

The Pilgrimage to Mecca

History, Rites and Philosophy

featuring:

Al-Ghazali on the meaning of the Hajj



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The outstanding feature of the Hajj is its annihilation of race and colour prejudices.



The Pilgrims' Regulation garb called the Ihram.

Our picture illustrates the manner in which men and women pilgrims at Mecca must dress for the pilgrimage rites.

The woman in the picture is Her Highness the Begum Agha Khan and the man the late Mr. Ghulam Muhammad, a former Governor- General of Pakistan. Both of them are in front of the door of the Ka'bah.

In Islam the pilgrimage (al-Hajj) may be defined as the visit, by angels and men, to the House of God on earth.

It will be convenient if we divide this study into three distinct sections:

- (1) Pre-historic antiquity.
- (2) Pre-Islamic antiquity.
- (3) The Islamic epoch.

PRE-HISTORIC ANTIQUITY

From Adam to Noah

According to certain traditions quoted by Muslim writers,¹ the Ka‘bah, the House of God, is of “pre-cosmic” antiquity. According to one of these stories,

¹ We give here a few relevant quotations:

(a) Ka‘b al-Ahbar (Ka‘b of the Hebrews) relates: “The Ka‘bah was like unto foam upon the water, at an epoch forty years before the creation of the heavens and the earth, and it was from there that the world was spread out.” (Azraqi, *Akhbar Makkah*, P- 3)

(b) Mujahid relates: “In truth God the All-Highest placed this House upon the earth before creating anything else on the earth; and the foundations of this House were placed on the seventh, the lowest, of the earths.” (*Ibid.*, p. 4.)

(c) Muhammad al-Baqir, son of Zayn al-‘Abidin ‘Ali, son of Husayn, relates: “One day I was at Mecca with my father, and while he was making the ritual circuits around the House (Ka‘bah), a tall man went up to him and touched him on the back. My father turned round to see who it was and the man said to him: ‘Peace on you, O son of the daughter of the Prophet! I would like to ask you some questions.’ My father merely replied to his greeting, and continued making his circuit without saying anything further. When he had finished the seventh circuit, he went into the Hijr enclosure, and stopped just underneath the spout of the Ka‘bah roof. The stranger and I remained behind him. When my father had finished reciting the ritual prayer which marks the end of the circumambulation, he got up and turned towards me, upon which I went and sat beside him. He then said to me: ‘O Muhammad (*al-Baqir*), where is the man who questioned me?’ I beckoned, and the stranger came and sat down face to face with my father. My father asked: ‘Can I be of any help?’ The stranger replied: ‘Will you please tell me about the origin of the ritual circuits around this House? Why, and when, and how?’ My father: ‘Where are you from?’ Stranger: ‘I am a Syro-Palestinian.’ My father: ‘Where do you live?’ Stranger: ‘At Jerusalem.’ My father: ‘Have you read the two books, the Pentateuch and the Gospels?’

Stranger: 'Yes.' My father: 'O Syrian brother, remember well (what I am going to tell you), and do not relate to others anything as coming from me unless it is true.

" 'I will tell you about the origin of the circumambulation of this House. One day God, the Blessed One, the Most High, said to the angels: "I am going to place a lieutenant (representative) in the earth." (The Holy Qur'an 2:30.) The angels replied: "O Lord, wilt Thou choose a lieutenant from among others (than us), one who will spread disorder, and shed blood. What is more, they (the members of this race) would set up rivalries, and hatreds, and there would be internal rebellion. Rather choose this lieutenant from among our own ranks, for we would not commit disorders on the earth, nor set up rival factions, nor hatred, nor internal rebellion. On the contrary, we would glorify Thee and praise Thee, and would extol Thy holiness. And we should obey Thee, and not disobey Thee." (The Holy Qur'an, *ibid.*) Then God the Most High said: "Verily, I know what you do not know." (Cf. The Holy Qur'an, *ibid.*) So the angels thought that what they had said had offended their Lord, the Powerful and Majestic One, and that their words had angered Him. And they sought refuge under the Divine Throne, raised up their heads, and stretched out their fingers (symbolising the recognition of the oneness of God), humiliating themselves and weeping, fearing His anger. For three hours they made circumambulations around the Throne of God. Then God looked on them and had mercy on them. He then placed beneath the Divine Throne a house having four pillars of emerald. This He covered with red ruby, and called the house *al-Dharah* (the far-off, the distant). He then said to the angels: "Make your circuits around this house, and abandon the Divine Throne." "

"The narrator continued: 'The angels then made the circuits around this House, and abandoned the Divine Throne, and this was easier for them. And this was the "Perpetually-visited House" (*al-bayt al-ma'mūr*) spoken of by God (Cf. The Holy Qur'an 52:4). During every period of 24 hours it is visited by 70,000 angels, who never go back to it again (which gives an idea of the number of worshipping angels). Later on God sent out a number of angels, with the command: "Build for Me on earth a house similar to this house (*al-bayt al-ma'mūr*)." Then God ordered those creatures who inhabited the earth to make ritual circuits around this house (the Ka'bah), in the same way as the dwellers in heaven make ritual circuits around *al-bayt al ma'mūr*.'

"When my father had finished giving this explanation, the Syrian replied: 'You have given a true account, O son of the daughter of the Prophet! It happened exactly as you have said.' " (Azraqi, *Akhbar Makkah*, p. 3.)

(d) Ibn 'Abbas relates: "When God expelled Adam from Paradise, and sent him down to earth, (Adam was so big that) his head was in the sky while his feet were on the earth, and, at that moment, the Ka'bah trembled like a boat. Then God decreased his height until it was sixty cubits. But Adam complained: 'Lord, how is it that I no longer hear the voices of the angels, or feel their presence?' God replied: 'It is because of your sin. But go, and build Me a house, and make circuits around it, at the

same time remembering Me, just as you have seen the angels doing around My Throne.’ ” The narrator continued: “Adam set out on foot. The earth and its deserts folded back at his tread, so that he was able to cross a whole desert in one stride, and similarly with all the stretches of water and the seas — to cross all of these he needed to take no more than one step. Each place where he set down his foot became a prosperous settlement. This continued till he arrived at Mecca, where he built the Sacred House. The Archangel Gabriel dug out the foundations simply by rubbing his wings against the solid mass of the lowest of the earths. Other angels filled it with large stones, so large that even thirty men would be unable to move one of them. And Adam built it (the House) with (stones which came from) five mountains: Mount Lebanon, the Mount of Olives, Mount *Sina’i*, Mount *Al-Judi*(Ararat), and Mount *Hira* (at Mecca, where Muhammad received the first revelation), until it finally took its finished form on the surface of the earth.”

The narrator Ibn ‘Abbas continues: “The first one to set up the House and make circuits around it was Adam. This continued till the Flood, which God, in His Anger, sent as a punishment. This Flood extended as far as the wind (breath?) of Adam.” The narrator points out that the Flood did not spread over the countries of Sind and Hind (India). Then he continues: “The site of the Ka’bah was swept away by the Flood, until God called upon Abraham and Ishmael, who laid the foundations of the House and marked out its boundaries. Later on it was rebuilt by the Quraysh (the tribe to which the Prophet belonged). This house is situated so exactly beneath the ‘House eternally-visited’ (*al-bayt al-ma‘mur*) in the heavens, that if the latter were to fall, it would fall nowhere except on the Ka’bah ” (*ibid*, p. 7).

(e) Wahb Ibn Munabbih relates: “When God accepted Adam’s repentance, He ordered him to go to Mecca. The earth folded back as he advanced, and the deserts also, so that he could cross a whole desert in a single stride. Wherever he placed his foot, that place became a flourishing community. And so he arrived at Mecca. Up till this time Adam had wept and grieved so bitterly, because of the gravity of his sin, that even the angels took pity on him. They grieved because of his sadness and wept because of his lamentation. To console him, God sent him a tent (tabernacle), one from among the tents of Paradise, and had it pitched at Mecca on the site where the Ka’bah is today (for this was before the Ka’bah existed). This tent was made from a red ruby (these are striking analogies with the ‘New Jerusalem’ described in the Apocalypse of *St. John*, 31:9-27; 22:1-5. Is the Ka’bah meant by the new Jerusalem? *Isaiah* 60:6-7 speaks of the children of Ishmael, of the sacrifice of camels and sheep and even of the House of My Glory’ (for which *cf.* the Holy Qur’an 15:37), one from among the rubies Of Paradise. Inside it there were 30 lamps, made from the gold of Paradise, and they shed a light which was the light of Paradise. With this tent there came down also the ‘Angular Stone’ (*rukhn* — the Black Stone). At that time it was a white diamond from among the gems of Paradise, and it served as a chair for Adam, who sat on it. When Adam arrived at Mecca, the angels mourned guard around this

(celestial) tent, and kept it intact by chasing away the inhabitants of earth, who at that time were nothing but djinni and demons. These latter were prohibited from setting eyes on any object which had come from Paradise, for whoever sets eyes on something which has come from Paradise deserves to go to that place. At this time the world was pure and spotless, undefiled, for no blood had yet been shed, and no sin had been committed. That is why God chose it as a dwelling-place for the angels, who existed as if they were in heaven, glorifying God unceasingly day and night. These angels took up their positions all around the sacred territory, at the places where today the boundary marks are to be found. In front of these angels was the sacred territory, and behind them the profane territory, and no djinn, nor any demon, could penetrate their ever-vigilant barrier. It is because of the presence of the angels that the sacred territory has remained sacred to this day, and, at those places where the angels took up their allotted stations, boundary marks have been erected. Eve was forbidden to enter the sacred territory, or to see the tent which had been sent down for Adam — this was because of the sin which she had committed in Paradise. And, in fact, she never set eyes on it during her entire life. (This is a detail which is obviously of Jewish origin, and contrary to Islamic conceptions. We recall here the celebrated saying of the Prophet: ‘Paradise lies at the feet of the mothers,’) But whenever Adam wished to see her for the purpose of cohabitation and raising children, he used to leave the sacred territory in order to meet her. Adam’s tent remained in its original position until his death, when God withdrew it (to heaven). After his death Adam’s sons built a house on the very spot where the tent used to be. This was made of earth and stone, and they and their descendants ‘populated’ it continuously until the time of Noah, when it was destroyed and its very site forgotten. When God raised up Abraham to be a prophet, the latter looked for the foundations of the House, and when he arrived (at Mecca) God caused the site of the House to be overshadowed by a cloud (the Word of God makes allusion to this (The Holy Qur’an 22:26): ‘And when We assigned to Abraham the site of the House . . .’; that is to say, when there occurred the sending of the cloud, which remained stationary over the exact dimensions of the House, to indicate to Abraham where the foundations were to be dug. And since that time, because of God’s blessing, this House has always remained ‘inhabited’ (Azraqf, *Akhbar Makkah*, pp. 7-9)), which spread exactly over the dimensions of the first House. And this cloud remained stationary, giving shade to Abraham and showing him the position of the foundations, until he had built the walls to the height of a man. It was not till then that the cloud went away.”

(f) Ibn ‘Abbas relates: “When God expelled Adam from Paradise and sent him down to earth, He caused him to fall on the site of the Sacred House, which trembled like a boat. God then sent down the Black Stone — the ‘Angular Stone’ (*rukni*) — which at that time glittered because of its intense whiteness. Adam took the Stone and retained it. And he was commanded: ‘Walk, O Adam!’ So he set out and went as far as the region of Hind (India) and Sind, and here he stayed for as long as God

the Ka'bah floated like foam on the water forty years before the creation of the heavens and the earth, and it was after this time that the earth was "spread out". According to another tradition, the angels used to make ritual circumambulations (*tawaf*) around a house built below the celestial Throne (*'arsh*). Later on, God sent angels to build another house on the earth, so that the earthly creatures might do the same thing as the heavenly creatures. According to yet another tradition, when Adam, who had been expelled from Paradise because of his sin, was able to obtain the gracious forgiveness of God, the latter ordered him to make pilgrimage to Mecca. On this occasion Adam had the additional happiness of finding his wife, Eve, who was lost and had led a wandering life since the Fall. (It was at 'Arafat,² in the neighbourhood of Mecca, that the couple were reunited.) The angels welcomed Adam to Mecca, wished him a happy pilgrimage which should be pleasing to the Lord, adding that they also had come there on pilgrimage two thousand years before Adam was born. It was the angels who marked out the boundaries of the sacred territory surrounding the House of God. Among the objects which Adam brought down from Paradise was a brilliant diamond. He inserted it into one of the walls of the sanctuary, and because of its being touched so often by sinners, it gradually lost its brilliance until it became black.

Some say that God removed the Ka'bah³ when the Flood occurred in the time of Noah, and that it was preserved in heaven. Others declare that it was taken away when Adam died, that his sons built another house with the same pious intention, and that it was this second house that was inundated by the

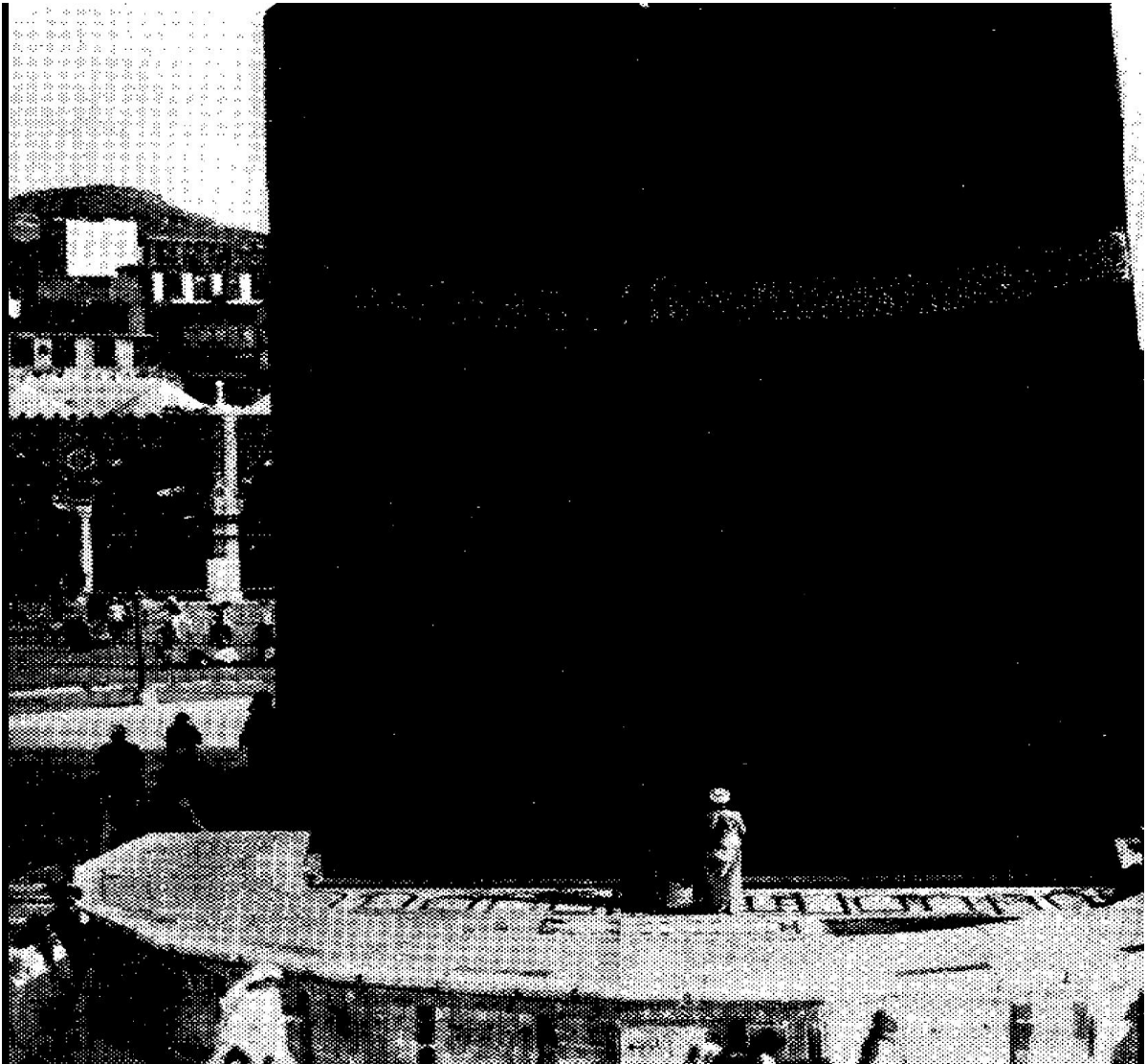
pleased. Then Adam felt the nostalgia with a longing to see the Angular Stone, so he was commanded: 'Make the pilgrimage.' This he did, and he was welcomed by the angels, who expressed the wish: 'May this pilgrimage be accepted as a pious action on your part! Two thousand years ago we also made pilgrimage to this House.' " (*Ibid.*, p. 7.)

