409850 - Do Women Die as Martyrs in Hajj?

the question

In the Hadith of `A’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), she said to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): O Messenger of Allah, do women have to do Jihad? He said: “Yes, they have to do a Jihad in which there is no fighting: Hajj and `umrah.” If a woman’s Jihad is Hajj, does this mean that if a woman dies during her Hajj she is a martyr who died in Allah’s cause?

Summary of answer

-It is not mentioned in the Hadith that if a woman dies [during Hajj] she will attain the reward of martyrdom, for the reward of Jihad does not necessarily imply the reward of martyrdom.
-However, if she performs Hajj with sincere intention, seeking the reward of Allah and striving in what is regarded as her form of Jihad, there is hope that she may attain the reward of martyrdom based on her intention, as taught in various Hadiths.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Hajj as the Jihad of Women in Islam

It is proven that Hajj is the Jihad of women. Al-Bukhari (1520) narrated from `Aishah, the Mother of the Believers (may Allah be pleased with her), that she said: O Messenger of Allah, we see that Jihad is the best of deeds; shouldn’t we (women) engage in Jihad? He said: “No, but the best of Jihad is an accepted Hajj.”

Ibn Majah (2901) narrated that `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: O Messenger of Allah, is Jihad obligatory for women? He said: “Yes, they have to do a Jihad in which there is no

fighting: Hajj and `Umrah.”

Does the Reward of Hajj Equal the Reward of Martyrdom?

It is not mentioned in the Hadith that if a woman dies [during Hajj] she will attain the reward of martyrdom, for the reward of Jihad does not necessarily imply the reward of martyrdom.

But if the woman hopes for the status of martyrdom and seeks to attain it, and wants to do Hajj because it is the Jihad that she is able to do, then in this case if she dies, there is the hope that she will attain the reward of martyrdom, because of her intention, not because merely dying during Hajj means that one has automatically attained martyrdom.

That is because of the general meaning of the Hadith narrated by Sahl ibn Abi Umamah ibn Sahl ibn Hunayf, from his father, from his grandfather, that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever sincerely asks Allah for martyrdom, Allah will cause him to attain the status of the martyrs, even if he dies in his bed.” (Narrated by Muslim, 1909)

Scholarly Commentary on Asking for Martyrdom

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

With regard to the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), “Whoever sincerely seeks martyrdom will be granted it, even if he does not die as a martyr” – and according to another report, “Whoever sincerely asks Allah for martyrdom, Allah will cause him to attain the status of the martyrs, even if he dies in his bed” – what is meant by the former report is explained by the latter.

When taken together, what they mean is that if he sincerely asks for martyrdom, he will be granted some of the reward of the martyrs, even if he dies in his bed. This indicates that it is recommended to ask for martyrdom and to always aspire for what is good. " (End quote from Sharh Sahih Muslim, 13/55)

To learn more, see these answers: (11419, 83856, 3095, 45618, 8511, 41849, 49049)

And Allah knows best.