36808 - Meaning of the verse “then he should not have sexual relations (with his wife), nor commit sin, nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj”

the question

What is the meaning of the verse (interpretation of the meaning):
“The Hajj (pilgrimage) is (in) the well-known (lunar year) months (i.e. the 10th month, the 11th month and the first ten days of the 12th month of the Islamic calendar, i.e. two months and ten days). So whosoever intends to perform Hajj therein (by assuming Ihraam), then he should not have sexual relations (with his wife), nor commit sin, nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj.” [al-Baqarah 2:197]?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

In this verse Allaah mentions some of the rulings and etiquette that have to do with Hajj.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“The Hajj (pilgrimage) is (in) the well-known (lunar year) months”

i.e., the time for Hajj is the well-known months which are Shawwaal, Dhu’l-Qa’dah and the first ten days of Dhu’l-Hijjah. Some of the scholars were of the view that the whole of Dhu’l-Hijjah is one of the months of Hajj.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So whosoever intends to perform Hajj therein”

i.e., whoever enters ihraam for that, because when a person enters ihraam for Hajj, he has to complete it, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And perform properly (i.e. all the ceremonies according to the ways of Prophet Muhammad), the Hajj and ‘Umrah (i.e. the pilgrimage to Makkah) for Allaah”

[al-Baqarah 2:196]

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“then he should not have sexual relations (with his wife), nor commit sin, nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj”

i.e., when he has entered ihraam for Hajj, he must respect it and protect it from everything that may spoil it or detract from it, of sexual relations, sin and argument.

Rafath (translated here as sexual relations) means intercourse and everything that leads up to it of both words and deeds, such as kissing, speaking about intercourse and desire, etc.

The word rafath is also used to refer to obscene speech.

Fusooq (sin) means all kinds of disobedience and sin, such as disobeying one’s parents, severing ties of kinship, consuming riba, consuming orphans’ property, backbiting and gossiping, etc. It also includes the things that are forbidden during ihraam.

Jidaal (dispute) means arguing and debating with no just basis. It is not permissible for the person who has entered ihraam for Hajj or ‘Umrah to argue with no basis.

With regard to debating in a good manner in order to explain the truth, this is something that is enjoined by Allaah, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Invite (mankind, O Muhammad) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islam) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Revelation and the Qur’aan) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better”

[al-Nahl 16:125]

Although these things – obscene speech, sin and false arguments – are not allowed at any time or in any place, the prohibition is even more emphatic during Hajj, because the purpose of Hajj is to be humble before Allaah and to draw closer to Him by means of the acts of worship as much as possible, and to keep away from evil deeds. Thus one's Hajj will be accepted, and an accepted Hajj brings no less a reward than Paradise.

We ask Allaah to help us to remember Him, give thanks to Him and to worship Him properly.

And Allaah knows best.

See Fath al-Baari, 3/382; Tafseer al-Sa’di, p. 125; Fataawa Ibn Baaz, 17/144.