² Tabari, *Ta'rikh*. 1, 120.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

Flood. But everyone agrees that Noah's Ark circled around the site of the Ka'bah for forty days before coming to rest on the peak of *al-Joodi* (Mount Ararat).

It should be emphasised that these versions are furnished by Jewish converts to Islam. None of these traditions appears either in the Qur'an or in the *Hadiths* (Sayings of the Prophet).



The Ka'bah

“ The first house built for men (for worship of one God) at Mecca, blessed and a guidance for the nationans.”

(The Quran 3: 96)

PRE-ISLAMIC ANTIQUITY

The period of Abraham

The great Prophet Abraham declared that he loved God above all else. To test him on this point,⁴ God asked him (when he was in Palestine), to separate himself from his only son, who had been born when his parents were already ageing. Abraham led his wife and son far from his home into the desert, where, several times, he was on the point of making camp and settling down, but God repeatedly commanded him to continue on his way. This he did until he arrived at a barren valley, which, incidentally was the site of the future Mecca. Abraham was horrified when he received the command to abandon, there and then, his wife and son, but he did so without complaining or murmur. He then returned to Palestine, where he rejoined his second wife. But the test of faith was not yet finished.

It was not long before the two lonely wanderers in the hot, arid desert had consumed all their food and drink, and the young child began to cry for water. His mother, Hagar, climbed up a small hill (Mount *Safa*) to see if there was any sign of water in the vicinity. Not seeing any, she decided to climb another small hill lying in the opposite direction (Mount *Marwah*). After descending Mount *Safa* she ran to see her baby before going on to *Marwah*. Still without

⁴ Cf. The Holy Quran 2:124-129.

success, she came down again and ran to her son before climbing Mount *Safa* a second time. This frantic and agonising journey was repeated seven times — maternal love never gave way to despair. But when Hagar went to see her son after the seventh “failure”, a spring of water was flowing from underneath the child’s feet, who had kept knocking his heels against the ground and crying from thirst. Fearing that she might lose the precious trickle of water in the desert sand, Hagar surrounded the spring with a low stone wall. This spring later came to be known as the Well of Zemzem. To add to the benefits which He bestowed upon the family of Abraham, God caused a nomad tribe to wander to the locality. Seeing that there was water, they asked permission of Hagar to settle there, and, in return, they promised to look after her and her son.

Some years later Abraham returned to see his wife and son. God then said to him: “If you are speaking the truth when you say you love Us, sacrifice your son.” According to the Qur’an,⁵ this command was revealed to Abraham in a dream. Abraham asked his son for his opinion. “Certainly,” he replied, “do as God commands.” Abraham then took his son to a locality nearby (Mina) and came to the decision to immolate him. The Devil then tried to dissuade him from this course, but Abraham hurled stones at him and chased him away. Satan then suggested to Hagar to intervene, but she also stoned him and put him to flight. Finally, Satan addressed the young boy and advised him to refuse to be sacrificed, but again the only reply was a shower of stones.⁶ Abraham then covered his eyes with a bandage, threw his son to the ground, and calmly drew a knife across his throat. But when he opened his eyes he saw that his son was safe and sound, and that he had only sacrificed — a sheep! For God had seen that Abraham was sincere when he said that he loved Him, and had commanded the Archangel Gabriel to substitute a celestial sheep for

⁵ The Holy Qur’an 37:102.

⁶ Batnuni, *Rihlah*, pp. 190-191.

Abraham's son. God⁷ then prescribed that this sacrifice be repeated perpetually by Abraham and his descendants as a commemoration.

According to the Biblical account,⁸ it was Isaac who was the son referred to in this incident, but the Qur'anic version⁹ gives the name as Ishmael, and the Qur'an¹⁰ declares that the birth of Isaac was a Divine blessing granted to Abraham as a reward for this stringent test of his sincerity. Incidentally, we recall that, according to the Bible,¹¹ it was always the eldest son who was sacrificed. And in this case the eldest son was Ishmael.

After this incident Abraham and Ishmael returned to Mecca, where they rebuilt the Ka'bah on the site of the ancient House of God. The word Ka'bah¹²

⁷ The Holy Qur'an 37:107-108.

⁸ *Genesis* 22:1-18.

⁹ Cf. Ibn Kathfr, *Tafsir*, IV, 14-19.

¹⁰ The Holy Qur'an 37:112.

¹¹ *Exodus* 13:1, 11-15; 22:28-29; 34:19, 20. Numbers 3:40-51, etc. Cf. Rene Dussaud: *Les sacrifices humains chez les Cananeens d'apres les fouilles recentes*, Paris, 1910 C.E., p. 19. "The fact that the age (of the infant sacrificed) was no more than a week, is evidenced by the skeletons found in the jars of Gezer." Further, this author considers that the law in the Bible concerning the purchase-redemption of children, to save them from being sacrificed, is a reform which originated during a later epoch.

¹² Ka'bah is the name of the temple at Mecca, of which one synonym, among others, is "*bayt Allah*" (the house of God). The word "Ka'bah", signifying a temple of religion, existed in the Arabic language before the advent of Islam. It appears in texts which deal with a number of regions. Before going more deeply into the matter, it will be appropriate if we search for this word in various Semitic languages. Mr. T. Fahd has very kindly written to us to point out that the root of the word "Ka'bah" is not found either in Syriac, or Aramaic, or Hebrew, or even in Assyrio-Babylonian. It is met with only in the South-Arabian languages, mostly in the proper names of male persons. It is therefore possible that the name "Ka'bah", as the proper name of the Meccan temple, is a late arrival, dating perhaps from the period when the Yemenite Khuza'ah tribe dominated at Mecca.

This root is very frequently met with in the Arabic language, since it has several meanings, all of which are still current today. Originally the word meant both "to be square" (*trabba'a*) and "to be round" (*istaddra*), as given in the dictionary *Taj al-'Arus*, s.v. "K-'A.B". It is significant that the shape

of the Ka'bah also lends itself to this double meaning, one part of it being cubic and the other semi-circular, the whole looking like a heart. The dictionaries also indicate that the word applies to a square house, a room, the swelling, the upper floor of a house (as well as the breast and the ankle-bone — they both being a protuberance, hence a kind of relationship with an upper storey). Thus originally the word "ka'bah" must have signified an upper room, and, in a restricted sense, a temple devoted to a cult or a religion.

Concerning the non-Meccan regions, al-Hamdani (*cf.* his *al-Iklil*, 8, 67) declares: "The *Ghatafan* possessed a ka'bah — it was built by *Zalim Ibn Sa'd Ibn Rabfah*. One day *Zuhayr Ibn Janab al-Kalbi* led an attack on it and it was destroyed. Later on the Prophet(PBUH) declared that among the activities of the 'age of ignorance' (paganism), none was more in conformity with Islam than that of *Zuhayr Ibn Janab*. The Arabs of *Najran* also possessed a Ka'bah, and so did the 'Iyad tribe at *Sindad* (near the modern *Kufah*)."

If we consult the *Mu'jam al-Bulddn* of *Yaqt* (see under '*Uzza*'), there is no doubt that the Ka'bah of the *Ghatafan* was none other than the temple of *al-'Uzza*, near *Nakhlah*, nine miles north-east of Mecca. It consisted of three "samura" trees, regarded, among other details, as being sacred.

As regards the Ka'bah, we know that on the eve of Islam, *Najran* (in the north of Yemen, on the *Yemeno-Su'udi* frontier), had been evangelised, and that after the Abyssinian occupation of this region, the Governor *Abraham* had built an important church there. It had probably been constructed on the site of the old pagan (idol-containing) temple. Cases are not rare where Christians converted other peoples' temples into churches. It is of some interest to note that in the famous church built by *Abraham* (this church was called *Qalis* by the Arabs), among other details the decoration included two enormous wooden poles or masts. One was called "*Ku'ayb*" (its height was some 60 cubits, about 30 yards), and the other the "Female of *Ku'ayy* (*cf.* *Suhayli, Rawdul Anaf*, 41). In this term we also find the root of the word "ka'bah"!

There are doubts about the Ka'bah of *Sindad*. According to one rendering of a verse by the poet *A'sha al-Aswad Ibn Ya'fur*, this temple was called *Dhu al-Ka'bat* (the one which has *Ka'bahs*). It is obvious that here the word Ka'bah means floors, storeys or rooms, and not the whole temple.

Bukhari (Sahih, 64, 62, Nos. 1, 2 and 3) speaks of another Ka'bah, which is not mentioned by *Hamdani* (mentioned above). He says that the temple of a certain idol of the Yemen, possessed by the *Madhhij*, was called by various names: *Dhu al-Khalasah*, *Ka'bah Yamaniyyah* (or southern Ka'bah), or *Ka'bah Shamiyyah* (or northern Ka'bah). He adds that the Prophet(PBUH) sent a military expedition against it and destroyed it.

As for the innumerable "idol-worship" temples in pre-Islamic Arabia, which did not bear the name "Ka'bah", there is probably no need for us to go into lengthy detail, however important such temples may have been, and however much they may have resembled the Ka'bah of Mecca. But the question

may be raised: Even before Islam, how did the temple at Mecca come to take precedence in importance over all the other places of pagan worship? Was it because this Ka'bah was the oldest in Arabia? (The Holy Qur'an 3:96 lays emphasis on the fact that the temple at Mecca was the first House of God ever appointed for men.) Was it due to the prestige of its guardians? (After the Meccans had succeeded in gaining control of the economic life of the whole of Arabia — see details in my article on “*al-Ilaf*” in the *Melanges Massignon* — they made their city the economic metropolis of all Arabia, and at the same time their municipal temple became the principal one for the people of the entire Arabian Peninsula.) Finally, was it because the Ka'bah was the House of the Supreme God, of Allah, and not that of some inferior regional divinity?

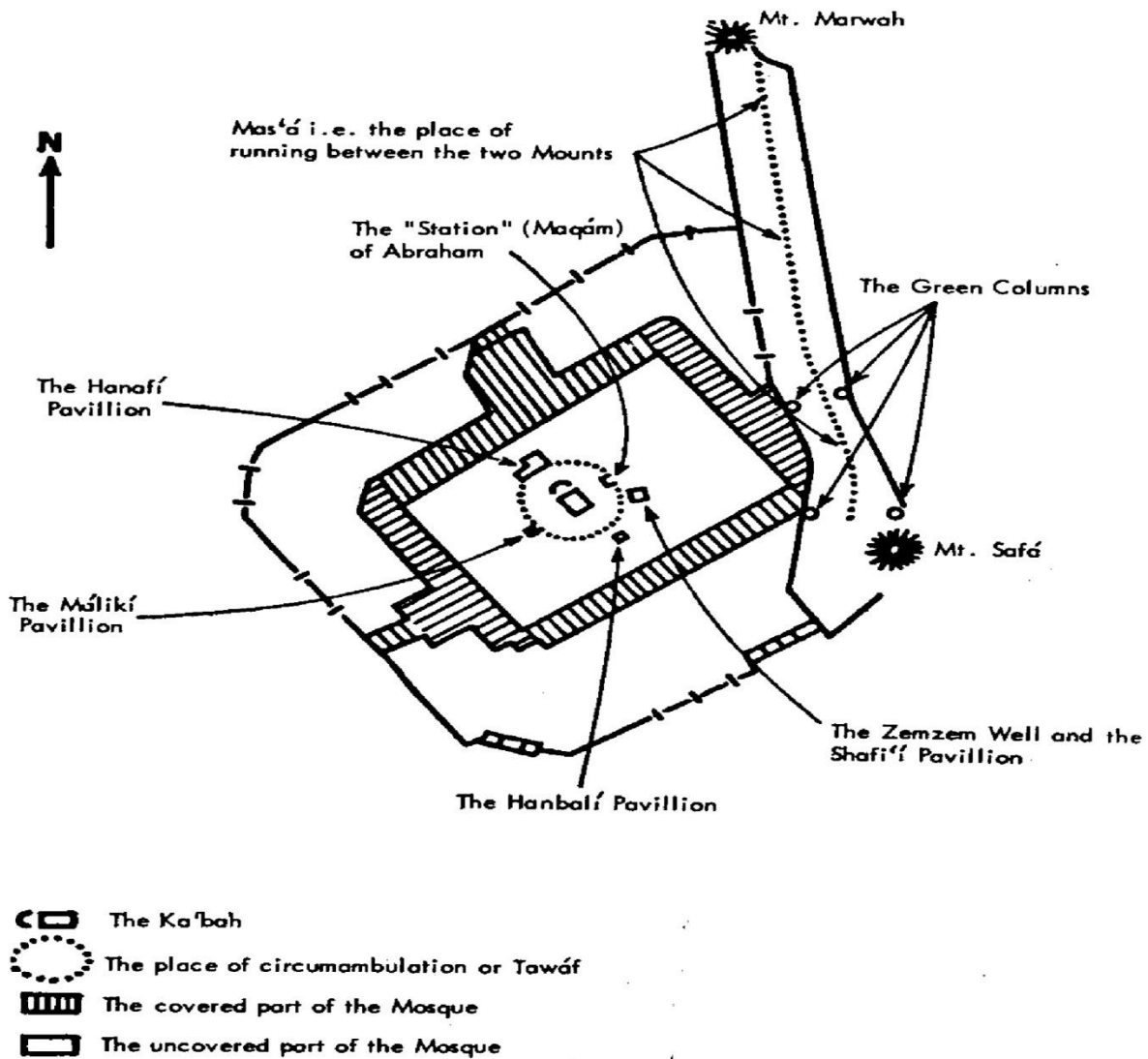
Whatever the replies to these questions, Arabian literature leaves us in no doubt that the pilgrimage to Mecca was by far the most important of all the pilgrimages in pre-Islamic Arabia. We will mention just one fact: Three years before the Hegira, when the Prophet (PBUH) was seeking a refuge outside his native city, which had become hostile, he introduced himself, successively, to as much as fifteen different contingents of pilgrims, and among them were to be seen people who had come from all the four corners of the peninsula (*cf.* Ibn Hisham, *Sirah*, p. 261 et seq). No doubt the following extracts will have an impressive “cumulative” effect on the minds of thoughtful readers:

