’ (fabricated). Al-Nawawi said: This idea is contrary to the consensus of the scholars, so this odd view is to be rejected on the basis of the consensus of the scholars who came before those who held this odd view.

Even if we accept this hadith, then it is to be understood as meaning that it is mustahabb.” (Mawahib al-Jalil, 2/466)

And Allah knows best.