

A decorative vertical panel on the left side of the cover. It features a complex, interlocking geometric pattern in shades of green, blue, and white, reminiscent of Islamic art. The pattern is set against a light yellow background.

# **PILGRIMAGE IN ISLAM**

**Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri**



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## Book Description

Note: This book was formerly titled, *The Pilgrimage of Islam*.

The rite of pilgrimage has played a central role in spiritual traditions since earliest times. For fourteen centuries, Muslims have undertaken the pilgrimage and today it is the world's largest annual spiritual gathering.

***Pilgrimage in Islam*** is a lucid exposition of the *Hajj*, the journey to the House of God, the *Ka`bah*, which is situated in the heart of the sacred city of Mecca. One of the five pillars of the Islamic faith, the *Hajj* is obligatory on all Muslims who are able to undertake the journey at least once in a lifetime. The Prophet Muhammad's original *Hajj* is described, upon which the present-day pilgrimage is based, and a step by step account offers the reader a rare insight into the inner meaning of the outer rites of the *Hajj*, for ultimately, the physical journey to Mecca is also a spiritual pilgrimage to the knowledge of God.

## About Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Acknowledged as a master of self-knowledge and a spiritual philosopher, Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri's role as a teacher grew naturally out of his own quest for self-fulfillment.

He travelled extensively on a spiritual quest which led to his eventual rediscovery of the pure and original Islamic heritage of his birth, and the discovery of the truth that reconciles the past with the present, the East with the West, the worldly with the spiritual – a link between the ancient wisdom teachings and our present time.

A descendant of five generations of well-known and revered spiritual leaders, Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri has taught students throughout the world for over 40 years. A prolific author of more than forty books relating to the universal principles of Islam, the Qur'an, and its core purpose of enlightenment, he is a gifted exponent of how the self relates to the soul, humankind's link with the Divine, and how consciousness can be groomed to reflect our higher nature.

The unifying scope of his perspective emphasizes practical, actionable knowledge that leads to self-transformation, and provides a natural bridge between seemingly different Eastern and Western approaches to spirituality, as well as offering a common ground of higher knowledge for various religions, sects and secular outlooks.

## **Acknowledgements**

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## Editor's Note

Pilgrimage is a perpetual impulse in man, a journey out of the realm of ordinary experience to the realm of the sacred. The intention of performing any pilgrimage may differ, as may one's concept of what is sacred. The primal impulse to perform pilgrimage is love of the Divine Being and to draw close to Him, as well as to those whose intention is religious merit. It even attracts those whose intention is travel and adventure.

The strength of this impulse is so great that it must find an expression. We find its materialistic manifestation, therefore, in the form of vacations or holidays. People carefully prepare themselves for these journeys, working all year and saving enough money to travel away from their homes. They leave the realm of their ordinary experience, and journey to beach resorts and other sites of natural beauty, or travel to foreign lands and tour historical sites and tourist attractions. These journeys assume an aura of sacredness.

The sacred places of religions and cultures whither men have made pilgrimage, throughout time and across cultures, had a connection either with divine prophecy or with primitive belief in spirits and the unseen forces that shaped the physical universe. Striking or unusual landscapes, springs, waterfalls, caves and volcanic craters brought to mind the merging of divine forces and the physical realm. Some places that were associated with specific legends became sites of pilgrimage: for example, the Homeric Greeks were said to have heard the voice of the Delphic Oracle speaking from a steaming fissure in the ground. A famous center of medieval pilgrimage in Ireland was a multiple cavern on an island in Lough Derg, mysteriously reputed to be the physical entry into purgatory and eventually Paradise. Glastonbury became an early site of Christian pilgrimage in England because of its association with numerous legends.

The pilgrimage rites that different religions and cultures practiced, and in some cases continue to practice, were meant to accentuate certain aspects of man's life-experience. In this way he had the opportunity of becoming more fully aware of himself in relation to his culture and religion. The form of the Pilgrimage of Islam, on the other hand, actually microcopies the universal experience and man's unique position in it. The Pilgrimage of Islam is ancient, Abrahamic in

lineage, and thus can be traced back at least 4,000 years. Islamic traditions exist which actually ascribe its origin to the appearance of man on the planet. In this book we shall examine the Pilgrimage of Islam. We shall gain familiarity with the historical context of its origination, see how it was obscured during a time of ignorance, and how it was finally revived in its pristine form by the Prophet Muhammad. We shall examine thoroughly the rites of the Pilgrimage and also its inner meanings. Our intention is to place before the reader a document that will provide knowledge of this inexplicably profound journey.

## Introduction

### *The Hajj*

Alone, out of all the major pilgrimages of history, the *Hajj* survives with its vitality unimpaired. The great Christian pilgrimages like Santiago are but memories; they have vanished with the passing of the Age of Faith, leaving churches and chapels to mark a route once annually traversed by thousands. These forlorn remnants remind one of the visitors in Philip Larkin's "Church Going":

Bored, uninformed, knowing the ghostly silt Dispersed . . .

The silt to which the poet refers is the dimension of the numinous, the inherent sacral nature that sets off certain places on earth, putting them into a category apart. The practice of pilgrimage roots in the notion of inherent sacrality, which accounts for the universality of pilgrimage, for, to date, no religion has been discovered free of these elements. Sanctity attaches to specific places in consequence of something decisive having happened there, e.g. the Buddha Gaya, near Benares, scene of Gautama's enlightenment, Jerusalem, the scene of Jesus' miraculous resurrection, or Bethlehem, that of his equally miraculous birth, Canterbury as the scene of the holy archbishop's martyrdom. The site of martyrdom becomes a martyrrium (*mashhad* in `Arabic) attracting pilgrims in its own right, the way pilgrims gravitate towards the scene of Hamza's martyrdom at Uhud. For pilgrimage to be set in motion an initial impulse is needed, be it an apparition or a decisive event like the birth of a religious figure, producing a *mawlid* the same way martyrdom produces a *mashhad*. Almost invariably, the sacrality of site manifests itself in secondary phenomena like induced ecstasy, or healing, or psychic phenomena like levitation (which may be witnessed at the Mawlid of Sayyid Ahmad al-Badawi at Tanta).

Pilgrimage is popular and collective; it climaxes in a moment of collective emotion, producing *communitas*, a heightened awareness of fellowship, but always involving transcendence. The physical goal, and the scene of these phenomena, is located on the threshold of the spiritual. The journey thither is a preparatory purification, preparing the pilgrim for this encounter with another

dimension. The other world is encountered on the boundary of the mundane. Pilgrimage therefore corresponds to a deep spiritual hunger present in all of us, offering the possibility of transcendence to those who might not otherwise experience it. This, together with its gregarious nature, accounts for the popularity of pilgrimage in all cultures.

Pilgrimages are hereditary, spiritual property passing not just from one generation to another but from one tradition to another. When one religion supplants another, frequently it inherits its predecessor's sites of pilgrimage, making the ritual and symbolic content difficult to read. Sometimes this happens more than once. In Islam, it happened twice, as Abrahamic sites and rites were perverted to non-monotheistic usage to be reclaimed later by Islam. When this happens, the site witnesses a purification of accretions (Qur'an 17:81). Vandalization of holy sites can lead to desacralization, total as at Canterbury after Henry VIII or partial as at Jannat al-Baqi' at Medina under the Wahhabis. Throughout history, iconoclasts have tried to suppress pilgrimage, and governments fear it because of its popular character and the irrepressible manifestations to which it can give rise. Foci of pilgrimage are also liable to shift under the impact of political or economic change: the Papal monarchy diverted Christian pilgrimage from Jerusalem to Rome; in Islam, 'Abdul Malik built the Dome of the Rock on purpose to attract away pilgrims from Mecca.

Islamic pilgrimage shares with other traditions, the basic features of the phenomenon like intention or consecration, separation, passage, sojourn (at the shrine), deconsecration and, pervading all, *communitas*, whereby the individual becomes aware of his place as part of a larger unit, a social body transcending frontiers not only of space but of class, culture and language. On return, the reintegration of the pilgrim into the community from which he temporarily separated is enriched by the *communitas*, which alters his perception of himself, his family, his nationality and his relations for all of them. Islamic pilgrimage exhibits all of these characteristics to a very marked and unusual degree.