- a) It appears that the Ancient Egyptians called the Hedjaz “the holy country”. (Batnuni, *Rihlah*, p. 113.)
- b) Al-Mas'udi (*Muruj al-Dhahab*, ed. Paris, 4:43-44, 47) relates that the Sabaeans claimed that the sacred House (the Ka'bah) was originally a temple dedicated to Saturn, and that if it had survived through so many centuries, surrounded with such constant tokens of respect, it owed this prestige to the protection of Saturn, because everything which is placed under its influence can neither diminish nor perish. On the contrary, it gathers to itself increasing respect and reverence. According to the idolaters (the Sabaeans), the Ka'bah was one of the seven temples placed under the protection of the planets, that is to say, the sun, the moon, and the five others.
- c) “The Hindu Brahmans declare that the god Siva and his consort, under the forms and names of Kapot-Ishwara (pigeon god) and Kapotesi (Kabutari?) lived at Mecca.” (*Cf.* Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage*, II, 174.)
- d) We have already mentioned the relationship of Sasan (Persian) and *Dhu al-Qarnayn* (Macedonian?) with the Ka'bah. As for the Christians, we know that the frescoes in the interior of the Ka'bah included, among other pictures, the portrait of the Madonna with the Infant Jesus. (*Cf.* Azraqi, *Akhbar Makkah*, pp. III, 112, 113.)

signifies both square and round, and the Ka‘bah happens to be both square and round, in the form of a heart □), which led the mystics¹³ to ascribe to it an inner, spiritual meaning, which they interpreted in their own particular kind of way. At that time the Black Stone of Adam, located in a grotto nearby, was placed by Abraham in the principal corner of the building, as a starting-point for the ritual circumambulations, and as a symbolic token of the pact made with God, which is accomplished by placing one’s hand on this stone and kissing it reverentially. When the walls began to grow higher, Abraham had to stand on a block of stone to continue building, and his footprint was left on it. This stone, called the “Station of Abraham” (*Maqam Ibrahim*), is still in existence. It was preserved, sometimes where Abraham had left it, near the wall, on the right of the door of the Ka‘bah, sometimes inside the temple itself, for fear of flooding. But today it is in a special pavilion-like building, underground yet covered with transparent crystal, facing the Ka‘bah. On this stone there is an ancient inscription. This was deciphered by *al-Fakihi*¹⁴, but with the passage of time it has become almost illegible. Some of the signs resemble Himyarite or Hebrew characters. Another relic that has been preserved is the furrow in the ground made by Abraham when he dug out soil

¹³ Cf. for example, Ibn ‘Arabif, *Futuhāt*, ch. 72, on the pilgrimage. (Kindly communicated by Mr. Mustafa Valsan.)

¹⁴ M. ‘Abd al-Wahhab Dihlawi, a Meccan scholar of Indian origin, told me, in 1946 C.E., that when he was a young man, people would wash the hollow depression of this footprint on the “Station of Abraham”, and would give the water to be drunk by those children who were about to begin their studies. He also said that the footprint is now barely visible. As for the inscription, Abu al-Jalal Nadawi, Dozy and other scholars have written about this, but it is high time that a new effort was made, using modern means and methods. *Al-Fakihi* (p. 335), claims to have copied the visible part of the inscriptions as accurately as possible. Dozy (*Die Isrueliten zu Mekka*, pp. 195-197, cf. also pp. 155-160), gives the facsimile reproduction of the Ms of *al-Fakihi*, and attempts a translation. But Abu al-Jalal (in the Urdu review *Ma‘arif*, A‘zamgarh of India), challenges this and gives quite a different rendering.



The Masjid al-Haram with the Ka'bah in the centre.

The covered part of the Mosque has been demolished and replaced by a much grander and more spacious building.

The Mas'a is now also covered.

at the foot of the Ka'bah. With this soil he made mortar for use in the construction of the masonry. It was Abraham who instituted the annual visit to the Ka'bah, and he put his son Ishmael in charge of the administration of this observance. Both of them dug a pit¹⁵ in the interior of the building, and in this pit the pilgrims dropped their offerings. Abraham later returned to Palestine, but came back several times to perform the pilgrimage and to visit his family.

Under the Khuza'ah

After the epoch of Abraham all the prophets¹⁶ made pilgrimage to the Ka'bah, including Moses, Aaron, etc. According to numerous Arab sources,¹⁷ the famous king *Dhu al-Qarnayn* also paid homage to this House of God. If this king was really Alexander the Great, we shall not receive any help from Greek sources, but their silence on this point is not by itself a valid reason for rejecting the story. *Dhu al-Qarnayn* means: "The two-horned one What better description could have been given to the Macedonians, whose helmets, decorated with two horns, must have made an impression on the imaginative Arabs? The "double-horn" was the symbol of the ram of Ammon, which was worshipped by Alexander. After the occupation of Egypt, and during the drive towards India, Alexander might well have passed by way of Mecca, whose famous temple was already known to the ancient Greek chroniclers.¹⁸ A curious fact is that, immediately previous to the advent of Islam, a ram's head (*Kabsh*) was still preserved among the numerous offerings left at the Ka'bah.

¹⁵ Azraqi, p. 73.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39; Tabari, *Tarikh*, 1, 122.

¹⁷ Ibn Hisham, *Tijan*, p. 85; 'Ayni, *Sharh al-Bukhdri*, VII, 365. Azraqi, p. 39; Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir*, 1, 179

¹⁸ From Ptolemy, *Geographia*, liv, VI, Ch. 7, para. 32, who gives it the name of *Macoraba*, a word which rather means "the temple", "the place where one draws nigh to God." (Cf. Hittf, *History of the Arabs*, p. 103.)

This object had two horns, was decorated with precious stones, and was popularly referred to as being one of the principal objects preserved in the Ka'bah "treasury".¹⁹ (According to Suhayli,²⁰ among the gifts left at the Ka'bah were a number which had been presented by either Sabour, a Sassanide king who died about the year 270 or 272 C.E., or even by his ancestor, Sasan.)

After the epoch of Abraham, many generations came — and went. Then the Yemeni nomads of the *Khuza'ah* tribe²¹ invaded Mecca and drove out the original inhabitants (the Jurhum, the Qatura and the 'Iyad, branches of the *Amalekites*). When they left, the Jurhum took care to remove all traces of the Zemzem well, and even hid the Black Stone. But a female member of the *Khuza'ah* tribe happened to see it being hidden and decided to turn the incident to the advantage of her tribe. Since the Ishmaelite tribe had remained neutral during this campaign, the victors did not worry them, but, in exchange for the Sacred Black Stone, they obtained a promise from the Ishmaelites that henceforward the Khuza'ites would act as guardians of the temple. According to the Arab chroniclers²² the Khuza'ites dominated for a period of five centuries.

Qusayy, a fifth-generation ancestor of the Prophet Muhammad — very probably a contemporary of Theodosius I (the founder of the Byzantine Empire, who died in 395 C.E.) — married *Hubbah*, daughter of *Hulayl*, the supreme head of the Khuza'ites. When his father-in-law died, he bought the keys of the Ka'bah from his brother-in-law, and thus the guardianship of the temple reverted to the Ishmaelites.²³ Later on *Qusayy* transferred this duty to his son 'Abd al-Dar (literally: "Worshipper of the House of God"). Since then,

¹⁹ *Azraqi, p. III, etc.; Abu Dawud, Sunan, 11, 95.*

²⁰ *Rawd al-'Unuf, 1, 97.*

²¹ *Isbahanf, Aghdni, XIII, 10.*

²² *Azraqi, p. 59.*

²³ *Ibn Hisham, Sirah, p. 79, et seq.*

and up to the present day, these functions have remained in the same family, being passed on from father to son.

Idolatry had started²⁴ with the Khuza'ite epoch, when 'Amr Ibn Luhayy, head of this tribe (about five generations before *Qusayy*), brought the idol "Hubal" from the land of Moab, and set it up inside the Ka'bah, over the pit into which offerings were dropped. According to legend, a "jinni" revealed to 'Amr the whereabouts of the idols which were worshipped by the people of Noah before the Flood, and 'Amr distributed them among the Arab tribes.²⁵ At Mina, one of the "stations" of the pilgrimage, he set up seven idols,²⁶ which symbolised the seven planets or the seven days of the week. At the time of the *Jurhum*, two statues—those of *Isaf* and *Na'ilah*—had been set up on the hills of Safa and Marwah as a warning to the impious. (In fact they represented a couple whom God had turned to stone as a punishment for sacrilege.) The Khuza'ite 'Amr Ibn Luhayy adopted *Isaf* and *Na'ilah* as divinities, and set them up in front of the Ka'bah, where they marked the altar on which sacrifices were to be made.²⁷ (Curiously enough these two idols were located on the site of the Zemzem well.²⁸ This fact was discovered several centuries later, in the time of 'Abd al-Muttalib (the grandfather of the Prophet), who, in a dream, learned of its whereabouts. He recovered the valuable offerings which were hidden there, and became the owner and custodian of the Sacred Well.)

²⁴ Baladhurf, *Ansab*, 1, 49, et seq. (Cairo edition, 1959.)

²⁵ Ibn Hisham, *Sirah*, pp. 50-51; Suhayli, *Rawd*, 1, 62. Cf. also the article in Urdu, by Yazdani, in *Armaghan* (Melange Shaff), Lahore, on the architecture of the Ka'bah.

²⁶ Ibn Habib, *Munammaq* (Lucknow MS.), p. 260. Suhayli, *Rawd*, 1, 62-63.

²⁷ Azraqi, p. 402.

²⁸ Suhayli, 1, 64-65. Ibn Hisham, *Sirah*, pp. 54, 98.

The Christian invasion

The Christians of Abyssinia, after capturing the Yemen, were envious of the prestige of the Ka'bah, which was venerated by all the people of Arabia. They invaded Arabia, even bringing with them an elephant, which gave rise to the term: "War of the Elephant". But they were routed and annihilated by miraculous birds, which ". . . threw stones at them".²⁹ Shortly before the arrival of the birds, 'Abd al- Muttalib [grandfather of Muhammad(PBUH)] had gone to see the chief of the invaders, to demand the return of some camels which had been looted by Abyssinian soldiers. When the commander asked him the question: "Why do you not ask me to abandon the invasion of your temple?" he replied calmly, " The camels are my property and I am claiming them. The temple belongs to its Master, Who will deal with it Himself."³⁰ Two months later Muhammad(PBUH), the Prophet of Islam, was born.

Mecca on the eve of Islam

Mecca was never under the rule of a king, but only an oligarchic government, which functioned through a council of 10 members. In addition there were four "outside" chiefs who were concerned with the administration of the religious life (the pilgrimage in particular). Almost all of these duties had some connection with the Ka'bah, the municipal temple of the City-State of Mecca, which was already known as *Umm al-Qura* (the mother of cities), the metropolis (of the world). The following list gives the names of the clans (or tribes) connected with the administration of Mecca, and their public functions:

²⁹ Ibn Hisham, *Sirah*, p. 71.

³⁰ *The Holy Qur'an*, chapter 105.

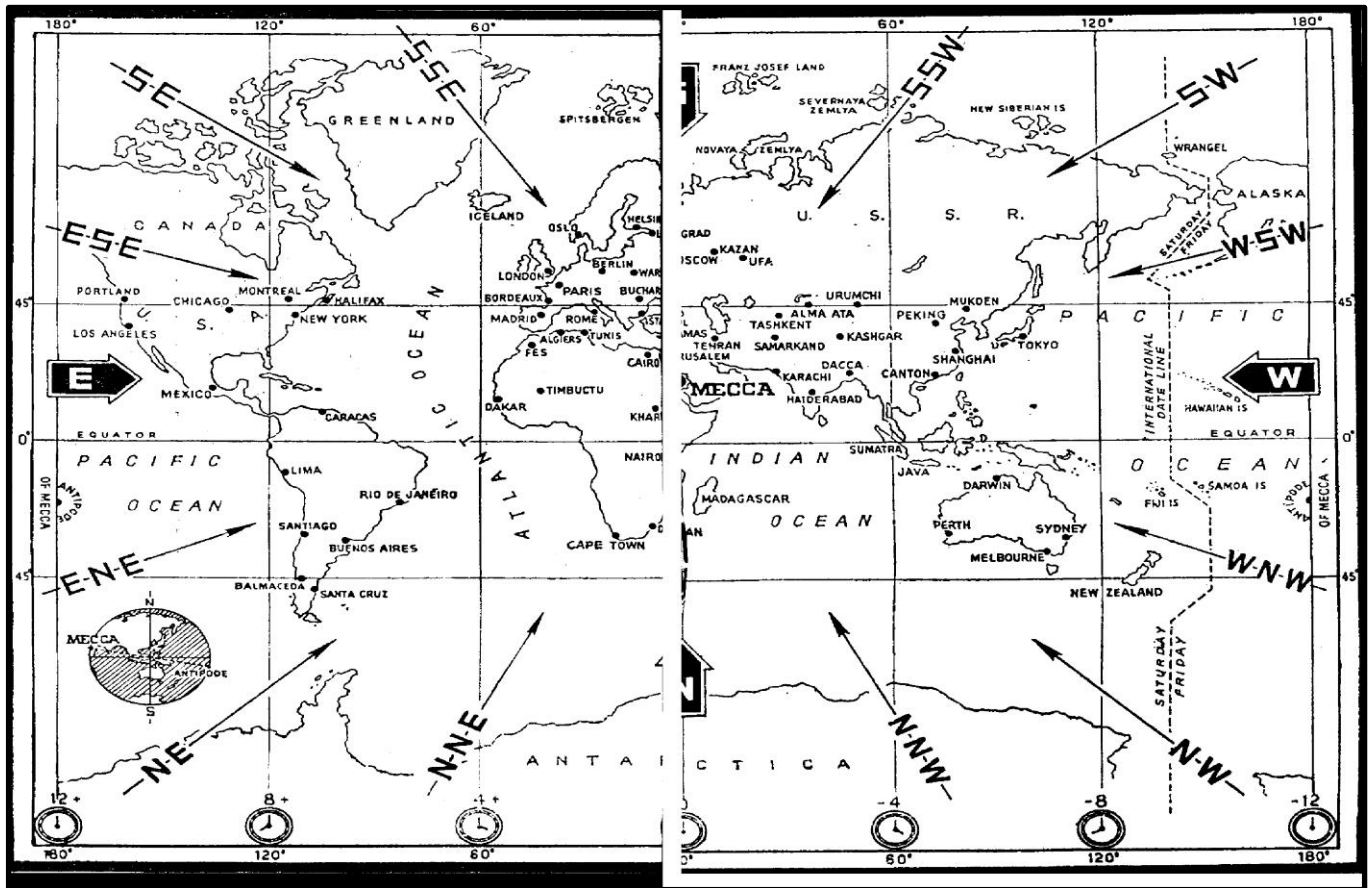
1. **The Hashim**, the tribe of the Prophet Muhammad(PBUH): the Well of Zemzem and the upkeep of the Ka‘bah.
2. **The ‘Abd al-Dar**: held the key of the temple and the city council.
3. **The Nawfal**: the collection of the tax devoted to the subsistence of pilgrims.
4. **The Makhzum**: the custodians of the canopy and reins of the horse which carried the idol during processions.
5. **The Jumah**: custodians of the “divining-arrows”.
6. **The Sahm**: custodians of the offerings made at the Ka'bah. They also dispensed justice in cases involving the penal law.
7. **The Taym**: assessed the damages payable in civil lawsuits.
8. **The Asad**: administered the *mashura* (Upper Chamber of the City Council).
9. **The Umayyah**: were guardians of the flag of the army, and assured the military high command.
10. **The ‘Adiy**: provided the permanent ambassador and minister in charge of relations with “foreign” tribes.

