

The Blessing of Umrah

Kausar

My parents and I lived in the same city. Whenever my mother became unwell, I would immediately go to take care of her. My younger sister was also often unwell.

One day, my brother called and said, "Mother is saying that she wants to go for Umrah, and she wants you to come along as well."

Umrah is a sacred Islamic pilgrimage in which Muslims travel to Makkah to visit the Holy Kaaba and perform special acts of worship.

I replied, "My son is only two years old, how will he manage? My daughter is five years old, and I also have an older son, so who will take care of them?"

But after two days, I thought to myself, "It is only a matter of two weeks, I should go. My husband will look after the children." I worried that if my mother became ill there, I would be deeply distressed. I also thought that we were going to the House of Allah, and I would pray there, and Allah would keep my children safe.

So I called my brother again and told him that I was ready to go for Umrah. But my brother told me that our aunt had come to the house the previous day, and she had agreed to go with them instead, so I should leave it.

Hearing this made me very sad. I thought that I too could have seen the House of Allah, and who knew when such an opportunity would come again in my destiny.

Then, a few days later, their visas arrived. After that, my mother called me and said, "You should come with us too. I do not want to go without you, and we will arrange your visa as well."

I got a new passport made, and even then the visa process took quite a long time. Nearly three months later, all my documents were finally completed. By then, Ramadan had arrived.

We travelled during Ramadan. All of us were overjoyed that we were being blessed with the opportunity to perform Umrah during the holy month of Ramadan.

We spent eight days in Makkah, and then we travelled to Madinah, where another eight days passed.

One Thursday, my mother became very unwell. It was around two in the morning, and by four o'clock, she had passed away.

On Friday, in Madinah, it felt to me as though the world had come to an end. I was crying endlessly, yet people there were congratulating me, saying, "This is a great blessing and honour, your mother passed away in Madinah on a Friday."

Today, I feel deeply grateful that I was with my mother on her final journey. I gave her the final غسل (ritual washing) with my own hands. I was able to see her one last time, and through her, I was also blessed with Umrah.