Politically, *Hajj* constitutes the annual congress (*majlis*) of all Muslims, since *Hajj* is the nearest the believers come to a single corporate presence in one place. The close association in common purpose of peoples of diverse origins and backgrounds promote not only spiritual uplift but they also promote solidarity. Whilst medieval Christian pilgrimages like Canterbury or Glastonbury



promoted national unity, the *Hajj* promotes international unity. The equality of believers before God is visibilized in the uniformity of the dress worn, the *ihram*.

Spiritually, the outward journey to Mecca prefigures the inward journey towards the heart, with gnosis (*ma`rifah*) as the goal. Mecca is both location and spirit. Above the visible Ka`bah are eight other invisible Ka`bahs disposed along a single axis around which the entire cosmos rotates. Above the last of these Ka`bahs is the Throne of God, or “*primum mobile*”. The act of *tawaf*, performed counter-clockwise, in the direction of the cosmic dance, would make of the Ka`bah an *axis mundi*, if it were not one already. Thus the Ka`bah represents the point of rotation of the spiritual universe. It also forms the intersection of two planes, the vertical plane of the spirit and the horizontal one of phenomenal existence. The *qiblah* axis used in prayer and which determines the orientation of all mosques is the horizontal plane, and the cosmological axis of which the Ka`bah is the visible point is the vertical one. Prayer can be construed as use of the horizontal axis to relate oneself to the vertical plane of the spirit. Thus *salat* and *Hajj* form but two aspects of a single reality, two ways of apprehending the Reality (*al-Haqiqah*). Of the Five Pillars four – *salat*, *siyam*, *zakat*, and *Hajj* – are peripheral to the central one – *shahadah* – but between *salat* and *Hajj* there is convergence. The Muslim Ummah as a middle nation (Qur’an 2:143) focused on the *qiblah* relates to this focus in various ways: daily in prayer, posthumously in burial, and, once at least in life, in *Hajj*. The *qiblah* is therefore the Ummah’s center of gravity since it is in relation to this point that the whole Ummah is balanced.

The centrality of *Hajj* is not only cosmological but legal. Canonically, *Hajj* ranks as *fard*, and specifically as *fard `ain* (individual’s obligation) as opposed to *fard kifaya* (collective’s obligation) but differs from the other Pillars in that this particular *fard* is consequent on one’s having the means. Islam recognizes different classes of pilgrimage. These are *ziyarah*, *Hajj* and *`Umrah*. *Ziyarah* (visitation) is the only respect in which Islamic pilgrimage corresponds to the pilgrimages found in other traditions; *Hajj* and *`Umrah* have no correspondence elsewhere but are peculiar to Islam. *Hajj* is *fard*, *`Umrah* is *Sunnah* and *ziyarah* is neither, albeit meritorious. The addition of Medina to the *Hajj*, though standard practice, falls into the category of *ziyarah*.

The rites of *Hajj* are essentially Abrahamic, being a re-enactment of certain events in the life of the Prophet Abraham decisive for the subsequent course of monotheism but endowed with fresh

significance in virtue of their ritualized incorporation in Islam. In considering *Hajj*, we have to assess both the Abrahamic core and its Muhammadan transformation, which subsumes and completes the Abrahamic component, Muhammad's resumption and extension of these rites being a fulfillment of prophecy (Qur'an, 2:127-9).

The occurrence and recurrence of events in specific localities endow the localities with a significance beyond the merely phenomenal. This numinosity pervades the entire area where the events occurred. Mecca and its environs can best be understood as a sort of divine theater where the encounter between God and man took place. Each rite is tied to a particular locality. The *sa'i*, which commemorates Hajra's anguished search for water, is performed at the *mas'ah* between the two hills of Safa and Marwah. The *jarm* (lapidation) at Mina commemorates the points at which Satan successively appeared to tempt Abraham. Both relate to the prophecy of the birth of Muhammad in the Qur'an, 2:129. The Qur'an (2:158) refers to Safa and Marwah as *sha'a'ir*, signs or evidences attesting to what had taken place in that area, making Mecca the scene of divine action. Zamzam is a third.

All of these localities represent incidents or stages in the unfolding of God's salvific plan, whereby man is rescued from the effects of the Fall (*al-hubut*) through divine intervention (*huda*). Had God not intervened twice, first when the infant Ishmael was dying of thirst, and again when the adolescent Ishmael was about to be sacrificed, there would have been no Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), since Kader (*Kaider* in `Arabic) the Prophet is the lineal descendant of Ishmael through Kaider. God's plan would have been thwarted and salvation (*najat*) from the consequences of the Fall would have been wrought by other means; the entire course of human history would have been different. Thus Mecca is, historically, the most important place on earth.

The ordained rites (*manasik*) are both Abrahamic and Muhammadan, but just as Muhammad (S.A.W.) resumes and completes the work of Abraham so the Muhammadan component is by far the most important. This explains why this particular component, the *wuquf* at `Arafat, constitutes the sole essential rites of the pilgrimage without which the performance of the *Hajj* is invalidated. The *wuquf* is also a commemoration, in this instance of the Farewell Sermon which the Prophet preached from atop the Mount of Mercy and of the descent (*tanzil*) in the middle of that sermon of the crucial revelation in verse 5:3 of the Qur'an.

The Muhammadan dimension of *Hajj* is not limited to the all-important *wuquf* at `Arafat but to other innovations, all introduced during the Farewell Pilgrimage. It was now that the Prophet substituted a purely lunar calendar to regulate the liturgical year and abolished the intercalation (*nasi'*), which had corrected the discrepancy between the lunar and solar calendars. The liturgical year focuses and heightens the sense of *communitas*, for the climax of that year, the *`Id al-Adha*, or the Feast of the Sacrifice of Abraham on the 10th of Dhu 'l-Hijjah, coincides with the corresponding rite in Mina on that day. This makes all Muslims spiritually present along with the Hujjaj in Mecca at that moment, so that Muslims, wherever they be, at that moment form a single communion. The celebration of *`Id al-Adha* merely reproduces locally what Muslims are doing in the vicinity of Mecca that same day, so that *salat* and *Hajj* coincide.

This relates directly to the political dimension of *Hajj*. It is said correctly that Islam is the most political of all religions, which is only what one would expect since Aristotle defined man as a political animal. Thus, throughout history, the *Hajj*, properly understood, is both popular assembly (*majlis*) and a forum for the interchange of ideas. It was at Mecca during *Hajj* that Amir `Abdul Qadir, the national hero of Algeria, and Shamwyl, the national hero of the Caucasians, met to plan the Islamic resistance in the 19th century. In Islam it is neither possible nor desirable to disentangle the religious from the political or the cultural from the economic.

The importance of the diverse aspects of *Hajj* is reflected in the diversity of effect the institution had on all who took part in it. Pilgrimage routes traverse the Muslim world, from Scutari on the Asian side of the Hosphorus, through Anatolia and Syria to the Hijaz. Another caravan came from Iraq, and a third from Yemen; another route was travelled by the North African pilgrims, whilst finally there was the ocean route from the Far East. Monuments all over the Muslim world attest to the religious and economic importance of the pilgrim traffic; the Selimiye in Damascus is only the most beautiful of the facilities provided by a beneficent administration for the comfort as well as the safety of the pilgrims. The facilities included rest houses, fortresses and assembly points. The reason the square in Scutari is so gigantic, relative to the size of the city, is because this was where the annual *Hajj* caravan formed up. At a later stage, the construction of the Hijaz railway (opened 1908) was but an updating of this route. It also formed the lifeline of the Ottoman Empire, and this overlapping of function merely reproduces an aspect of the Pilgrimage

that was always present – the economic, for trade routes and pilgrimage routes converged, diverged and coincided.

The *Hajj* has been described as ‘the most important agency of voluntary, personal mobility before the age of the great European discoveries,’ one which ‘must have had profound effects of all the communities from which the pilgrims came, through which they travelled, and to which they returned.’ (Encyclopedia of Islam, 2nd ed., part *Hajj*). People, particularly the merchant class would avail the opportunities offered by the pilgrimage to defray in whole or in part the expenses of the journey for themselves and their families. Everyone returned spiritually benefited, provided his intention were pure at the outset, but many also profited intellectually. Nor were these effects confined to scholars. The transformative effect of *Hajj* on societies even a few of whose members went on pilgrimage is something that would be difficult to overestimate. Both the almoravid and Almohad revolutions in North Africa were brought about by *Hujjaj* who realized the religious backwardness of their own societies through coming into contact with Islam elsewhere. The British recognized the dangers of such enlightenment, and in some places, notably Nigeria, went to extraordinary lengths to restrict the number of pilgrims leaving the country so that the Muslims would be left in benighted darkness.