In addition, an architect-engineer was in charge of repairs to the temple building.

The following tribes were also associated with the government:

1. **The Kinanah**: who were concerned with the Calendar, and the intercalation necessary so that the time of the pilgrimage fell always during the same period (in spite of the lunar year).
2. **The Ghawth**: who supervised the pilgrims going to ‘Arafat.
3. **The ‘Adwan**: who’ supervised the pilgrimage to Muzdalifah.
4. **The Murrah Ibn ‘Awf**: whose functions are not known.³¹

³¹ Azraqi, pp. 90-95; Ibn Hisham, *Sirah*, p. 29 et seq.; Suhayli, 1, 40, et seq.



Mecca, “The Centre of the world”.

The map below made on the principle of Mercator’s projection gives a vivid picture of the situation of Mecca—in the centre of the world.

In the Qur'an 42:7, Mecca is described as “The Mother of Towns” (*Umm al-Qura*) because it is destined to be the spiritual centre of the world. Already after the passage of 1,400 years since its advent, Islam is the most widespread religion of all religions of the world.

The arrows on the map show the direction in which the Muslims all over the world face the Ka'bah at Mecca when saying their daily prayers.

The pre-Islamic pilgrimage

On the eve of the advent of Islam,³² the pilgrimage to the Ka'bah, the House of the One God, co-existed with pagan idolatry. There was already a distinction made between the Greater Pilgrimage and the Lesser Pilgrimage.

The Lesser Pilgrimage was probably limited to the month of *Rajab* (the seventh month of the calendar, and, it seems, the period when the dates were harvested). This pilgrimage entailed a visit to the Ka'bah and the accomplishing of seven journeys between Mounts *Safa* and *Marwah*. In the Greater Pilgrimage the devotees had also to make stops at 'Arafat, at *Muzdalifah* and at *Mina* and sacrifice animals. This pilgrimage was carried out in the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* (literally: "the one of the Pilgrimage", the twelfth of the calendar). Profiting from the occasion, the devotee also made a "pious" visit to the idols. (Incidentally, we will mention that the Ka'bah was certainly the most important place of pilgrimage, though not the only one, in pre-Islamic Arabia; similar practices were carried out at other sanctuaries and "sacred-stone" sites.)

The pilgrims first assembled at 'Arafat, about ten miles east of Mecca, where they stayed during the day of the 9th *Dhu al-Hijjah*. In the evening they left in the direction of Mecca, but, on the way there, they stayed for a night at *Muzdalifah* (also called Mughammas and Jam'). After the time of *Qusayy*, the Meccans and their allies considered themselves as being privileged people and so they did not visit 'Arafat, but waited for the pilgrims at *Muzdalifah*.³³ (Before the advent of Islam, Muhammad had offended his fellow-citizens by

³² Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *al-Iqd* (ed. Bulaq), 11, 45-46, Ibn Hisham, *Sirah*, p. 80; Tabari, *Tarikh*, 1, 1098. See also my *Prophete de l'Islam*, p. 526, et seq.

³³ Ibn Habib, *Muhabbar*, p. 311.

disregarding this “privilege” and proceeding to ‘Arafat,³⁴ like the other pilgrims.) These “privileged” people were called “the austere ones” (*al-Hums*) because, once they had purified and consecrated themselves and definitely entered upon the sacred state of pilgrimage, they would eat neither melted butter, nor curdled milk, nor milk which had been gathered on the previous day. They would abstain from meat, and no longer lived under tents of wool, but only under tents made of red leather.³⁵

From *Muzdalifah* the pilgrims went to *Mina* (about three miles from the centre of Mecca). Here was carried out the lapidation of the Devil³⁶ (by throwing stones at the three specially-marked places), and then they went on to Mecca. Each contingent of pilgrims had its own particular customs and peculiarities. For example,³⁷ when the ‘*Akk* tribe of the Yemen used to arrive near Mecca, they brought forward two Negro boys, who had been chosen from among the slaves. They were completely naked and, mounted on a camel, they shouted from time to time “ We are the two crows of ‘*Akk!* ” Their cry was answered by their fellow-tribesmen, who followed behind them. They proclaimed: “The ‘*Akk* surrender to Thee as captives, they who are Thy devotees from the Yemen. May we once more make the pilgrimage, in spite of all the hardships, hardships which bring healing to our souls.”

The pilgrims then made seven ritual circumambulations of the Ka'bah, though it is not known exactly what went on there. The Qur'an³⁸ speaks contemptuously of these practices, saying: “ Their ritual prayer before the

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 236, 319.

³⁵ Bukhari, *Sahih*, 29:91; *Suhayli*, 1, 135.

³⁶ Ibn Habib, *Muhabbar*, pp. 178-181; *Ibid*, *Munammaq*, pp. 95-97 (Lucknow MS.); Ya'qoubi, *Ta'irikh*, 1, 297.

³⁷ Ibn Habib, *Muhabbar*, p. 319.

³⁸ The Holy Qur'an 8:35.

House was nothing but whistling and clapping of hands.” Al-Fakihi³⁹ relates that during the seven journeys between hills *Safa* and *Marwah* (quite near the Ka‘bah) the pilgrims used to sing a refrain: “ May our eyes be refreshed on seeing the *Marwatayn* (i.e., *Safa* and *Marwah*).” Then they shaved their heads and this completed the pilgrimage. They then left in the sacred state of “Hajj. During the whole of the time they were in the ritual state, they abstained from washing, did not cut their hair or their nails, and often pronounced the *Labbayk* (“Here am I”).⁴⁰“ The actual wording of this ritual formula differed according to the site or the object which was being visited, and probably also according to the different tribes. The following are some examples of this:

1. For the idol *Isaf*⁴¹: “ Here am I before Thee! O God! Here am I before Thee! Here am I before Thee! Thou hast no partner, except the partner that Thou hast. Thou art Master of him, and also of that of which he is master.”⁴²
2. For the idol *Hubal*: “ Here am I before Thee! O God! Here am I before Thee! We have fertile camels. Thanks to Thee, we have

³⁹ Fakihi, *Akhbar umm al-Qura*, p. 3.

⁴⁰ The Arabic word لبيك (of which the infinite is *talbiyah*) is a substitution for the phrase *ulabbi'uka labbatayn* (“I respond twice to Thy appeal”). It would be more accurate to translate the word *labbayka* by “Twice (or doubly) I am here before Thee”, but in order to lighten the style, we will simply say, “Here am I before Thee”.

⁴¹ The famous traditionist *al-Darimi* in his *Sunan*, paragraph Muqaddimah, 1, No. 3 relates the following anecdote: “A slave speaks: Before Islam, my master used to send me with the offering of butter and milk for their gods, and he would threaten me with their (the idols’) anger if I should ever consume the offering on the sly. But I have seen dogs come, lick the butter, drink the milk, and then urinate on these idols, viz. *Isaf* and *Na'ilah*.”

⁴² Ibn Habib, *Muhabbar*, p. 311; Ibn al-Kalbi, *Asnam*, p. 7; Sayed Mu'azzam Husain, “*The Talbiyah al-Jahiliya* in The Proceedings of the 9th All-India Oriental Conference, 1937, pp. 361-369.

become inaccessible to spearheads Thanks to Thee, all men envy us, because of our happi-ness.”⁴³

At Mecca the pilgrims lodged with private residents, to whom they gave a few presents in return for their help. Before the advent of Islam, Muhammad⁴⁴ also extended this hospitality to visitors. The latter were not permitted to perform the circumambulations of the Ka'bah in their everyday clothes. They had either to borrow garments from the Meccans (against remuneration), or make the circuits in a completely new garment, which later they had to leave in front of the Ka'bah, where it gradually disintegrated. The poor (or the miserly) who could choose neither of these two solutions, had to perform the rite completely unclothed (women were excepted).⁴⁵

At this period of history the sacred territory surrounding the Ka'bah had already been definitely marked out and fixed. It extended over some eighty square miles, the area of the City-State of Mecca. Here, everything was safe and secure — a man was not allowed to kill, or even pursue, another man (an enemy), or even hunt game. Even trees were protected and could not be hewed down.

⁴³ Ibn Habib, *Muhabbar*, p. 315.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*; *Munammaq*, mentioned in the note by Baladhuri in *Ansab al-Ashraf*, Cairo edition, 1959 C.E., Vol. 1, pp. 460-461.

THE ISLAMIC EPOCH

After the advent of Islam, the Prophet adopted the ancient institution of pilgrimage. He reformed it and purified it of its idolatrous and superstitious elements. The Qur'an⁴⁶ definitely attributes the institution of pilgrimage to Abraham. The eliminations carried out by Islam were aimed only at the corruptions of post-Abrahamic times. Let us review briefly the history of the Hajj.

The biography of Muhammad (ﷺ)

The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, was born at Mecca in the year 569 C-E. When he was forty, he had a vision during a pious retreat which he was making in the “ Cave of Research ” (*Hira*) on the Mountain of Light (*Nur* — *Paran*), on the outskirts of the city. In the vision the Archangel Gabriel announced to him that God had chosen him to be His Prophet, and that his mission would be the reformation of humanity. After thirteen years of heroic and unselfish struggle, during which he underwent the cruellest of persecution, he was obliged to flee from his native city because of a plot against his life. He arrived at Medina in 622 C.E., accompanied by other Muslim exiles, and here

⁴⁶ The Holy Qur'an 2:124-129; 14:35-41, etc.

he organised the community as a City-State, where the spiritual and the temporal were blended harmoniously into a single whole.

From the very first day the religion he preached was addressed to the whole of humanity. It was a religion which invited men to practise the purest monotheism, without icons or other material representations or symbols of God, and to cease to rely on intermediaries, so that they might have direct communion with the Transcendent and Omnipresent Lord. If we compare Islam to a building, we might say that the roof is the acknowledgement of the oneness of God (*imdn*), the four pillars being the ritual prayer (*Salah*)⁴⁷, the tax collected for charity (*Zakah*)⁴⁸, the annual fast (*Sawm*), and the pilgrimage to the House of God (*Hajj*), effected at least once during one's lifetime. These obligations are incumbent on both men and women. The ritual prayer has a

⁴⁷ The word "*salah*", among Muslims, is used to designate the ensemble of the inner and outer actions carried out by them during the act of adoration. It therefore includes the ablutions, the intention of reciting the prayer, the request for grace and pardon, and the recitation of the canonical phrases, together with the appropriate bodily movements (bowing, prostrating, etc.). Some people give the translation of this term as "service", but here our version is: "ritual prayer". A ritual prayer may be composed of 2, 3 or 4 *Rak'ahs* or cycles of acts, according to circumstances. In a *rak'ah* there are three successive bodily postures — standing, bowing, with the hands placed on the knees, and a prostration, which is repeated twice. This ensemble of gestures, accompanied by the recitation of various texts is called a *rak'ah*. The number of *rak'ahs* varies according to the ritual prayers of different hours. They are repeated in exactly the same manner, but the Qur'anic texts recited therein differ from *rak'ah* to *rak'ah*.

⁴⁸ The tax known as *Zakah* is clearly distinct from what is known as "almsgiving". It is definitely a tax payable to the government under penalty of sanctions, the amount payable and the times of payment being fixed by law. The *Zakah* tax is levied not only on savings, but also on agricultural crops, commercial capital, profits from industrial concerns, cattle and sheep and livestock, mineral production, in short, on everything which in Islamic law is subject to taxes and levies. In the time of the Prophet and the Caliphs the *Zakah* was the only tax which the various Islamic governments received from Muslims.

certain connection with the pilgrimage, for the daily times of “*Salah*” constitute a non- mobile kind of pilgrimage and a Hajj in miniature.

According to tradition,⁴⁹ Gabriel, during his first visit, taught Muhammad how to purify himself by making ablutions, and how to perform the ritual prayer. At that time Muhammad used to turn towards the Ka'bah, selecting a point in the south side of the sanctuary, so that he could turn towards both the House of God built by Abraham at Mecca, and the house built by Solomon at Jerusalem. At Medina this two-fold orientation was no longer possible because, in relation to this city, Mecca and Jerusalem were situated in completely opposite directions. Immediately after the Hegira, when at Medina, Muhammad received the Divine command to turn towards Jerusalem when offering the ritual prayers. But after several months a new revelation⁵⁰ ordained that Muslims would henceforth face the Ka'bah during prayers.

In the year 6 A.H. (628 C.E.) revelation prescribed the pilgrimage to the Ka'bah as a religious duty. (At that time the Ka'bah was still in the hands of the non-Muslims.) In order to carry out this duty, Muhammad led 1,500 Muslims to Mecca, but the polytheist masters of the holy city would not allow him to enter. Two years later the city of Mecca rallied to the cause of Islam and peacefully adopted the Faith. Thus, in the year 8 of the Hegira, Muslims were free to celebrate the pilgrimage but, among the pilgrims, there were infidels who came from different parts of Arabia. Muhammad himself remained at Medina. In the following year he issued a proclamation according to which no infidel would be allowed to approach the Ka'bah in order to practise his idolatry. Thus the Ka'bah was henceforth reserved for monotheistic worship. In the year 10 A.H. Muhammad went to Mecca, celebrated his first, and last, pilgrimage, and drew up the rites and regulations, which have remained the

⁴⁹ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, 1:111 (Cairo edition).

⁵⁰ The Holy Qur'an 2:142-150.

same to this day. At 'Arafat he had the happiness of meeting more than 140,000 Muslim men and women, who had come from all parts of the Islamic State. (This State started from nothing and after a period of ten years — when the Prophet made this particular pilgrimage — extended over some 1,154,000 square miles.) There, from the top of the Mount of Mercy (*Rahmah*), he preached to them a sermon which was a summary of the essential precepts of Islam.⁵¹ (This sermon is still solemnly recited during the pilgrimage at the same place where it was delivered by the Prophet.)

Changes brought about by Islam

In relation to the conditions which prevailed during the pre-Islamic epoch, the following were the principal objectives of the new Islamic dispensation:

- (1) The re-establishment of the spiritual character of the Pilgrimage, in its pristine purity.
- (2) The abolition of idolatry and polytheism.
- (3) The suppression of superstition.
- (4) The institution of an individual and personal duty, incumbent on every believer wherever he may live, a duty so imperative that if a man should die before it has been carried out, it must be performed by proxy.
- (5) The creation of a rite having universal scope and application.

⁵¹ For the text of this sermon, see my *Prophete de l'Islam*, pp. 179- 181.

Terminology

When referring to the Pilgrimage, Muslims use the word *hajj*. This Arabic word means literally: “to direct oneself towards” and also : “to dominate”, “to get the better of”. In fact, the Muslim directs himself towards God, and endeavours to overcome his egoism, to the point where he forgets himself entirely and annihilates himself in God, by visiting His House.

The site

The Ka'bah, the House of God, is situated on the level stretch of the territory of *Bakka*, in the valley of *Makka* (at Mecca), at 40.2 degrees East longitude and 21.7 degrees North latitude, at about 47 miles east of *Jedda*. The city is 900 feet above sea-level and is surrounded by high mountain chains. At this point the valley is about a mile and a quarter wide, and the city spreads out for a distance of some three miles. At the time of the Prophet Mecca must have had a population of at least 10,000 souls. Today there are almost 200,000 permanent residents. When the pilgrimage is in progress, this figure increases to over a million.

The mosque surrounding the cube-shaped Ka'bah building forms the centre of the city and since the last extension, made under the Su'udite regime, more than 300,000 people can pray at the same time. The city is rapidly becoming modernised. Most of the houses are three- or four-storeyed, and are lit by electricity. Drinking water comes from the canal named after *Zubayda*, wife of the Caliph *Harun al-Rashid*, but there are also several wells giving fresh water which is used in horticulture. The water from *Zemzem* is slightly salty and so heavy that those who drink it lose their appetite for hours at a time.

Afforestation is being carried out. There is very little rain — about two inches in a year — and, being surrounded by arid desert, the city has a hot climate.

Today the Muslim community is found everywhere and people make their way to Mecca by all methods of transport — by air, by sea and overland. Formerly all local transport was by camel but nowadays only automobiles are seen everywhere.

Two types of pilgrimage

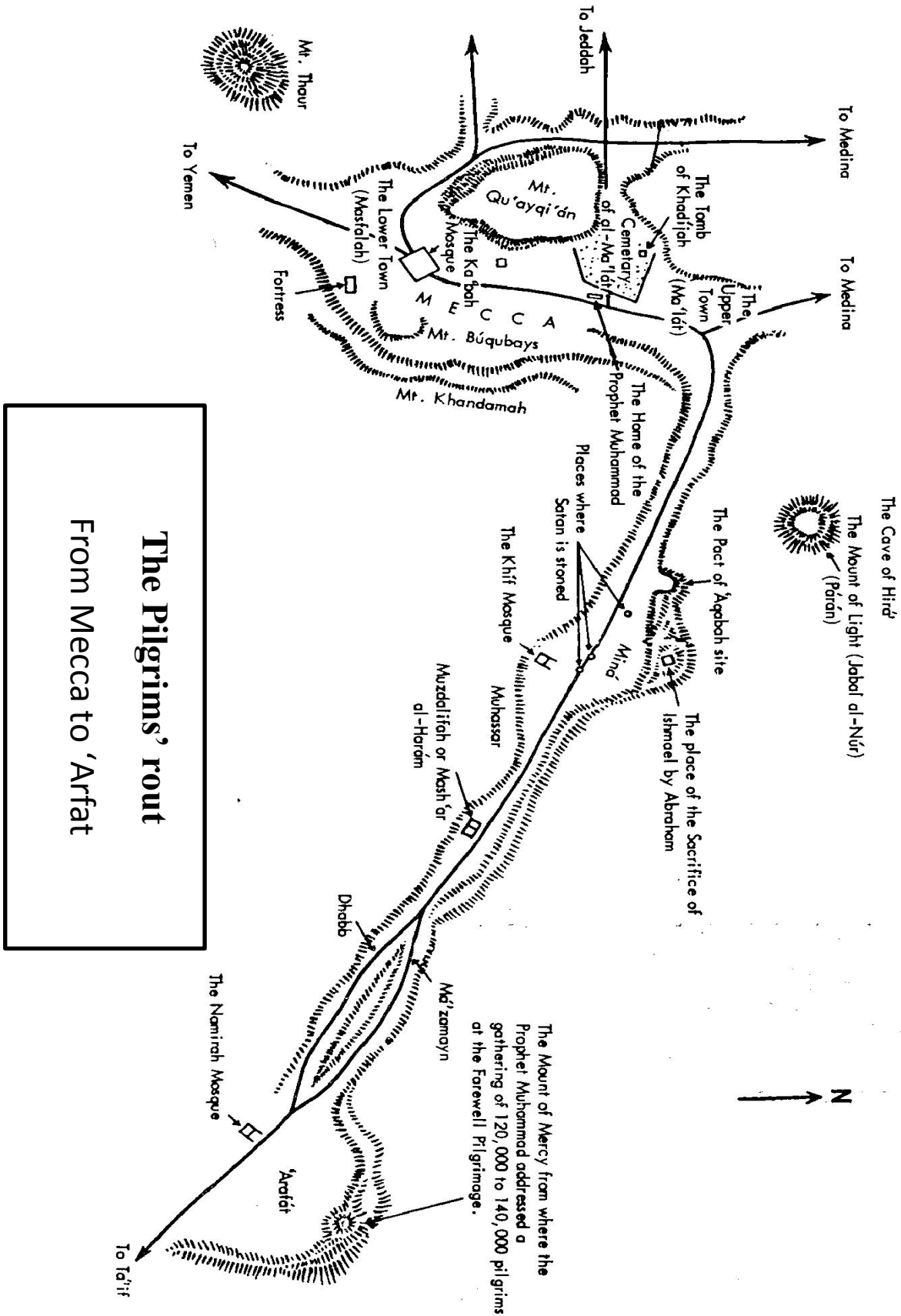
There are two kinds of pilgrimage: the Lesser Pilgrimage (the *'umrah*, or *hajj asghar*), and the Greater Pilgrimage (the *hajj akbar*). The former consists of a personal visit to Mecca, which can be made at any time of the year, but this visit does not carry a dispensation from the accomplishment of the ritual duty of the Greater Pilgrimage (the *hajj akbar*), which is performed collectively at a definite period during the lunar year. The Greater Pilgrimage involves a greater number of rites and ceremonies and for this a longer stay in Mecca is necessary.

In both cases the male pilgrim no longer wears his usual clothing, but puts on a special garment, called the “ihram”. This is composed of a loin-cloth for the lower part of the body, and another piece of cloth which covers the back and the shoulders — but the pilgrim remains bare headed. He also wears sandals or some other kind of shoe which does not cover the back of the foot.

The “ihram” may be put on as soon as one leaves one’s home but, at the latest, as soon as one arrives at the “outer circuit” of the sacred territory (see the accompanying sketch- map). Those who normally live at Mecca put on the “ihram” in the city itself, at the moment when they leave it to visit *Mina'-Arafat*. For those who reside at Mecca or in its suburbs, the “inner circuit” marks the limit where they must put on the “ihram” for the Lesser Pilgrimage

and when they make the Greater Pilgrimage, they go outside of this circuit in order to consecrate themselves, and then they return to Mecca to perform the prescribed rites.

In the Lesser Pilgrimage the essentials of the routine are: the visit to the House of God, seven circumambulations of the Ka'bah, and seven symbolical journeys between Mount *Safa* and Mount *Marwah*, after which the pilgrim shaves himself or cuts his hair. In the Greater Pilgrimage the supplementary routine consists of the following: the pilgrims assemble at 'Arafat on the 9th day of *Dhu al-Hijjah*, they spend the night at *Muzdalifah*, and on the 10th day they go to *Mina*, where animals are sacrificed and the "Pillars of Satan" (Jimàr) are stoned. They then go on to Mecca for the sole purpose of making the seven-fold circumambulation of the Ka'bah and the journeys between *Safa* and *Marwah*. They return immediately to *Mina*, where they should stay for two or three days. This completes the ritual of the Pilgrimage.



The pilgrimage and the calendar

We have already mentioned that the Greater Pilgrimage is accomplished during the second week of the 12th month of the Hegiran Calendar. As we are here concerned with lunar months, the date of the pilgrimage, according to the Gregorian calendar, which is solar, changes from year to year (since intercalation was abolished by the Prophet for a special reason).⁵² Each year the date falls about 11 days earlier. The 10th day of *Dhu al-Hijjah* is the most important day of the Pilgrimage and is celebrated enthusiastically all over the world of Islam, even at the mosques at London and Paris. As a matter of interest, we give, for several future years, the dates of the 10th of *Dhu al-Hijjah* according to the Gregorian calendar:

1970	18 February	1975	26 December
1971	8 February	1976	15 December
1972	28 January	1977	3 December
1973	16 January	1978	23 November
1974	5 January		

⁵² Cf. my article "Why a purely lunar calendar in Islam?" in the Muslim Digest, Durban, ix/8, pp. 155-158.

The pilgrim's self-consecration

To prepare himself for the Pilgrimage, the Muslim takes a complete ritual bath and offers a prayer of two *Rak'ahs*. He then says: "Lord, it is my intention to purify myself for the Pilgrimage to Thy House. O Lord, assist me in this and accept my devotion." During the whole of the time that he is in this state of consecration, he pronounces the *Talbiyah* from time to time, both during the day-time and at night. This is said in a fairly loud voice, the wording being as follows: "Here am I before Thee! O God! Here am I before Thee! Here am I before Thee. Thou hast no partner. Here am I before Thee! In truth, praise and graciousness belong to Thee alone, and majesty. Thou hast no partner."

Entry into the city and the accomplishment of each rite are accompanied by appropriate prayers, which all ask for God's forgiveness and mercy. The most important of these are given here:

The seven-fold circumambulation of the Ka'bah

The pilgrim stands before the Black Stone, which is visible in an angle made by two walls and which is the starting-point of the Pilgrimage.⁵³ He raises his hands (symbolical of complete renunciation and surrender of self to God), and says: "I have the intention of making the ritual walk around Thy

⁵³ The Black Stone of the Ka'bah is named by the Prophet himself as "the right hand of God" (*Yamin Allah*). The Believer, when making his oath of loyalty, places his hand on this stone, and even he will kiss it. This act is known as *istilam* ("the obtaining of the pact"). On the Day of Resurrection this stone will testify in favour of those Faithful who have made the Pilgrimage. (This reminds us of the gesture of *Jacob*, mentioned in the Bible, *Genesis 31:44-46*.)

House. Lord! Make this straightforward for me and accept this sign of my devotion.” Then, after kissing the Black Stone (when pilgrims are numerous the devotee places his hand on it, or he makes the gesture from a distance and then kisses his own hand), he leaves the sanctuary, keeping it on his left and begins making the circumambulations. During each of the seven circuits he recites the following prayer, which is in four parts (one part for each side of the Ka'bah, which is quadrilateral):

- (1) “ O Lord! Believing in Thee, acknowledging the authority of Thy command, acting in accordance with Thy Covenant and following the example of Thy Prophet Muhammad (May God keep him and be gracious unto him!), I declare that there is no god but God Himself and that He has no partner. And I declare that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. O Lord! This house is indeed Thy House, this sanctuary is indeed Thy Sanctuary, and this security Thy Security. It is here that we seek Thy protection against the Fire. Shield me from it, O All-Powerful One! O Thou Who, above all else, art the One Who forgives!”
- (2) “ O Lord! I seek Thy protection against every doubt, against all forms of polytheism, against all division, against all hypocrisy, against all unworthy behaviour, against all misfortune when I return to my family, my possessions and my children.”
- (3) “ O Lord! Gather me into the shadow of Thy Shadow on the day when there will be no shadow except Thine, and on that day give me to drink from the cup of Muhammad (May God keep him and be gracious unto him!) — a delightful drink — and then I shall thirst no more. O Majestic and Bountiful One! O Lord! May my Pilgrimage be a sincere one, may my sins be forgiven and my devotion accepted, and do Thou make it a gain and a benefit for me!”

- (4) “ O Lord! Bestow a blessing on us here on earth, and in the hereafter, and shield us from the fire of hell.”

After the seven circumambulations, each one involving a distance of about 36 yards if one remains near the Ka'bah, a prayer of two *Rak'ahs* is offered. The pilgrim then goes to the hill of *Safa*, turns towards the Ka'bah, declares his intention of making the seven circuits, and proceeds to the hill of *Marwah*, a distance of some 440 yards. At a certain part of this latter journey a section of the route, about 75 yards, is marked off by two green-coloured pillars, and male pilgrims must cover this distance by running (women are exempt). The remainder of the journey is done at a normal walking pace. The journey from *Safa* to *Marwah* is made four times, and the return journey to *Marwah* from *Safa* is made three times, terminating at *Marwah*; in all, a distance of about 10 miles. The sick and the feeble may make these journeys, as well as the circumambulations, carried on a stretcher or even in a vehicle. During each of the seven journeys *Safa- Marwah-Safa*, the pilgrim recites prayers affirming his faith, glorifying God and asking His forgiveness and blessing. On arriving at *Marwah* at the end of the seventh journey, he asks God in his own way for that which is nearest to his heart. He then shaves or has his hair cut (women merely cut off a small lock), which expresses symbolically that he throws off the burden and the defilement of sin and begins a new life.

After the ritual circuits the pilgrim, if he wishes, may drink water from the well of *Zemzem*, which faces the Ka'bah. The Prophet once declared “Water from the *Zemzem* will make your wish come true.” When drinking it he had offered a prayer: “O Lord ! Make this water a remedy against all illness and all indisposition, and feed me with the nourishment of sincerity, certitude and well-being, both now and in the hereafter!”

One of the duties of the pilgrim is to spend a day at ‘*Arafat*. Here, in the late afternoon, before leaving, the Prophet had pronounced the following

invocations: “There is no God but God, He, the One Who has no partner, and to Whom alone belong majesty and praise. It is He Who gives life and He who causes to die. He is Living and is above death. In His hands is all good and He has power over everything. O God! Give inspiration to my hearing and to my sight, and a light in my heart.⁵⁴ [O God! Pardon my sins, facilitate my task, and open my breast. O God! I ask Thy protection against all evil temptations, against all dissipation in my activity and punishment in the hereafter. O God, I ask Thy protection against the evil which flies in the night, and the evil which flies in the day, against the evil which comes upon the wind and against the evil of the time.”

The Fundamental Texts

The Hajj is prescribed to all Muslims by the Qur’an, in which there is an entire chapter, No. 22, entitled “al-Hajj”. In other chapters, too, the Holy Book makes a number of references to the subject. The passages in question are so long that they would need at least a dozen or so pages to quote. Besides, there *are* the sayings and the doings of the Prophet on this subject, which are contained in works dealing exclusively with the Hadith (Traditions or sayings of the Prophet). The Qur’an gives us the history of this institution and also deals with the regulations to be observed, the consequences of infringements, etc. It relates the story of Abraham, who was ready to offer his son in sacrifice. We will simply indicate the most important of these passages (the numbering being the one followed by Muslim authors, not that of Flügel) : Chapter 2:124-129, 158, 196-202. Chapter 3:96-97. Chapter 9:3, 17-19, 28, 36-37. Chapter 14:35-41. Chapter 22:25-38. Chapter 37:83-113.