Today the *Hajj* has increased in quantity but declined in quality. Formerly scholars would spend years on *Hajj*, not only sojourning in the Haramain but stopping off at centers of learning enroute; sometimes a pilgrim would be so taken with a teacher’s teaching that he would break his journey and stay on, picking up the next year’s caravan. Since traders and pilgrims made used to the same routes, the merchant class also benefited from chance encounters. The *Hajj* was a vehicle of cultural diffusion, helping to bind disparate parts of the Muslim world into a single cultural imperium. Since ‘*Umrah* in Ramadan is particularly meritorious, people would arrive in Mecca during Ramadan and stay on for Dhu ‘l-Hijjah, thereby performing both ‘*Umrah* and *Hajj*. As scholars from different parts of Dar al-Islam were brought together in the act of pilgrimage, a process of cross-cultural fertilization took place.

## Preface

The path of Islam has its origin and roots in the rise of Adamic consciousness. From the dawn of humankind and throughout its history, the practices and rituals of Islam have evolved and developed, as revealed to the numerous prophets and messengers who brought about successive changes.

The practices and laws for the wayfarer were finally completed as a total code of conduct by the last messenger, Muhammad, and preserved in the Qur'an and the prophetic teachings. The Qur'an tells us that the purpose of creation is to adore, worship and submit to the loving Creator by total surrender. No lasting contentment or satisfaction can be obtained except through this unific path.

To arrive at an inner state of pure surrender and freedom, outer practices and rituals are observed. To pray and supplicate, to retreat in meditation, to give alms to share and care for others, to restrain one's self by fasting, to go on pilgrimage and to visit places which are conducive to spiritual uplift, to uphold goodness and to renounce evil, and to live fully within Islam and to protect it – all are within the original blueprint of human consciousness. All of these practices are fundamental, primal expressions of the spiritual and social facets of human nature. If we observe closely, we will find these practices reflected in the habits and traditions of tribes and societies everywhere from time immemorial.

Prayer, for example, if not offered in sincere supplication, can be reduced to a simple cry for material help, and if giving becomes self-gratifying, it enhances the ego rather than reduces it. If fasting is performed simply as abstention from food, its benefit may only be dietary, and if the pilgrimage loses its spiritual and social content, it becomes simply a form of folkloric pageantry.

The present work is an attempt to show the outer practices and inner meanings of the journey of the *Hajj* in Islam. Its intention is to present an integrated picture of the entire pilgrimage. This work is a companion volume to a book on fasting which is to be published in the near future. We hope this work will be of benefit to all who are interested in Islam original.

Although the section on rituals is based on the Ja`fari school of thought which is only very slightly different to the other four schools of Islamic thought, the rest of the book is of a universal nature.

## **Section One: The Pilgrimage Before Islam**

### ***Pilgrimage in Different Religions and Cultures***

Many religions and cultures have practiced a form of pilgrimage. Although Islam has been the only spiritual discipline in which pilgrimage has been considered an obligatory rite, the practice of pilgrimage existed among other major religions such, as Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism. We shall briefly explore the practice of pilgrimage in these religions and a few other cultures, in order to place the pilgrimage of Islam within a wider context.

#### **Pilgrimage among the Jews**

The Jews came to Palestine to visit places associated with Biblical events. Also, in Judges 21:19, there is a reference to the festival of Jehovah, which took place annually at Shiloh, to the north of Bethel. This festival is called in Hebrew the *hag*, a word which is almost identical to the Arabic word for pilgrim (*hajj*). Once the Tabernacle had been installed, the pilgrim sacrificed and prostrated at the shrine. In more ancient times, only the head of the family participated in the activities, while in later times the whole family took part.

In the seventh month of the Hebrew year, pilgrims went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles. They shaved their beards, wore ragged clothes and brought offerings and incense. The Book of Psalms contains songs sung by the pilgrims to celebrate their visit to the Temple in Jerusalem.

#### **Pilgrimage among the early Christians**

The Christians also visited Palestine to see places associated with Biblical events. An account exists from a Christian woman named Egeria who lived around 400 AD. She tells of her pilgrimage to Palestine and the sites she visited. The central devotional practice that she and her group performed was to read the passage of the Bible relevant to each site they visited. A pattern

of public worship developed which was associated with these sites during the reign of Constantine in the early fourth century.

### **Christian centers of pilgrimage in Europe**

Certain centers of pilgrimage had developed in Europe by the early fourth century. The bones of Peter and Paul were enshrined in Rome, as were the graves of the many Christian martyrs who died under Roman persecution. The shrines of lesser pious people and martyrs appeared all over Europe, and people visited these sites in anticipation of blessings. It became a custom, and in 787 AD a church decree, that every church should have some kind of relic associated with a saint or martyr. A trade in ‘the limbs of martyrs’ had begun, as St. Augustine of Hippo reports in 400 AD. To explain the resultant flood of articles, it was widely believed that all relics possessed the miraculous power of self-multiplication. The test of popularity as to whether a particular site became a constant place of visitation was whether the relics had the power to perform miracles. Those that were reputed to have this power enjoyed a steady stream of visitors.

Besides Rome, there were only a few other places in Europe that enjoyed international popularity. After Rome, there was Santiago de Compostella in northern Spain, where in 816 AD the body of St. James was said to have been miraculously rescued from the waves of the Atlantic. There was a popular shrine in France, another in Germany, and a third in Italy, in addition to the famous Canterbury Cathedral in England.

In Britain the veneration of wells was also common, and many of these sites became places of visitation for a great number of people, particularly those who sought healing from some disease or physical ailment. These wells often derived their fame from the fact that some pious person baptized converts there in the early days of British Christianity. Many, however, derived their popularity from pre-Christian legends and were rededicated by missionaries for the baptism of converts.



### **Pilgrimage among the Buddhists**

Reincarnation being central to Buddhist belief, the Buddhist is anxious to achieve as many pious acts as possible in order to break out of the cycle of rebirth. Pilgrimage is considered one such pious act. As in the Christian tradition of visiting sites associated with the life of Jesus, Buddhists travel to important sites connected with the Buddha's life. These sites are grouped into three. The first group comprises the places of the Buddha's birth, of his enlightenment, of his first sermon and of his death. The second group consists of six places which he visited, while the third consists of places which are associated with Buddhist culture.

Tibetan Buddhism, mixed with ancient Shamanistic beliefs, is known as Lamaism. Pilgrimage is a practice among the Tibetan Buddhists, and since its beginnings the essential element seems to have been the act of circumambulating the person or place which the pilgrim wishes to honor. During the rite of circumambulation, the person or place is kept on the right-hand side of the pilgrim.

### **Pilgrimage among the Hindus**

Pilgrimage in Hinduism is an ancient practice, and there are numerous places throughout India which attract millions of people. Some places draw people from all over the country, and others largely from neighboring cities, towns and villages. Hindus perform pilgrimages to earn religious merit, to fulfill vows towards the solution of a problem, and to expiate ritual impurities.

Most of the sacred sites lay either on riverbanks, at confluences or on the coast. The value of water as a purifying agent was important in locating places of pilgrimage. The word commonly associated with visiting these places means 'undertaking a journey to river fords,' and great emphasis is laid upon ritual purification by bathing.

An interesting point related to Hindu pilgrimage strongly indicates that the roots of Hinduism were originally monotheistic. The famous epic known as the 'Mahabharata' describes a grand tour of the entire country of India, listing many places of visitation; virtually every site is devoted to Brahma, the Creator, and there is no mention of the other prominent deities such as

Siva, Vishnu and Krishna, nor of icons or temples to these deities. Bhardwaj, in ‘Hindu Places of Pilgrimage in India’, says, ‘The kind of theistic worship we find in India today must have been totally lacking.’