⁵⁴ Here the “heart” (as also very generally in Islamic tradition) indicates the symbolical seat of the soul. There is also an oft-quoted hadith according to which God says: “*The universe could not contain Me, but the heart of the Believer was large enough for Me.*”

The Hajj Regulations according to Islamic Law

The rites and ceremonies connected with the Hajj, which have not changed since the time of the Prophet, fall into various legal categories. The following are the principal ones:

(a) Conditions which make obligatory the undertaking of the Hajj

- (1) The intending pilgrim must be a Muslim.
- (2) He must have reached puberty.
- (3) He must be of sound mind.
- (4) He must be free (not a slave).
- (5) He must have the material means necessary, and must be certain that the pilgrimage-route is safe.

(b) The basic rules (duties which are absolutely obligatory)

- (1) A formulation of intention.
- (2) A stay at 'Arafat on the date fixed.
- (3) Circumambulation of the Ka'bah.
- (4) The seven-fold repeated short journeys between Safa and Marwah.
- (5) The shaving or cutting of the hair after all the rites have been accomplished.
- (6) The accomplishment of the rites in the prescribed order.

(c) The obligations (or the things necessary)

- (1) Self-consecration by the wearing of a special (un-sewn) garment as soon as the sacred territory is reached.
- (2) The stoning of the “Pillars of Satan”.
- (3) The initial circumambulation.
- (4) A stay of one night at Muzdalifah.
- (5) A stay of two or three nights at Mina.
- (6) A final farewell circumambulation.
- (7) Abstinance from those things which are temporarily forbidden.

(d) The traditional rites (recommended by the Prophet)

- (1) The uttering of the words “Here am I” (Labbayka).
- (2) The ritual prayer of two Rak‘ahs.
- (3) The drinking of water from the Well of Zemzem.
- (4) A visit to the Tomb of the Prophet at Medina.

(e) The prohibitions applicable during the state of ritual consecration.

- (1) The wearing of sewn garments (for men only).
- (2) The wearing of headgear (for men only).
- (3) The wearing of a veil (for women only).
- (4) Anointing the hair.
- (5) Shaving or trimming the hair.
- (6) Cutting the nails.
- (7) Using perfume.
- (8) The killing of animals (except snakes, scorpions, and the like).

- (9) The felling of trees in the sacred territory (except during the course of normal agricultural and horti-cultural work).
- (10) Marriage.
- (11) Sexual relationship.

The consequences of the non-observance of the rules

In order to avoid a superfluity of detail, we can say, in resume, that if a basic rite (see paragraph (b) above) is omitted, the duty of pilgrimage has not been fulfilled, and this duty must be undertaken again during some year in the future. On the other hand, the omission of the “obligatory observances” mentioned in paragraph (c) (above) can be compensated for by the sacrifice of an animal, by the provision of a definite quantity of food for the poor, by fasting, etc. — the mode of reparation depending on individual circumstances. The non-observance of any of the traditional rites, mentioned in paragraph (d) (above) does not in any way invalidate the pilgrimage.

The meaning of the symbolic acts and gestures

The Ka‘bah is the *Qiblah*, the target or focal point which commands the attention of all the servants of God, those obedient ones who are true Believers and who submit to their Lord. It is perhaps interesting to note that since the pre-Islamic period Mecca has been called the *Umm al-Qura* (the mother of cities, the metropolis (of the world)). God being King, the house dedicated to Him must of necessity be situated in the metropolis. Further, the choice of a building, instead of a rock, indicates that it was the spiritual centre of a community of town-dwellers and not of nomads.

Al-Ghazali on the meaning of the Hajj

Among those Muslim writers who have been at pains to explain the reasons for the acts and gestures prescribed to the pilgrims, we may here quote the celebrated *al-Ghazali*. In his *Ihyà ul Uluum* (with the very learned commentary by *al-Zabidi*, vol. 4, pp. 266-460), he speaks of the Hajj, and devotes Chapter 3 to “The Meticulous Rules of the Internal Acts” (of devotion) (pp. 431-441). We will summarise his study by quoting some brief extracts from the chapter in question:

“The ‘Meticulous Rules’ are ten in number ...

- (1) Money must have been honestly gained.
- (2) No collaboration with the enemies of God by a servile decision to pay the taxes they demand.
- (3) Lay in a good stock of provisions, share them (en route) with those who have need, and with a good grace.
- (4) Abstain from sexual relationship, renounce all sin and the tendency to quarrel with others.
- (5) If possible, go to the pilgrimage on foot.
- (6) Ride only an unladen animal. Do not ride on one which is loaded with baggage.
- (7) Be kind to the animal.
- (8) Maintain a humble demeanour, the hair uncut, the body dusty (from the journey), grooming to be modest.

- (9) Seek nearness to God by making sacrifices, even in addition to those which are obligatory.
- (10) Be gracious in the giving of charity.

“With regard to the internal acts of devotion, we must first of all have a right understanding of the meaning of the Hajj, that is to say, its place in religion. Then there must be a keen desire to accomplish this religious duty. The would- be pilgrim must break off all worldly ties which divert him from this duty, etc., and he must observe the rules and procedures which deal with the preparation for the Hajj, the departure, and the pious observance of each rite in its established order.

“In order to appreciate fully the significance of the Hajj, the pilgrim must bear in mind that he cannot approach God unless he has abandoned all bodily desires, unless he abstains from all pleasure or luxury which is in excess of the necessary minimum, unless he gives himself entirely to God during both the active life of the day and his hours of rest and quietness. It is for this reason that the monks of the ancient religions used to abandon the normal life of towns and villages and would go to live on the hills and the mountains. They preferred to leave the company of their fellow-men and to find satisfaction in being nearer to God, seeking the higher Divine blessings and renouncing the pleasures of the temporal. In course of time this practice gave rise to corruptions and abuses, and God sent Muhammad, as His Messenger, to revivify the path to the higher life and, for the successful treading of this path, to restore the practices of the previous prophets. And this He did by enjoining the Hajj for our Muslim community, to replace the ‘monkery’ of the ancients. And He honoured the ancient Ka‘bah by calling it ‘His own House’, and by fixing it as the goal and destination of His servants, thus rendering sacred the

territory surrounding the House, and this with the aim of enhancing its importance. Further, He designated the locality called ‘Arafat to be the channel for the outpouring of His mercy. And to enhance still further the sacred character of this territory, He forbade the hunting of game there, and the felling of trees. In short, He established, so to speak, a royal audience-hall for those who came from far and near to seek His kingly presence — in humility, covered with the dust of travel, bowing low before the Lord of this House. It was there that they took refuge, humbling themselves before His majesty and power, knowing full well that God is too pure to be contained in a building, or limited to one place. And all this served to emphasise the character of men as slaves and servants of God, and to bring to completion their submission and obedience. That is why God prescribed the performance of acts to which they were not accustomed, and for which mere reason could furnish no meaning or explanation, such as the lapidation of certain landmarks, and the repeated to-and-fro journey between Safa and Marwah. Such acts as these show the perfection of the character of man as slave and servant of God, the quality of submission and obedience, and such acts are performed solely because of the Divine command, and to put this command into execution. That is why the Prophet declared, when referring to the Hajj: ‘Here am I before Thee as a true pilgrim, as Thy servant and slave’, and he did not speak in this way when referring to the ritual prayer, or to the other acts of devotion. The Divine Wisdom is such that man’s spiritual welfare and salvation should be achieved by acts going against the nature of man, and which are controlled and governed by Sacred Law ...

“With regard to the condition that the devotee must have an ardent desire (to accomplish the Hajj) . . . such a desire becomes manifest when he really understands that the building is the House of God, and that, by its function, it closely resembles a royal hall-of-audience. Therefore whoever directs his steps towards it is really approaching God, Whom he wishes to visit. And

whoever approaches God's house during his earthly life merits a reward — that his visit shall be productive of happy results, that he will attain the object of this prescribed visit, namely, to gaze on the majestic face of God in the everlasting hereafter.

“There is symbolism in the donning of the consecrated garment on reaching the boundary-line of the sacred territory, and in the oft-repeated phrase: ‘Here am I’ . . .” They indicate that the pilgrim responded to the call of God. “Know ye,” continues al-Ghazalf, “that the circumambulation of the House of God constitutes a service of worship. Therefore manifest in your heart both respect and awe, as well as hope and love . . . Know also that, in accomplishing these circuits, you are doing what is done by the angels' which are closest to God (those cherished by Him), who fill the space surrounding the Celestial Throne, and make ritual circuits around it. Think not that the aim here is the circuit of the House made by your body, but that made by your heart in remembering the Master of the House . . . And the House is a visible symbol in the world of the Kingdom (mulk) of the Divine presence, which is invisible to our earthly sight. For it is the world of super kingdom (malakut), in the same way that the body is a symbol in the present world (shahadah) of the heart. And the heart is not visible to mortal sight because it dwells in the world of the unseen.

“The world of the divine kingdom and the temporal world serve as a ladder which leads to the invisible world and the world of the super kingdom — to him for whom God has opened the door. It is this comparison which is referred to by the saying that the ‘house which is eternally visited’ (al-bayt al-ma'mur), which is in the heaven, is situated exactly over the Ka'bah. The angels make circuits around the former, just as men circumambulate around the latter. Since the majority of men are incapable of doing this (as carried out by the angels), they are enjoined to emulate these angels as far as lies within their capabilities. And it has been promised: ‘Whoever strives to reach up to the level of one of

these groups, then he becomes part of it' (a saying of the Prophet). As for the man who is capable of making the circuit at this advanced degree, it is said that the Ka'bah itself will visit such a pilgrim, and that it will make circuits around him. These facts have been vouched for by a number of people who are lifted with spiritual vision

“With regard to the journeys between Safa and Marwah, in the exterior court of the House of God, they resemble the coming-and-going of a slave in the court of the king’s palace — he comes and goes unceasingly to show his sincerity in the service of his king, hoping that he will be noticed by the eye of Mercy (and not by the eye of Justice).

“With regard to the time spent at ‘Arafat, may it cause you to think ... of the assemblies on the Day of Resurrection, when men will meet together around their prophets and their guides . . .

“As for the lapidation . . . seek, through this practice, to emulate Abraham, when the Evil One appeared to him (to tempt him) . . .

“And as regards the sacrifice of animals, you should know that through this observance you will approach nearer to God, because you are carrying out His own command. Thus the sacrifice must be a perfect one. You must hope that God will liberate from the Fire one of your organs for each organ of that animal which you sacrifice . . .”

Other interpretations of the symbolic acts of worship during the Pilgrimage

All this was how *al-Ghazali* views the Hajj and its attendant ceremonies. There are other interpretations possible. The greatest mark of respect that a man can give is to prostrate himself before the object of his worship. In Islam this act is reserved for God alone. To circle around someone means that one is ready to sacrifice oneself to defend this object of one's reverence. The House of God merits this more than anything else.

In speaking of God, the Qur'an has used, among other metaphors, that of "King" and the "attributes of royalty". He is the most holy King, who sits on the Celestial Throne, who possesses treasures, armies and the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. This kingdom has its metropolis (*Umm al-Qura* — Mecca), where is situated the Palace (*Bayt Allah*). To take the oath of fidelity the loyal subject stands in front of the house of his Lord, and swears loyalty on the hand of his Sovereign. (Referring to this the Prophet declared: "The Black Stone in the Ka'bah is the right hand of God (*Yamin Allah*) on earth.") The circuits made around the house of the Sovereign are like those made by a sentry when on guard.

The journeys made between *Safa* and *Marwah* signify through their very origin that one is showing one's admiration for maternal love, symbol of the love of God for His creatures. We recall that it was this maternal love which drove Hagar to search for water for her thirsty baby, and that it was in response to this love that the spring of Zemzem was created by God.

At 'Arafat Adam found his wife, Eve, for whom he had been searching since his expulsion from Paradise on earth (at Ceylon, according to certain traditions). This meeting followed the pardon granted to Adam by God. For the

descendants of the couple Adam-Eve this place naturally evokes sentiments of filial affection and memories of the Divine blessing bestowed on their ancestors, a blessing which the human race continues to share, as it also shares in the loss of Paradise through the first man. So that the day spent at ‘Arafat is passed in quiet meditation. We ask God to pardon our faults and our sins, and we pray Him to guide us on a surer path in the future, so that we can gain His favour.

Finally, at Mina, comes the recollection of the supreme Divine test undergone by Abraham, a test during which he had to resist the temptations of the Evil One, and offer in sacrifice that which, to him, was the dearest thing in the world, because he was commanded to do so by God.

In short, the Hajj, for the Muslim, is above all the com-memoration of the blessings bestowed by God on Adam and Eve, on Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael, as well as a demonstration of his own close relationship with the one Lord, Transcendent and Omnipresent.

During the state of ritual consecration, the period when the pilgrim devotes himself entirely to God, he tries to forget himself completely — he is asked not even to scratch himself. For each hair which is removed by scratching, religious law demands a penalty in the form of alms given to the poor.

The Prophet declared: “The hand of God remains with the collectivity”. Therefore the action performed in common by an entire community is more likely to attract the attention and the pleasure of the Lord than the action of an isolated individual.

Externally, the Pilgrimage is a kind of military exercise. Men assemble at a fixed place, in response to a mobilisation order. They come from all four corners of the earth; they spend their days and nights bivouacking in one of the most arid regions of the world. During this exercise, at the times of the five

daily prayers, they assemble at the call of the muezzin; they fall in behind the imam, and in harmony with him they carry out, collectively, the ritual movements. In short, a life of perfect discipline.

Narratives about the Pilgrimage

From the earliest times all Believers have done their best, according to their individual circumstances and their spiritual development, to carry out this journey to the House of God. The story is told of Ibrahim Adham (d. c. 777 C.E.), who left Turkestan on foot to travel to Mecca, and who stopped after each step he took, to offer a prayer of two *Raka'hs*. After a number of years, when he had duly arrived at Mecca, he saw “through the eye of his heart” that the Ka'bah was not there. It had gone to welcome another pilgrim, a woman who was God's guest of honour. It was *Rabi'ah*, the saint of Basra. According to the chronicles, Ibrahim had come to see the House of God, but *Rabi'ah* hoped to see God Himself. Naturally she also had come to seek Him in His House, but what a difference between the spiritual aims of the two pilgrims!

The outstanding feature of the Hajj is the annihilation of race and colour prejudices

The Muslim community has succeeded in eliminating from its midst all prejudices connected with race, language and country of origin. An outstanding feature of the Hajj is the unity and the equality which reign everywhere among the Muslims, the faithful of all colours mixing fraternally together — white, black, yellow, etc. — members of all social categories, from kings to the poorest of men. We hear that the elderly Lord Headley, a

convert to Islam, was unable to withstand the heat of 'Arafat, whereupon the Sherif Husayn (then King), found him a turban to cover his head and neck.