One form of pilgrimage is to visit a monastery and go around its environs, prostrating oneself at every step. The pilgrim is not allowed to halt for food or rest, otherwise he loses the benefit of his pilgrimage. His body must be fully stretched out in front of him, with his hands joined. The pilgrim makes these prostrations even if it is raining, snowing or very cold. Older pilgrims and women with children may simply walk around the monastery, telling the beads of their rosary or turning the prayer-wheels they hold in their right hands. Some pilgrims, when journeying towards a shrine, prostrate themselves the entire way; they protect their faces with a board so they are not bruised by the continual contact with the ground. Each time their forehead touches the ground, they mark the spot, get up, place their feet on this point and extend their body again until they reach their destination. One particular sanctuary lies at the top of a peak. There is an arrangement of chapels at each floor, linked by wooden ladders from which chains hang. The pilgrims climb the peak by clinging onto these chains.

Pilgrimage in Tibet is beset with difficulties, and generally involves crossing harsh and treacherous terrain. Because of the dangers, people usually travel together in large groups. Sometimes rich people pay others to make the pilgrimage for them; they may also pay for poorer people to make the pilgrimage, as an act of merit. All classes of people make the pilgrimage, including brigands who hope to win forgiveness for past sins. There are always many beggars who live around the shrines and avail themselves of the generosity of the pilgrims.

### **Pilgrimage in China**

The Confucian mandarins considered pilgrimage to have within it an element of disorder and danger to the state. They did not like the peasants leaving their lands, considering the practice potentially harmful to the country’s agriculture. Hence it was not a particular feature of religious practices in China, although it was widespread among the Buddhists there.

Mountains were the main places of pilgrimage in China: originally the mountain was seen as an intermediary between the heavens and man. Five official sacred mountains existed in China, the most important of which is called Ta'i Chan. The time for pilgrimage was in the spring. In ancient Chinese tradition, the Emperor had to make pilgrimage to certain sacred mountains; he was considered the son of the heavens, and thus possessed a divine mandate as an intermediary between the heavens and man. He was expected to rule society according to the laws of the universe, and his mandate had to be renewed with every new dynasty. It consisted of a double sacrifice; one at the foot of the mountain, and one at the peak.

Pilgrims organized themselves into societies, each member contributing to a communal fund. Generally the pilgrims set out on foot at the beginning of the year, the group leader carrying a flag with the group's place of origin and other details. Pilgrimage was often made on behalf of a sick person who could not make the journey.

The temple at the summit of Ta'i Chan is difficult to reach, and so pilgrims who climbed the eastern peak rested the night in order to view the sunrise the following day. The lights which appeared during the night at the top of the sacred mountain were considered to be a manifestation of a celestial force. Pilgrims believed that watching these lights assured one of divine benevolence.

### **Pilgrimage in Japan**

Both Buddhists and Shintoists perform pilgrimage in Japan. One of the most frequent circuits of pilgrimage is the visit to the 88 sanctuaries of Shikoku. Pilgrims are most numerous here in March and April. The majority make a single complete tour of the sanctuaries, although some do it several times. In principle, the pilgrimage is made on foot.

One of the objectives of pilgrimage in Japan is to compel the rich, even if it is only once in their lives, to beg. The inhabitants of the villages through which the pilgrims pass believe it assures the well-being of their ancestors to give small quantities of rice or money to the pilgrims. It is considered obligatory for the people to tend to any pilgrim who falls ill, and if a pilgrim dies while in someone's care, then that person must pay for his burial. In return, he keeps whatever

possessions the pilgrim had. The Japanese pilgrim retains the robe he wears on pilgrimage, as this will later serve as his funeral shroud. The hat and cane are also kept, and they are placed on his tomb.

Each pilgrimage has its own characteristics. The pilgrimage to the isle of Sado requires the pilgrim to ask for alms from a strange house two or three times a day. In the region of Shimane, alms must be sought at least seven times a day, each time from a different house.

Generally, the Shintoists in Japan concentrate on making pilgrimage to one sacred place at a time, while the Buddhists perform a circuit. However, there is one Shinto custom whereby 100 temples are visited in a certain order, and a card is left at each temple in ordered to affect a cure for a sick person.

### **Common Features of Pilgrimage**

Certain common features exist among the various types of pilgrimage we have just surveyed. They include the following:

1. The significance of water by the site of a sacred place or shrine. It is important as a means of purification, both for purposes of ablution and for curing the sick.
2. The ancient origin of many sites of pilgrimage. Newer faiths build their temples and shrines in places which have been venerated since pre-historical times.
3. Difficult access to the sacred places, requiring the pilgrim to make a long and arduous journey.
4. The need to sacrifice as part of the rites of pilgrimage. This includes offerings of food, flowers, and small amounts of money or similar tokens.
5. Physical obeisance at the shrine, and in some cases on the road towards the shrine.

6. Making the pilgrimage on foot.
7. A special mode of dress. This dress is often preserved as the pilgrim's shroud.
8. Belief that objects left in a sacred place will become impregnated with divine energy.
9. Importance of mountains as places of worship.
10. The benefits of staying up all night at a sacred place.
11. Certain times of the day, and dates in the lunar calendar, especially the full moon, are considered more auspicious for pilgrimage.
12. Certain foods are prohibited during the pilgrimage.
13. Abstention from cutting the hair or nails, as well as from sexual relations, during the time of the pilgrimage.
14. The more removed the rites of pilgrimage become from their original purity, the more likely is the growth of an avaricious priest class and superstitious practices.
15. The place or person honored is usually kept on the right-hand side of the pilgrim while he circumambulates that place or person.

### **The Pilgrimage of Islam**

As we stated earlier, the Pilgrimage of Islam fully symbolizes the universal experience. The analogies are numerous. For example, an essential rite is circumambulating the Ka`bah counterclockwise, as the planets revolve around the sun. The Ka`bah geometrically represents a cube, and symbolizes the four dimensions as well as the four basic elements: fire, water, earth and air. This circumambulation is circular in shape, while the prayer at the station of Abraham represents a vertical line. Going between the two hills of Safa and Marwah represents a horizontal line. The pilgrim sets out from the Ka`bah to the plain of `Arafat, travelling beyond

the boundaries of the Sacred Precinct. The meaning of this action is that he has travelled beyond the confines of the cosmos to stand upon the vast, solitary plain of Arafat, the plain which symbolizes divine knowledge. Then he returns to the confines of the Sacred Precinct to stone the pillars, which represent the attachments of creational existence, attachments that distance him from divine knowledge. Finally, he returns again to circumambulate the Ka`bah, back to the cosmic, orbital movement, but this time with knowledge beyond the time and space dimension of the cosmos.

### ***From Adam to Abraham***

The Ka`bah is the oldest sacred sanctuary on earth of which there is historical record. The Qur'an says,

Most surely the first house appointed for men is the one at Bakkah [Mecca], blessed and a guidance for the nations. (3:96)

The Ka`bah predated the Prophet Abraham, who unearthed the foundation and rebuilt the House upon it.

And when Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House: Our Lord! accept from us; surely Thou art the Hearing, the Knowing. (2:127)

The oldest extant history of Mecca, 'Reports About Mecca', which was written by Muhammad al-Azraqi approximately three centuries after the Prophet Muhammad's death, contains information on the origin of the Ka`bah which most of the latter historical texts rely upon extensively. He traces his information to reports from certain companions of the Prophet Muhammad, who all relate that the Ka`bah is linked to Adam. There are different versions of the specific details of the original construction of the Ka`bah, but all contain common, basic information.

An example may be found in tradition from Ibn `Abbas, the Prophet's cousin, who said that Adam travelled until he arrived at Mecca, where he built the Ka`bah with angelic inspiration and assistance. Later, the flood of Noah swept away the physical structure, which was later raised by Abraham and Ishmael. Ibn `Abbas also alluded to the inward meaning of the Ka`bah, mentioning that there is another House like the Ka`bah which is directly under God's Throne. He said that if this House fell, it would fall upon the Ka`bah of earth. In other words, the physical Ka`bah of form is an emanation of its archetype in the spiritual world. This will be further discussed in another chapter.

Another tradition says that Adam merely erected a tent to serve as the Sacred Sanctuary; around which he would walk while praying. When he died, his sons constructed the House from clay

and stones. This Ka`bah remained until the flood of Noah swept it away. It is said that after the flood of Noah, there was a red heap upon the spot where the Ka`bah had been. The people who repopulated the area used to come and worship there until Abraham rebuilt the Ancient House.