European converts have become more and more numerous in the ranks of the pilgrims. But the most striking example of fervour to be found among the "Takrum's" (a collective term given at Mecca to pilgrims from Black Africa). The Takrum toils strenuously in his own country in order to save up a little money, just enough to enable him to travel a few miles in the direction of Mecca. Then he recommences his life of hard toil, and it takes him some years to arrive eventually at his goal. According to a tradition current in Arabia, the Prophet would appear in vision or dream to pious Muslims, assuring them that the Takrum pilgrims were among those dearest to his heart. It goes without saying that the fact of having made the Hajj brings a pilgrim the greatest respect and honour among his community, and the smaller the number of pilgrims in a district, the more honoured they are.

Several centuries before the coming of Islam, *Qusayy* had organised a public repast for the visitors to the House of God, and for this purpose his fellow-citizens agreed to pay a special levy (*rafadah*). His descendants continued to observe this hospitable custom, even after the advent of Islam. And, in our own times, the Su'udf kings invite the representative pilgrims of all the different countries to a sumptuous banquet at Mecca. They also receive them as guests at 'Arafat, where a military parade provides entertainment for them.

'Arafat, *Muzdalifah* and *Mina* are inhabited only at the time of the annual Pilgrimage. All kinds of shops and stalls spring up like mushrooms. The Government opens up a number of Post Offices, sets UD hospital and ambulance arrangements, etc. Thanks to the very efficient and well-trained police force, there are few accidents, in spite of the extremely heavy traffic.

Some Muslim and non-Muslim visitors to the Ka'bah

Since the earliest days of Islam, visitors to these Holy Places have handed down interesting descriptive narratives in all languages. One of these descriptions, written by the Imam Shaff (d. 820 C.E.), has been published. The North African “globe-trotters” Ibn Jubayr and Ibn Battutah have devoted the most important chapters of their works to their pilgrimages. In more recent times the best descriptive accounts are those which were prepared for the Khedives of Egypt, dating from before the first World War. Non-Muslim visitors are very few in number; generally speaking, they are Judeo-Christians.

In India there is a widespread tradition that Guru Nanak (the founder of the Sikh religion) once visited Mecca. One day he was lying on the floor of the mosque, with his legs stretched out towards the Ka'bah. A steward who happened to be near invited him to adopt a more respectful attitude towards the House of God. The subtle-minded Nanak replied: “Take my legs, and turn them in the direction where God is not.” The steward did not insist further, and went away.

The people of Medinah still remember the story of the two Christians who arrived during the period of the Crusades. They were disguised as Muslims, and their aim was to desecrate the Prophet's tomb. Nur al-Din Zengi (d. 1174 C.E.), the ruler of Syria, was there when they were discovered, at the moment when the tunnel which they had dug from their domicile had just reached the tomb. Since that time the sepulchre has been surrounded by deep, thick walls, reinforced with molten lead. Since the 19th century, other “inquisitive” visitors have arrived secretly from time to time — researchers, journalists, “spies” and so on — but their intentions have been less nefarious. (There have also been

bogus visitors, who have pirated their stories, or parts of them, from bona-fide narratives, or who have even relied on their imaginations.) Among celebrated savants, Burckhardt (Swiss), Burton (English), and Snouck-Hurgronje (Dutch), have left learned descriptions for the benefit of posterity. Burckhardt seems to have been an authentic Muslim, for, after the Pilgrimage, he became naturalised in Egypt. Members of his family still live in Switzerland, and always declare themselves to be Muslim. The famous Arabic scholar Snouck-Hurgronje had arrived in the company of the pilgrims from Java, and spent several months at Mecca, but had to leave the region hurriedly when his identity was discovered.⁵⁵ In 1933 he told the writer of these lines that a Su‘udite prince had come to see him, and had officially presented him with an album of photographs of the Holy Places, at the same time extending an invitation from King Ibn Su‘ud to come and visit Arabia in perfect freedom, without let or hindrance from anyone. The old professor died shortly afterwards, but seemed very moved at the gesture.

⁵⁵ “Snouck Hurgronje’s intention was to take part in the Pilgrimage, and then go to Medina. But this did not materialise. His stay in the Holy Places of Islam terminated abruptly. In fact the French Consul at Djedda, de Lostalot, knew about his itinerary and suspected Snouck of planning to gain possession of the obelisk of Tayma’, in which a number of scholars were interested, and which he wanted to reserve for France. (For the details see *Verspreide Geschriften*, by Snouck Hurgronje, 111, p. I, et seq.) De Lostalot communicated his suspicions to the authorities of the Quai d’Orsay, who in turn asked for an explanation from Constantinople. Not long afterwards, on a beautiful August day in 1885 C.E., our traveller was ordered to leave Mecca immediately.” (Biographical note by Bousquet, in *Oeuvres choisies de Snouck Hurgronje*, 1957 C.E., p. 15.)

Can non-Muslims visit Mecca?

I am of opinion that the total exclusion of non-Muslim visitors dates from rather a recent period, possibly from Ottoman times. For the Qur'an⁵⁶ forbids only the use of the Ka'bah by pagans for their idolatrous worship. The Caliph 'Umar even used to receive non-Muslim plaintiffs — Abu Yusuf⁵⁷ mentions the case of a Christian merchant — in the mosque of the Ka'bah during the Friday sermon, so that justice could be dispensed without delay. Dealing with a period a bit later, Ibn Sa'd⁵⁸ mentions the existence of the consulting-room of a Christian doctor at the foot of the minaret of the Ka'bah. He was an odd kind of Christian, for he had brought up his son, Dawud (David), as a good Muslim, without constraint from anyone, but had himself remained a Christian, giving rise to the Arab proverb: "An unbeliever worse than the father of Dawud". At various periods of history mention is made of a large number of Judeo-Christian wives or slaves of Meccan Muslims, and this is perhaps why Azraqi⁵⁹ speaks of "the Christian cemetery". In addition there are the technicians, engineer-architects, etc., who have been brought in temporarily since as far back as the Abbaside epoch⁶⁰ to deal with the work of maintenance.

⁵⁶ The Holy Qur'an 9:28.

⁵⁷ Abu Yusuf, *Kharaj*, p. 79; *My Prophete de I'islam*, pp. 580-581.

⁵⁸ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, v. 365.

⁵⁹ Azraqi, p. 501 (*Maqbarat an-Nasara*).

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 299, 336, 396; Baladhuri, *Futuh*, ed. Leyden, p. 54.

Some details on the Ka‘bah

Before the advent of Islam the exterior walls of the Ka‘bah were covered with curtains, a common practice at other pagan temples also. According to Azraqi⁶¹ it was *Tubba‘*, the Yeminite king, who was the first to cover completely the walls of the Ka‘bah with cloth. Before that time leather curtains were used. These were not changed until they became torn, or until a king or some other wealthy visitor, wishing to show his devotion, donated a new covering. Sometimes the old curtain was retained, and the new one placed over it. Nowadays the Ka‘bah is covered with a large sheet of black silk on which religious inscriptions have been embroidered, and which is changed every year. The discarded curtains are cut into small pieces and sold to the Faithful by the guardian of the sanctuary. For centuries it was the Egyptian Government which took upon itself to provide these coverings. Then, for a number of years, during political differences between Egypt and Su‘udf Arabia, they were made firstly in Germany, then in India, by Muslim weavers, who later established a factory at Mecca itself and taught their craft to the Meccans. Thereafter Egypt resumed the sending of the curtains. For a long time the departure of these curtains from Egypt was celebrated by picturesque ceremonies at the moment when chests (called Mahmal) containing the curtains, were loaded on camels.⁶² These ceremonies are no longer carried out. The replacement of the curtains of the Ka‘bah takes place when the pilgrims are outside of the city, at ‘*Arafat* and at *Mina*.

⁶¹ Azraqi, p. 85.

⁶² Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *Le voile de la Ka'bah in Studia Arabica*, Paris, 1954.

On the eve of the Pilgrimage a special sermon is delivered in the mosque of the Ka‘bah, and this is diffused by microphone.

Visit to Medina

The Prophet (ﷺ) is buried at Medina, which is situated several hundred miles north of Mecca. Prophets do not die; it is only their bodies which cease to live. And how very true this is of the Prophet, who declared that his teaching was valid for all time, that there would be no more prophets after him, and that henceforward the human race would no longer be without guidance in every domain! A famous tradition quotes a saying of the Prophet: “Whoever visits my tomb, I take it upon myself to intercede with God on his behalf”. Although this visit to Medina is in no way obligatory from the religious point of view, all Believers who have the opportunity make a point of going there, and when there, as a token of gratitude, they ask the Divine blessings for the head of their religion, the Last Prophet Muhammad (May God keep and protect him! — a phrase which is recited each time a Muslim pronounces the Prophet’s name).

Conclusion

Al-Ghazali does not hesitate to describe the Pilgrimage as “the completion of religion”, for, he asks, was it not in this connection that the Qur’anic verse was revealed (5:3): “This day have I perfected for you your religion . . .”?

This is true from various points of view. It is true historically, for the Prophet began his Mission by teaching the oneness of God and instituting the daily prayers. Later there came, each in its turn, fasting and the tax (*Zakah*), whereas the Pilgrimage was the final commandment to be laid down as the religious duty of the Believer.

It is also true from the devotional and mystical points of view, for although the ritual prayer constitutes an ascension towards God, it is only an approach of the spirit, whereas the Hajj is a rite which is carried out on the very threshold of the House which God Himself has declared to be His House.

It will be readily appreciated that the Hajj, in Islam, is of much greater importance than the pilgrimages of other religions. It is obligatory on all Muslims, whether men or women, and to such a degree that if a Muslim dies before accomplishing it, then this duty becomes incumbent on his heirs, who take his place. Together with the prayers, fasting and Zakah, the Hajj is one of the four fundamental and essential elements of Islam. Finally, it involves so many individual, social and spiritual elements that nothing is comparable to it. It is a veritable Resurrection, but a resurrection on the earth-plane. Men of all classes, all countries, all races and all languages meet together in an act of adoration of the universal Lord. We cannot but reflect on the words of revelation describing the Day of Resurrection in the hereafter: "Whose is the Kingdom today? It is God's, the One, the Ruler of all!"⁶³

The Mosque around the Ka'bah

The mosque surrounding the Ka'bah has been enlarged many times, to keep pace with the increasing number of pilgrims. The almost circular space around the Ka'bah (see the sketch-diagram) was sufficiently large in the time of the many times, to keep pace with the increasing number of pilgrims. The almost circular space around the Ka'bah (see the sketch-diagram) was sufficiently large in the time of the Prophet. The most recent enlargement carried out during the present epoch on the orders of the late King *Su'ud*, allows for more than 300,000 devotees to take part simultaneously in the

⁶³ The Holy Qur'an 40:16.

congregational prayer. Some parts of it are covered, which in certain places rise to several storeys. When the Pilgrimage takes place during the hot season, tents are erected in the uncovered sections, and these are particularly convenient for the mid-day prayer.

A history of the Ka'bah itself

In the middle, both the quadrilateral and the semicircular parts are the ones which form the actual Ka'bah. At one time the quadrilateral part was larger than it is at present, and it included both sections. On the eve of Islam, when Muhammad was a young man, rain, and then a flood, destroyed the edifice and necessitated the new construction of the building. Since the amount of material collected (wood from the wreck of a ship for making the roof) was insufficient for the purpose, it was decided to leave a part of the building open to the sky. After the city of Mecca became Muslim in 630 C.E., the Prophet declared that one day he would restore the Ka'bah to its original form, and that he would arrange for two doors to be made, one an entry and the other an exit, both to be fairly near the ground to avoid the need for stairs. But he died not long afterwards. This project of the Prophet was later carried out by Ibn al- Zubayr during his tenure of caliphate, but the rival caliph (who eventually got the upper hand), wishing to remove all traces of his adversary, reconstructed the building as it previously existed. The present Ka'bah building dates from the Ottoman period.

The Black Stone is situated near the door of the Ka'bah, in the wall of the left-hand angle. It can be seen by everyone, and is about a yard above the level of the ground, so that in order to kiss it the pilgrim has to bend forward. The door is about two yards above the ground-level and, to facilitate access during ceremonial occasions, a small movable staircase is used. The interior is a

small, empty room, with a roof supported by three wooden pillars. On the walls are a number of inscriptions in Arabic which commemorate the occasions when the Ka'bah was rebuilt. In one corner a narrow staircase gives access to the roof (for the purpose of making repairs or for the annual changing of the exterior curtains). Those Believers outside of the Ka'bah must turn towards it during prayer, but, inside the small room it is simply . . . the Ka'bah itself! Therein, for their prayer service, Muslims will be found turning in all directions (as will also be done at the “antipodes” of the Ka'bah, somewhere to the east of Samoa Island, see map).

The space between the Black Stone and the door of the Ka'bah, about a yard in width, is called the “Multazam” (or “place of embracing”). After a seven-fold circuit of farewell around the Ka'bah, the pilgrim who is leaving Mecca goes to the Wall of Multazam and takes his leave by embracing it, at the same time asking God for the grace to return one day to make the Pilgrimage again.

Pilgrims can at any time enter the unroofed part of the Ka'bah, indicated in the sketch by a semi-circle (actually it is a little wall). This part is called “Hatim” (or sometimes “Hijr”), and it is here that rainwater coming from the roofed part of the Ka'bah falls through a pipe made of gold called Mizab al-Rahmah (spout of the Divine Mercy). The four corners of the Ka'bah have been given names : the Corner of the Stone (on the left of the door), the ‘Iraqi Corner (to the right of the door), the Syrian Corner (opposite that of the Iraqi), and the Yemeni Corner (opposite the Corner of the Black Stone).

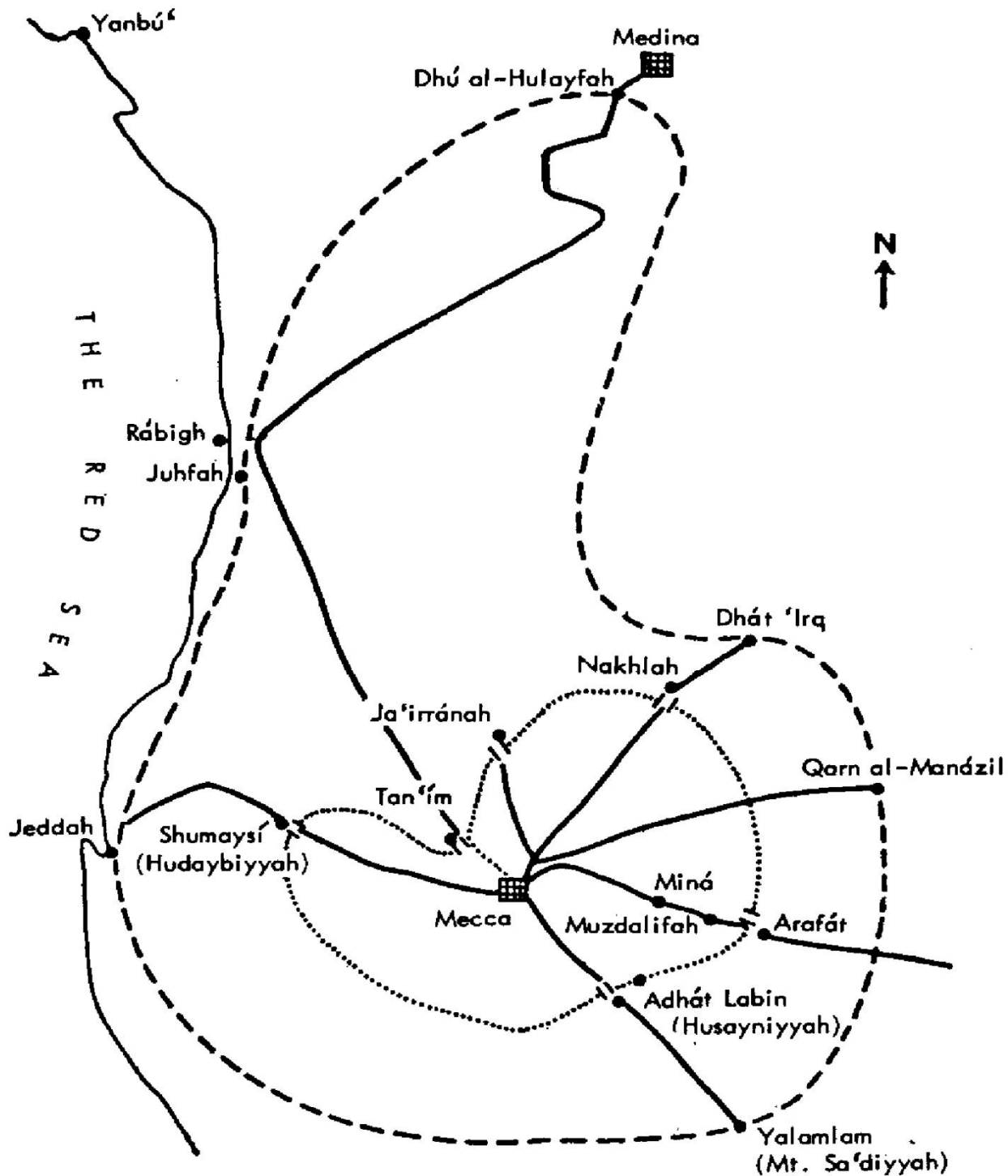
At the foot of the Ka'bah, on the right side, there is a small ditch, and this is the remaining trace of the work done by Abraham, when he was digging out soil to prepare mortar for building. Almost opposite the Ka'bah door, outside the “mataf” (the route taken during the ritual circuits) can be seen the block of stone on which Abraham stood when completing the building of the sanctuary.

It was formerly enclosed in an enormous pavilion, but it is now buried under a cover of transparent crystal. This was done in order to make room for the pilgrims when they were making the ritual circuits of the Ka'bah. Not far from this spot there was a large pavilion over the Well of Zemzem. For the same reason this building was demolished, and now the only access to the Well is by a spacious underground approach.

Here we will quote a passage from the work of Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *Mahomet*, p. 34: "Archaeologists, however, have discovered the prototype of the Ka'bah of Mecca. The excavations carried out by the British Mission at Huraydah, in Hadramaut, in 1937-1938, brought to light the ruins of a temple consecrated to the lunar god Sin. It was quadrilateral in shape, and measured $13\frac{3}{4}$ yards by $10\frac{3}{4}$ yards in width. It was orientated (like the Babylonian temples), on the axis of the cardinal points, the front facing the south-west. This form of orientation, and the dimensions, are the same as those of the Ka'bah, except that the front of the Ka'bah faces north-east. (Cf. Rykmans, *Religion*, pp. 27-28; *ibid. Trace de Saba*, p. 9.)"

But it would be more accurate to say that the entrance-door to the Ka'bah faces east-north-east. Abraham came from Babylonia, and it is quite understandable that he might have decided to site the front of the House of the One God in the opposite direction, as a protest against the paganism of his former compatriots. But before speaking of a "prototype", it would be necessary to have definite proof that the temple of Huraydah was older than the Ka'bah.

At the eastern end of the mosque is the route followed by pilgrims making the journey between the Mounts Safa and Marwah (these are actually two large rocks). This route is called Mas'a ("the place of running between the two Mounts").



Routs -----

The Inner Circuit ----- For the lesser pilgrimage (Umrah)

The Outer Circuit ----- For the Greater Pilgrimage (Hajj)

Mecca and its surroundings

The sketch-map of Mecca and its surroundings shows the City of Mecca itself and the three pilgrimage-sites or “Stations” of *Mina*, Muzdalifah and ‘*Arafat*. The route taken when visiting these sites has no inherent sacred character, but owing to the configuration of the terrain no other itinerary is possible. In order to widen the route, engineers have recently blown up a number of small hills. At *Mina* can be seen the sites connected with Abraham and the offering of his son in sacrifice. (It may be recalled, by the way, that the ceremonial immolation of the first-born child is attested to by the Bible (*Exodus* XIII, 1, 12; *Ezekiel*, XX, 26, etc.) as a Divine ordinance — and Ishmael was not only the first-born, but even the immolation of Abraham had concerned his “only son”, as *Genesis* XX, 12 affirms — and according to the precision of the Qur’an XXXVII, 112, when Abraham successfully passed the Divine test, God gave him as a gift another child, Isaac.) In this region, at almost every step can be seen historical monuments or sites having close connection with the life of the Prophet of Islam and his successors.

Arabia

The map of Arabia shows the two circuits. The Outer Circuit is the one which applies to pilgrims coming from abroad or from the exterior. When they reach the limit indicated by this circuit, they take off their everyday clothing, and consecrate themselves by wearing two pieces of cloth, which are unsewn. The Inner Circuit is undertaken by those who are already in Mecca (who live there), and who are making the Lesser Pilgrimage. To consecrate themselves,

these pilgrims go outside of this circuit, and return when this observance has been carried out.



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The Text of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)'s historic Farewell Pilgrimage Address.

(delivered on 23 February 632 C.E)

An Analysis of the Address

The Address lays emphasis more than anything else on social service and obligations of one individual to another, i.e., on cultivating social conscience.

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)'s Farewell Pilgrimage address

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) during his Farewell Pilgrimage gave a sermon which could be styled the “Manifesto of World Peace”. The Prophet attached so much importance to this Manifesto that he repeated it five times during that Hajj season! Once he gave this sermon on 7th *Dhu al-Hijjah* in the Sacred Mosque at Mecca and twice at ‘Arafat on 9th *Dhu al-Hijjah* and again twice at Mina on 10th and 11th *Dhu al-Hijjah* (or 11th and 12th) each day once.

Ya ‘qubi’, the historian, records that the sermon of the 7th *Dhu al-Hijjah* was delivered by the Prophet while on a camel after the afternoon prayer and the sermon on 9th *Dhu al-Hijjah* in the valley of ‘Arafat in the afternoon first before the afternoon prayer and again after finishing the afternoon prayer; on both these latter occasions he spoke on camel-back. The sermon at *Mina* was delivered after the morning prayer, also on camel-back. His companion, Bilal was in attendance, holding the camel reins. On all these occasions the Prophet had a crier to repeat his words, sentence by sentence, after him. During the *Mina* sermon it was his son-in-law, ‘Ali, who acted as the crier, while on other occasions it was a young man of vigorous voice named Rabi’ah Ibn Khalaf. The Prophet Muhammad had him standing very close to him and asked him to repeat after him each sentence.

When the Prophet Muhammad reached ‘Arafah (near Mecca), he asked Rabi’ah Ibn Khalaf, who had a very powerful voice, to act as crier.

During the Farewell Pilgrimage of 632 C.E. there were present at ‘Arafat between 120 to 140 thousand men and women. The Prophet Muhammad

repeated his sermon again and again because everybody could not make it convenient to attend only one assembly. As the pilgrims' presence in the plain of 'Arafat forms an integral part of the Pilgrimage rites and his stay at 'Arafat is obligatory, the Prophet soon after the whole congregation was ready to perform the afternoon prayer mounted his camel. After praising and glorifying God, the Prophet said to Rabi'ah, "Say to them: O people! the Messenger of God says:

"I am a man like unto you. It is possible that you may not see me again in this place (the Prophet passed away about three months later — 8th June 632 C.E.). Therefore listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today.

"May God bless the person who, after having heard me, guards my words and takes them to others ! It is possible that you do not understand the import of my words here, but there are people in the world who would understand the meaning of my words better than you. Therefore understand that you should take my words to others who are not present here today, for it happens often that the messenger does not know the importance of the message he is carrying."

When the Prophet Muhammad had finished his sentence and his crier Rabfah had repeated it, the Prophet Muhammad stopped and asked the audience if it had heard his words well. When everyone shouted to say that they had heard them, the Prophet turned his face upwards and said: "O God! Thou art my witness. I have conveyed Thy message."

The Prophet said to Rabi'ah, "Say to them: O people ! Do you know what month this is? " They said: It is the sacred month of *Dhu al-Hijjah*.

Then the Prophet said to Rabi'ah, "Say to them: God has hallowed your blood and your property like the sanctity of this month until you meet your Lord."

Then the Prophet said to Rabi'ah, "Say to them: Do you know what territory this is?" and they said: The Holy land (of Mecca).

And then the Prophet said to Rabi'ah to say to them: "God has hallowed your blood and your property like the sanctity of this land until you meet your Lord."

Then the Prophet said to Rabi'ah, "Say to the people: Do you know what day this is?" And they said: The day of the great Hajj.

And then the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said to Rabi'ah to say to them: "God has made sacred and inviolable the life and the property of each of you unto the other like this day of the Hajj until you meet your Lord.

"The Lord has ordained to every man the share of his inheritance. A testament is not lawful to the detriment of heirs.

"The child belongs to the parent, and for the violator of wedlock a stone.

"You are about to meet your Lord Who will ask you to account for your actions. He who has a pledge should return it to him who entrusted it to him.

"This day all sums of interest are remitted, including that of my uncle, 'Abbas Ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib. This day retaliation for all murders committed in the days of paganism (the *Jahiliyyah*) is prohibited, and foremost of all, the murder of *Rabi'ah Ibn Harith* is forgiven.

"O people! you have certain rights over your wives, and so have your wives over you. They are the trust of God in your hands. So you must treat

them with all kindness. You have taken them only as a trust from God, and you have the enjoyment of their persons by the words of God.

“And as regards your slaves, see that you give them to eat of what you yourselves eat, and clothe them with what you clothe yourselves. If they commit a fault which you are not inclined to forgive, then part with them; for they are the servants of the Lord, and they are not to be harshly treated.

“And keep always faithful to the trust reposed in you and avoid sins.

“All men from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab; also a non-Arab has no superiority over an Arab, except by good actions.

“O people! listen to what I have to say and take it to heart. You must know that every Muslim is the brother of another Muslim (and as he pronounced these words he raised his arms aloft and placed the fore-finger of one hand on the fore-finger of the other). You are all equal. (You enjoy your equal rights and have similar obligations.) You are all members of one brotherhood. It is forbidden for any one of you to take from his brother save what the latter should willingly give.

“Guard yourselves from committing injustices.”

The Prophet then proceeded to recite the 36th and 37th verses of the 9th chapter of the Holy Qur'an which abolish the triennial intercalation of the year, and fix the month of Pilgrimage to the changing seasons of the year.

He said: ‘Verily, the number of the months with God is twelve months (in a year, so ordained by Him the day He created the heavens and the earth. Of them four are sacred, three consecutive and the Rajab of Mudar, which is between Jumadd and Sha'ban). That is the true religion. So wrong not yourselves.

‘Verily the transposing (of a prohibited month) is an addition to unbelief. The unbelievers are led to wrong thereby; for they make it lawful one year, and forbidden another year, that they may equalize the number of months which God has forbidden and make such forbidden ones lawful.’

“And now on this very day has time performed its cycle, and as it was on the day that God created the heavens and the earth.

“O people! truly Satan has despaired of being worshipped in your land for ever. But should you obey him in some matter which may seem to be trifling, it will be a matter of pleasure for him. So you must beware of him in the matter of your faith.

“Let him that is present tell it to him that is absent. Haply he who shall be told may remember that who has heard it.

“O people! so understand my words. I have left with you something which, if you will hold fast to it, you will never fall into error—a plain indication, The Book of God and the practice of His Prophet. So give good heed to what I say.”

Then the Prophet looking up to heaven cried at the top of his voice, “O Lord! I have delivered Thy message.” And the valley resounded with the reply from the myriads of human throats with one accord, “And that thou hast!”

Thereupon the Prophet said, “O Lord! I beseech Thee! bear Thou witness unto it.”

An analysis of the Prophet's Farewell Address

In the Farewell Pilgrimage Address of the Prophet there are fifteen items which taken collectively could be styled "The Manifesto of World Peace". In this sermon the one thing which catches one's eye is that the Prophet not even once mentioned the importance of rituals — the prayers, the zakah and fasting;— and that whatever he said and emphasized had a bearing on human relationship tending to establish peace amongst men and security in the world. Ritualism is given no pride of place in this Address. There are fifteen items in the Manifesto. They are:

1. The blood, property and honour of Muslims is sacred to one another. In this regard the Prophet Muhammad said, "O men! listen to my words and take them to heart. Know that every Muslim is a brother to every other Muslim, and that you are now one brotherhood. It is not legitimate for any one of you, therefore, to appropriate to himself anything that belongs to his brother unless it is willingly given to him by his brother."
2. Equality of rights. In this regard the Prophet said: "All men are from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab; also a non-Arab has no superiority over an Arab, except by good actions."
3. The abolition of family distinctions. He said that people should not take pride in their genealogy. It is the good actions alone they should take pride in.
4. Interdiction of bloodshed resulting from old feuds. The Prophet said, "Blood feuds of the pre-Islamic days are under my feet, i.e., forbidden."
5. Interdiction of usury. The Prophet said: "All usury money chargeable from the pre-Islamic period is under my feet (i.e. cancelled), and the first usury

money which I cancel is the money that belonged to my uncle ‘Abbas Ibn Muttalib.’”

6. The enforcement of the law of cease-fire. The Prophet emphasised the importance of observing peace and the cease-fire during the four sacred months of the Arab calendar. The meaning underlying this observance of the sanctity of the four sacred months was that the elders and leaders of the Arab community would thus be able to consolidate peace.

7. Safeguarding of the rights of women.

8. Safeguarding of the rights of the slaves, who, the Prophet emphasized, should be looked after in the same way as one did after oneself.

9. The brotherhood of Muslims. The Prophet pointed out that Muslims were brethren to each other and that they should each one of them respect the rights and privileges of the other; they should not backbite, and they should safeguard the property and life of one another.

10. He said, “from the sacred Ka‘bah, as a result of the promulgation of the doctrine of the Oneness of God, Satan has departed; but do remember that it may try to come through other ways. Be prepared, therefore, to forestall its moves and machinations.”

11. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) anathematized transgression in any form or shape. He said that the worst enemy of God was he who struck someone who had not struck him.

12. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said that those who took pride in affiliating themselves to others who were not theirs and those who did not pay the full price of the work done by a workman were far removed from the mercy of God.

13. The Prophet emphasised that Muslims should try to effect peace between two fighting Muslim factions.
14. The Prophet said, “I am leaving behind with you two things which will bring you salvation—one of the Qur’an, the second my ways.”
15. All men are jointly responsible about God’s commandment and for the propagation of the Manifesto. The Prophet said. “Those who hear this Manifesto should convey it to others who are ignorant of it.”



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