### **Abraham settles Ishmael and Hagar**

The great prophet Abraham was born approximately four thousand years ago, according to historical sources, in a place called Ur, which is located in what is now known as Iraq. The Qur'an speaks much about him, as does the Bible. He was the greatest revolutionary being to come forth since the prophet Noah. Both came with the message of unity and truth which was inimical to the vested, materialistic powers of their respective times.

As a young man, Abraham spoke out strongly against the idolatry in which his people were immersed, and physically destroyed their idols to prove his point. The power elite of the society in which he lived subjected him to torture by fire, from which he was miraculously saved. He then left his homeland and travelled to Egypt, and later to the land now known as Palestine.

Abraham had no children until he was 88 years of age, at which time Hagar bore him Ishmael. When Ishmael was still a suckling child, Abraham took him and his mother out of Palestine and eastward toward the Arabian Peninsula, according to what had been revealed to him. Gabriel would appear periodically, and Abraham would ask him if he should stop at the particular point they had come to. Finally, upon reaching the Valley of Bakkah, where there rose a mound of reddish sand, Gabriel told him to stop. Here in the desolate valley Abraham left Hagar and his infant son Ishmael, setting them under a thorn tree near the mound. At that time Mecca was desolate. No one lived there and there was no water. Abraham abandoned the mother and the child in this place. He left them a bag of dates and a leather bottle of water and went away. Hagar ran after him and said, 'O Abraham, where are you going, leaving us in this desert, a desert where there is no one and nothing?' She repeated these words but he did not turn back. Then she asked him 'Has God commanded this?' Abraham answered, 'It is God's command.' 'Then He will not desert us,' Hagar responded.

The Qur'an reveals that upon leaving Hagar and Ishmael, Abraham said,



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O our Lord! surely I have settled a part of my offspring in a valley unproductive of fruit near Thy Sacred House, Our Lord! that they may keep up prayer; therefore make the hearts of some people yearn towards them and provide them with fruits; haply they may be grateful. (14:37)

### **Zamzam and the Arrival of the Jurhum**

Hagar suckled her child and gave him small sips of water until the water was gone. She and Ishmael became extremely thirsty and he began to cry. Hagar thought her infant son would die. Unable to bear the sight, she went to the nearest hill, Safa, and climbed to the top. She looked down into the valley to see if there was anyone there, but saw no one. Desperately determined, she descended from Safa and set off across the valley to another hill about a quarter of a mile away, called Marwah. She climbed Marwah and once again searched across the wilderness. Again she saw no one. She returned to Safa and again to Marwah, going back and forth a total of seven times. When she ascended Marwah after the seventh time she heard a voice within her saying, ‘Listen.’ She heard it again and said, ‘You whom I hear – if you can, bring help.’ Then beside her appeared an angel, who directed her to the spot where Ishmael was. Then the angel struck the ground and water appeared. Hagar hurriedly dug a depression at the spot so the water would not escape.

Hagar and Ishmael continued to live by the well called Zam-zam. Now the Jurhum, a tribe of Yemeni origin, had come from the north across Mount Kada, and made camp in the lower part of the Meccan valley. One day a group of them were travelling in the desert when they saw a bird, or a flock of birds, whose habit it was to circle above water. According to what they had previously known, there was no water in the valley, so they sent a scout to see what was there, and he returned with news of water. The Jurhum came and found Hagar and Ishmael. They asked if they could use the water and Hagar granted them permission. They began to settle in the area and sent messengers to their people, who also began to come and settle.

## **Ishmael in the Bible**

Hagar and Ishmael remained in Mecca until their deaths; Ishmael grew up among the Jurhum, speaking their language and marrying one of their women, while we find references to Ishmael in the Bible, as follows:

And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. (Genesis 21:17-20)

Also we find that the Bible connects the Ka`bah to Ishmael:

Blessed are they that dwell in Thy House; they will be still praising thee.  
Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.  
Who passing through the valley of Bakkah<sup>1</sup> make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

(Psalm 84:4-6)

## **Abraham Visits Ishmael**

Before building the Ka`bah, Abraham visited his son Ishmael on several occasions. When God took the covenant with him, which included the circumcision of all males, Ishmael was also circumcised: this meant that Abraham must have visited him in Mecca. Also, the Qur'an mentions Abraham's vision, in which he was ordered to sacrifice Ishmael:

. . . O my son! surely I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice you; consider then what you see. He said: O my father, do what you are commanded;

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<sup>1</sup> Heb. *Baka*.

if Allah please, you will find me of the patient ones. So when they both submitted and he threw him down upon his forehead, and We called out to him saying, O Abraham! you have indeed shown the truth of the vision [...] and We ransomed him with a great sacrifice. (37:102-7)

Al-Azraqi relates on the authority of Ibn `Abbas that Abraham came from Syria to visit Ishmael when the latter was grown up and married. When Abraham arrived at his son's house he found Ishmael's wife, who had never met him. (Ishmael was probably out hunting.) The woman was rude and inhospitable to Abraham, so he asked her to mention to her husband, upon his return, that an old man of such-and-such a description had come to visit and passed on his greetings. He asked her to give a message to her husband that he should change the threshold of his house, for it did not please him. When Ishmael returned he asked if anyone had been to see him, and his wife replied that there had been someone, and described Abraham to her husband. Ishmael asked if the man had left any message, and she related what he had said. Ishmael said to her, 'You are the threshold of my house, so return to your family.' He returned the woman to her family, and remarried.

Sometime later Abraham returned to visit his son. Once again, he came to Ishmael's house while he was out. This time, however, he found a different woman, whom he duly greeted. She returned the greeting and asked him to partake of food and drink. Abraham asked her what she and her husband normally ate and drank. She replied that they ate meat (which Ishmael obtained by hunting) and drank water. Abraham asked if they ever had grain or anything else, and she replied that they did not. 'Then may God bless you abundantly with meat and water!' Abraham said. Upon leaving, Abraham asked that she mention him to her husband and deliver the following message: 'I found the threshold of your house good, so keep it!' When Ishmael returned she gave him the message, and he knew that his father had come once again and was pleased with his new wife.

### **The Ka`bah is Built**

When Abraham received the revelation from God to raise the foundations of the Ka`bah, he went to Ishmael and found him sitting under a large tree in the area of Zamzam. When Ishmael saw

him, he got up and greeted him with love and respect, as is proper when one greets one's father, and Abraham returned the greeting, as one greets a son. They sat together under the tree and Abraham said to Ishmael, 'Oh Ishmael, God the Exalted has given me a command.' 'Then you must obey your Lord,' Ishmael replied. 'Will you help me?' asked Abraham. When Ishmael said he would, Abraham said, 'My Lord has commanded me to build a House for Him.' Ishmael asked where, and Abraham pointed to the mound, that was higher than its surroundings. They excavated the gravel, and when they reached the original foundation of Adam, a cloud came directly over the spot to indicate the dimensions of the structure. Abraham dug the earth according to the cloud's shape, in order to build on the original foundation. Once he finished digging, the cloud disappeared. Then Ishmael brought large stones from the surrounding area, and Abraham built the walls of the structure. When he had reached a certain point, he asked Ishmael to find a stone to place there, so that people would know where to begin circumambulating. So Ishmael went to the mountains in search of a stone. Gabriel came to him with the Black Stone, which had been carried to and deposited upon the mountain of Abu Qubays by the flood of Noah. The stone was originally white, and gleamed lustrously.<sup>1 2</sup> 'Where did you get this stone?' Ishmael asked him. 'From Him who has no need of your building or mine,' Gabriel answered. The stone was put in its place, and when Abraham reached a point where he could reach no higher, Ishmael brought him a large rock, so he could stand upon it to lay the upper level of the walls. This rock is now located at a spot called 'the Station of Abraham', and contains his footprints embedded in it.

When Abraham completed building the Ka`bah, Gabriel approached him and ordered him to go around the House seven times, kissing the Black Stone during each round. Upon completing the seven rounds, Abraham and Ishmael made two cycles of prayer at the Station of Abraham.

And when We made the House a pilgrimage for men and a place of security, and [He said,] appoint for yourselves a place of prayer on the standing-place of Abraham. And We enjoined Abraham and Ishmael saying: Purify My House for those who visit it and those who abide in it for devotion and those who bow down and those who prostrate themselves. (2:125)

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<sup>2</sup> According to Islamic tradition, the Stone turned black as a result of being touched by so many people.

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And when We assigned to Abraham the place of the House, saying: Do not associate with Me aught, and purify My House for those who make the circuit and stand to pray and bow and prostrate themselves. (22:26)

### **The First Pilgrimage**

The Angel Gabriel showed Abraham all the ritual practices of the pilgrimage. When they entered Mina, Satan appeared to Abraham at the place which later became known as the pillar of stoning, 'the Pillar of `Aqabah'. Gabriel ordered him to stone Satan which Abraham did with seven small stones, so that he disappeared. Then Satan appeared again at another spot close by, which is called 'the Middle Pillar'. Again Gabriel ordered that the figure be stoned, and again Abraham did so. Satan disappeared, but then reappeared for a third time, at the place called 'the Lower Pillar'. Abraham hurled seven more stones at him and he disappeared, nor did he reappear again. Then, when the angelic presence, Gabriel, had finished teaching him the ritual practices of the Pilgrimage, Abraham was commanded to inform other people:

And proclaim among men the Pilgrimage: they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, coming from every remote path. (22:27)

Upon the completion of the Pilgrimage, Abraham prayed for the security of the Ka`bah:

And when Abraham said: My Lord, make it a secure town and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in Allah and the last day. He said: And whoever disbelieves, I will grant him enjoyment for a short while, then I will drive him to the chastisement of the Fire; and it is an evil destination. (2:126)

When Abraham died, Ishmael inherited the legacy of prophecy from him and carried on with the ritual practices of his father:

And mention Ishmael in the Book; surely he was truthful in his promise, and he was an apostle, a prophet. And he enjoined on his family prayer and almsgiving, and was one in whom His Lord was well pleased. (19:54-5)

### *After Abraham*

Ishmael had twelve sons, whom he sent out across the Arabian Peninsula to bring people the pure message of unity, and to transmit to them the prophetic practices revealed to his father, including the Pilgrimage. Upon Ishmael's death, his eldest son Nabit took over the leadership of Mecca and the responsibility for perpetuating the teachings of Abraham. Ishmael was buried next to his mother, between the wall of Ishmael and the Ka`bah.

The tribe of Jurhum controlled Mecca and the Ancient House after the death of Ishmael, but their control was usurped by a tribe known as the Amaliq. The Amaliq were a people of Arabian descent who had settled in Southern Arabia, Syria, Palestine, and in the peninsula proper. The Abil branch of the Amaliq are said to have founded a city which was in the vicinity of, if not actually on, the present site of Medina.

Another branch of the Amaliq, who lived in Mecca, were the cause of a long period of inter-tribal warfare for the custody of the Ka`bah. They launched an attack on the descendants of Ishmael who guarded the holy place, but as it was sinful to fight there, the latter refused to defend themselves. Thus they were driven out, and for centuries wandered as nomads in the gorges which lie between the mountains and the coast. Later some branches of the tribe moved away and, as their numbers grew and the available pastureland became insufficient for their needs, they took up trading. Other descendants of Ishmael, the Prophet Muhammad's ancestors among them, could not bear to leave the vicinity of the Ka`bah, even though they were allowed to visit it only on the occasion of major pilgrimages.

The Ka`bah in Mecca had by now become Arabia's foremost sanctuary, a place where strife and bloodshed were, in principle, prohibited. The fugitive and the hunted beast alike found safety in Bakkah, as the valley around the Ka`bah was called. Bushes and trees which grew there were never cut down. In these early days, the Ka`bah stood alone in the valley. The tribesmen's tents and cattle-pens, and some cave-dwellings, lay on the slopes of Mount Abu Qubays and the Red Mountain, or else beyond the four gorges which lead out of the Meccan valley. During the

daytime, the people would gather around the Ka`bah, and at night they would return to their tents, leaving the House and the valley in solitude.

When Abraham built the Ka`bah it stood upon a mound. Since that time, alluvial mud carried down by the flood waters had gradually raised the level of the surrounding plain until the mound disappeared. The area of the House itself had to be constantly cleared, and by the Amaliq period the Ka`bah was standing in the center of a depression.

In the winter months Mecca was sometimes lashed by violent rainstorms. After one such storm, torrents of water rushed down the hillsides and along the ravines, filling the basin in which the Ka`bah stood. As a result, the building was undermined and collapsed in ruins. The Amaliq rebuilt it exactly as it had been before.

### **The Deputation from Ad**

A constant stream of pilgrims and petitioners visited the sanctuary, including a deputation sent by the moon-worshipping people of Ad, one of the early Arabian tribes, also mentioned in the Qu`ran. It is believed that they lived in Southern Arabia, in a ‘town of pillars’ set among sand-dunes, which was named Iram after their chief, and was traditionally located a little to the east of Aden. They were visited by a long drought, and in their despair sent a deputation to Mecca to pray for rain.

The members of the delegation from Ad were entertained in the dwelling of a Meccan with whom they had an alliance. There they proceeded to engage in a series of drinking-bouts. After a month of drinking and carousing, the weary host induced his musicians to improvise a song reminding the visitors of the purpose of their journey. As a result, the head of the deputation went down to the valley and at the sanctuary made a supplication for rain. As he did so, clouds began to form overhead. He singled out one that seemed to be heavy with rain, and asked the God of Mecca to send it to his country. Unfortunately for his people, he had chosen a cloud that contained a tornado. For seven days and nights the wind raged across the sand-dunes, burying the city and its inhabitants, who ‘lay -prostrate as if they were the trunks of hollow palm.’(69:7)

The deputation was still in Mecca, unaware of the disaster, when a messenger arrived one day to tell them of their fellow tribesmen's fate.

### **The Jurhum Regain Control**

The Yemeni tribes of Jurhum and Qaturah, who had long lived in the Meccan area awaiting their opportunity, succeeded at last in ejecting the Amaliq. They divided the Meccan valley between them, along its physical configuration, from the north-east to the south-west. As Mudad, the dynastic leader of the Jurhum, was descended from Ishmael's father-in-law Mudad ibn Arar, the Jurhum claimed the right to guard the Sacred Precinct of the Ka`bah. They occupied the upper part of the valley and Mount Qu'a'qi'an, and exacted a toll from all travelers who entered Mecca through their territory. The Qaturah, who settled in the lower part of the valley, were great horsemen. They were combative like the Jurhum, and forced pilgrims who came from the direction of Yemen to pay them dues for the right of passage.

It was inevitable that there should be a clash between these two tribes, and at last it came. The Qaturah chief was killed and his tribe sustained defeat. Yet, in the end, because of the kinship between them, the tribes concluded a peace treaty in an atmosphere of amity, and a feast of celebration was held in a ravine near the city. This place was afterwards known as 'the kitchens', in commemoration of the vast amounts of meat which had been prepared there that day.

The history of Mecca during its domination by the Jurhum must remain shrouded in the mist of popular lore. The Jurhum rule may well have lasted over 1,000 years. It will be remembered that they claimed to be closely related by intermarriage to the descendants of Ishmael, and on this they based their claim to be the rightful guardians of the Ka`bah. Perhaps for this reason, too, certain Ishmaelites were apparently allowed to live in the sacred valley; some of them were even promoted to high priesthood. One of them, called Iyad, built a holy tower in Mecca, where he worshipped God. Another famous descendant of Ishmael of this period was Nizar, the son, by a Jurhumi woman, of Ma'add, who had fled to Mecca from Nebuchadnezzar's persecution of the Arabs. Nizar in his turn had four sons, to whom he assigned the insignia that were to distinguish the four main branches of the Ishmaelites: the Scarlet Tents, the Black Tents, the Silver-haired



Ones, and the Owners of the Dappled Camels. The Scarlet Tents thereafter proudly displayed their scarlet tents on festive or solemn occasions.

### **Moral Degeneration**

At the height of their power, the Jurhum became neglectful of their duties as keepers of the Ka`bah. Far from maintaining peace in the Sacred Precinct, the guardians of the House began to steal from the pilgrims the gifts they brought to the sanctuary. Some young men even attempted to rob the Ka`bah of its treasure. They posted a guard at each of its four corners, while a fifth tried to climb into the roofless building from above. It is said that he was struck dead before he could enter, and the others fled in terror.

It is also said that a woman called Na`ilah and her lover `Usaf, who had made a tryst within the precincts of the Ka`bah, were turned to stone. The reigning king, who viewed these profanations with indignation and alarm, ordered that the petrified bodies of `Usaf and Na`illah be placed on Safa and Marwah as a warning to other potential sinners. He was afraid that these acts of sacrilege might bring down the judgment of God upon the Jurhum. Indeed, it seemed that his fears were justified, for the waters of the miraculous Zamzam well began to sink, and at last dried up.

The king hid the treasure of the Ka`bah in the empty well, hoping thus to save it from would-be thieves. Then the king gathered his family together and set out for the desert, to await the final calamity he felt was sure to come.

### **The Overturn of Jurhum Rule**

It came in the wake of a catastrophe that was happening some distance away, in the land of Saba'. The huge Ma`rib Dam, formerly one of the wonders of the world, was now in a state of decay. Repairs were being made, but the great edifice continued to crumble. It appears from inscriptions and records that this disintegration was regarded in Arab lore as a portent of Southern Arabia's decline.

It is said that a priestess called Turayfah, allied to the Azd tribe, foretold in an oracle the total collapse of the dam and the consequent inundation of Saba. Her tribe and others decided to move northward to escape this disaster. The migration probably took place in the last century BC. When the tribes approached Mecca, they were met by the unwelcoming Jurhum, and a pitched battle ensued. The people of Saba', with the aid of a group of Ishmaelites, succeeded in defeating the Jurhum. In accordance with ancient custom, the women were taken into slavery and the warriors were massacred.

However, an epidemic began to rage among the members of the victorious tribes, causing them to wonder whether they should remain in the holy city. They consulted a fortune-teller, who advised them to disperse into other regions. Some tribes, therefore, turned southward towards Oman and their native land. Others, the progenitors of the later Ghassan dynasty, travelled northward to Syria. The Aws and Khazraj tribes settled in Yathrib (Medina), alongside the Jewish tribes of Banu Nadir and Banu Qurayza. Yathrib had now become one of the many agricultural oases on the caravan route from the Arabian Peninsula to Syria inhabited by Jewish mercantile communities.

### **The Introduction of Idols**

One group of Sabeen invaders, the Khuza'ah, stayed in Mecca, where they established, shortly before the Christian era, a powerful state which was to last for about five centuries. Their ruling house, the Lahiyy, allied themselves to the family of the Mudad, and all hostility between the various tribes ceased. For a time, the Khuza'ah allowed their Ishmaelite allies to assume responsibility for the Ka`bah. However, a quarrel arose between the Ishmaelites of the Scarlet Tents and those of the Dappled Camels, and as a result, the Khuza'ah took charge of the Ka`bah themselves.

`Amr ibn Lahiyy, the most renowned leader of the Khuza'ah, also had the ignominious distinction of introducing idols into the Ka`bah, which set the stage for the final degeneration and complete loss of the way of Abraham among the majority of the tribes in the Meccan area and surrounding regions of the peninsula. Ibn `Abbas related that the Prophet said he saw `Amr ibn

Lahiyy in the Fire with his intestines dragging behind him, because he was the first to introduce idol-worship to the Ka`bah.

The acceptance of idols had, in fact, some priming. As Mecca expanded through the years, it was necessary for people to move out to other areas. Whenever a resident of the Meccan valley left, he took a stone from the locality of the Ka`bah as a symbol and reminder. As generations passed, the descendants of these people lost the original meaning intended in having a stone, and they began to believe that the stone had the power to give them what they asked for. Many began circumambulating this stone, just as they had the Ka`bah.

`Amr ibn Lahiyy had been introduced to idol-worship during his travels to the north. When a statue of Hubal was sent to him from Hit, an Amaliq town in the north, `Amr placed the statue in the Ka`bah, on top of the treasury-well, and ordered the people of Mecca to worship the idol.

Ya`qubi relates in his history that the Arabs of the peninsula coming for the Pilgrimage asked the Khuza'ah why they were worshipping idols. They said that they worshipped them 'because they can bring us closer to God.' Those who came for the Pilgrimage spread the word of idol-worship, and gradually the practice spread throughout the peninsula. Each tribe began to acquire its special idol. Soon they began to place them in or near the courtyard of the Ka`bah. The weaker tribes were not allocated space in the Ka`bah courtyard, but had to put their idols outside of the main area.

These idols took many shapes. Hubal was the major Meccan idolic deity. Other idols were Manaf, the sun god, Quzah who held the rainbow, the eagle-shaped Nasr, Wadd, and three other major deities, al-Lat, Manat and al- 'Uzza, A piece of stone on which a crown was incised was placed on the plain near Marwah; two statues designated 'the Windmaker' and 'the Bird-eater' were placed on the summits of Safa and Marwah, and the petrified lovers were brought back to the Ka`bah, the scene of their sacrilegious tryst.

Trees and stones were also invested with supernatural significance. An acacia grove on the Tihamah coast was sacred to al- 'Uzza, the Arabian version of Aphrodite, A rock in the highlands of Taif, where a hermit had once given milk to travelers, became a symbol for al-Lat, the mother-

goddess. It is also related that when the residents of Mecca came down from the hills and began to build houses in the valley, they sometimes built their houses around trees, so that the tree was inside the house.

The Khuza'ah dynasty ruled until five generations before the time of the Prophet Muhammad.

## ***The Quraysh***

A large group of Ishmaelites called the Quraysh lived in the Meccan region. One of the members of the tribe, a man called Kilab, married a woman named Fatimah, who bore two sons, Zuhrah and Zayd, about the year 400 CE. Zayed was the fifth forefather of the Prophet Muhammad. Kilab died soon after Zayd's birth, and the two boys were left in the care of their mother. She married again quite soon to a man who had come to Mecca on pilgrimage. Fatimah left Zuhrah behind with Kilab's family, and took the baby Zayd with her to her new home.

### **Qusayy ibn Kilab**

There, near the river Yarmuk, in the country of the Nabateans, Zayd grew up with his mother's second family, and was called Qusayy, 'the little stranger'. It was not until he was an adult that he learned of his Meccan origin. He decided to pay a visit to his father's family, and joined a group of pilgrims travelling south along the desert route.

Qusayy decided to stay in Mecca and married a girl from the Khuza'ah tribe, whose father, Khalil ibn Habishiyah al-Khuza'ah, was the doorkeeper of the Ka`bah, and a descendant of 'Amr ibn Lahiy. Upon his death Khalil bequeathed the key to Qusayy, whereupon the Khuza'ah were incensed, and demanded that Qusayy give up the key. Qusayy refused, calling upon the Quraysh and possibly some Nabateans for support. A battle ensued in Mina and many were killed, until the two sides were petitioned by another group to cease fighting within the sacred area, citing the legend of the two tribes who had been wiped out as a result of fighting in the precincts of the Ka`bah. So they resolved to solve the conflict by arbitration, calling on one of the Arabs, a man well-known for his wisdom, to act as arbitrator. He carefully examined the situation and decided that the key to the Ka`bah door, as well as the rule of Mecca, belonged to Qusayy. Another version relates that Qusayy and his allies actually defeated the Khuza'ah, and the arbitrator, who was brought in to determine the fate of the Khuza'ah, decided that they could remain in Mecca because they were related to Qusayy by marriage.

Qusayy was a powerful, astute leader who had excellent organizational and administrative skills. He focused a great deal of energy on the development of Mecca, the care of the Ka`bah and the organization of the Pilgrimage, distributing the various functions of the Pilgrimage among the more powerful people of Mecca; and it is believed that during his reign Qusayy rebuilt or at least repaired the Ka`bah. Qusayy was the first man to construct a town in the sacred valley itself. No houses had ever stood there. The dwellings nearest to the Ka`bah had always been on the lower slopes of the Red Mountain and Mount Qubays, overlooking the valley. The shrubs were cleared away from the plain and, as the site of Zamzam had long since been forgotten, new wells were dug.

The new houses were arranged in concentric circles around the Ka`bah, according to strict rules of caste and tribal precedence. The houses of Qusayy and his children, each of whom had been dedicated to and named after one of the gods worshipped in Mecca, enclosed the square, sandy courtyard which had been left around the temple. His own house faced the northern side of the Ka`bah. The rows behind were occupied by people in descending degrees of importance. Accommodation was also provided for people of allied tribes whom the Quraysh regarded as their equals, such as the Ghassani tribes. The outskirts of Mecca were left to undistinguished foreigners, outcasts, slaves and mercenary soldiers.

### **Qusayy's Rule**

Mecca was a republic, administered by an elite group of men; Qusayy's house also served as a kind of city hall, where men would meet to discuss public affairs. In reality, Qusayy was in charge of both temporal and spiritual matters. He was 'lifter of the veil' in the Ka`bah, and in this capacity led the ceremonies there. It was he who consulted the oracles and organized the distribution of food and water to the pilgrims. If members of the Quraysh wished to marry outside the tribe, they had to seek the permission of Qusayy. In time of war, Qusayy took command of the troops.

Qusayy had four sons, two of whom managed to consolidate their father's power after his death. `Abd al-Dar controlled the custodianship of the Ka`bah, the representative assembly and the

banner. When the Prophet entered Mecca in triumph, the following verse was revealed to him regarding the custodianship of the Ka`bah:

. . . Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners . . .  
(4:58)

Thus he left the custodianship with the descendants of `Abd al-Dar. `Abd al-Manaf controlled the watering and feeding of pilgrims, as well as holding the executive position.

The house of Qusayy continued to control Mecca and the Pilgrimage until the conquest of Mecca by the Prophet, whose great-great-grandfather was `Abd al-Manaf. Hashim, `Abd al-Manaf's son, succeeded his father as leader; his concern for the pilgrims was legendary. One year there was great difficulty obtaining the provisions necessary to feed the pilgrims, so Hashim travelled to Syria and purchased animals for meat and flour for bread in order to feed the pilgrims. The Banu Hashim tribe maintained the tradition of feeding and watering the pilgrims up until the time of the Prophet. `Abd al-Muttalib fed and watered the pilgrims after Hashim, then Abu Talib continued the tradition. When the Prophet deputed Abu Bakr to lead a group of Muslims for the Pilgrimage in 9 AH, he gave him money to prepare food for the pilgrims. During the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Prophet also provided food for the pilgrims, maintaining the tradition that whoever ruled Mecca was responsible for feeding the pilgrims.

`Abd al-Manaf dug wells to supply the pilgrims with water, as Zamzam had dried up. When `Abd al-Muttalib was the leader of the Quraysh and Mecca, he heard a voice which told him to dig into the earth and uncover the spring of water that was the heritage of his grandfather Ishmael. So he dug – and uncovered the well of Zamzam.

### ***The Sanctity of the Ka`bah***

The sanctity and inviolability of Mecca was well established from the time of Abraham.

And when Abraham said: My Lord! make this city secure, and save me and my sons from worshipping idols... (14:35)

The Sacred Mosque was a sanctuary for all who sought refuge within its boundaries. Slaves were able to enter its environs desiring freedom, and declared themselves free. To this day, hundreds of fugitives live within the walls of the Sanctuary. Many have lived in it for decades to escape detention and punishment. Every attempt to violate the sanctity of Mecca and the Ka`bah since the time of Abraham has been repelled or dealt with harshly. Before the Prophet's time there were several Yemeni chiefs who attempted to overthrow Mecca but were soundly defeated. We have previously mentioned the two groups who fought within the Ka`bah and were totally destroyed. Even those who ostensibly seemed to gain victory, such as Hajjaj, who assaulted Mecca by Yazid's injunction in order to overthrow Ibn Zubayr, lost personally in the end. The greatest example illustrating the inviolability of the Ka`bah was the attempted attack by Abraha in the year of the Prophet's birth.

#### **Abraha is Repelled**

Southern Arabia, known today as the Yemen, was under Abyssinian rule. The governor there, Abraha, who was a Christian, decided to initiate a proselytizing campaign with the intention of diverting the Arab Pilgrimage from the Ka`bah and its Black Stone to his own capital. He built a magnificent church at San'a decorated with polychrome marbles, gold and silver inlay, and inlaid gems. At the gate of the church he set an enormous ruby, perfumed with musk, and hung a curtain across it. Then he suggested that the Arabs should come to worship in the church adorned with this jewel, instead of at the Ka`bah, and indeed some tribes actually broke from their old beliefs to worship there. A young member of the Kinanah tribe, angered by this defection, defiled the church. Abraha was so enraged that he swore to take his revenge upon the Ka`bah itself.



Abraha set out for the Ka`bah at the head of a tremendous army, riding upon a giant elephant. When he arrived at the edge of the sacred valley of Mecca, he drew up his cavalry on the plain and sent his infantry into the mountains overlooking the Ka`bah. The Meccans were terrified to find themselves surrounded but made no attempt at defense, relying on the sacredness of the sanctuary to protect them. Abraha sent them a message, asking to see their leader. There had been no official chief of the Quraysh since `Abd al-Manaf and `Abd al-Dar had divided the responsibility between themselves, so `Abd al-Muttalib, the leader of the Banu Hashim, was asked to meet Abraha. He went with one of his sons, and Abraha was impressed by the nobility of his bearing. He asked `Abd al-Muttalib if he had any favor to ask. Now, Abraha's army had confiscated two hundred of `Abd al-Muttalib's camels, who now requested that they be returned. Abraha was surprised and disappointed at the request, thinking `Abd al-Muttalib sought a favor for himself rather than for the Ka`bah which he, Abraha, was about to destroy. He spoke of his disappointment to `Abd al-Muttalib, who replied, 'I am the lord of the camels, and the House also has its Lord, Who will defend it.' 'He cannot defend it against me,' said Abraha. 'We shall see,' replied `Abd al-Muttalib, 'but give me my camels.' Abraha returned the camels, and `Abd al-Muttalib returned to Mecca, warning its inhabitants to retreat to the mountains, as Abraha and his army were attempting to destroy the Ka`bah.

Quickly the inhabitants of the valley departed. `Abd al-Muttalib was the last to leave and, grasping the metal knocker on the door of the Ka`bah, offered up this prayer before he abandoned the House to its fate: 'O God, in truth, as the servant defends his camel, defend Your city.'

At dawn the next day, the Abyssinian troops were drawn up in battle order to enter Mecca. As they advanced upon the Ka`bah, the governor's elephant suddenly kneeled down and refused to get up, even when it was severely beaten. The sky grew dark, and a huge flock of birds appeared, each one carrying a pebble in its beak. As they flew over the plain, the birds dropped the stones on the invaders, at which moment the soldiers were struck by a virulent plague, with such severity that they retreated in confusion and dismay. Many died, and those who survived fled in terror towards the Yemen. God describes the incident in Chapter 105, 'The Elephant':

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Have you not considered how your Lord dealt with the possessors of the elephant? Did He not cause their war to end in confusion? And send down to prey upon them birds in flocks, casting against them stones of baked clay. So He rendered them like straw eaten up?

### ***The Pilgrimage Before Islam***

The pure path of divine knowledge that was revealed to Abraham, and which was perpetuated by his son Ishmael in the Arabian Peninsula, gradually degenerated to idolatry over a span of approximately two thousand years. The worship of idols, stones, trees and other natural phenomena such as the sun, moon, planets and stars, was not a new phenomenon to the Arabs. Abraham himself fought idolatry throughout his life. In the Qur'an he confronts his father, Azar:

. . . Do you take idols for gods? Surely I see you and your people manifest in clear error. (6:74)

Following this are verses eloquently describing Abraham's demonstration of God's existence, and the frivolity and irrationality of worshipping anything other than Him.

And thus did We show Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and that he might be of those who are sure. So when the night overshadowed him, he saw a star; said he: Is this my Lord? So when it set, he said: I do not love the setting ones. Then when he saw the moon rising, he said: Is this my Lord? So when it set, he said: If my Lord had not guided me, I should certainly be of the erring people. Then when he saw the sun rising, he said: Is this my Lord? Is this the greatest? So when it set, he said: O my people! Surely I am clear of what you set up with Allah. Surely I have turned myself, being upright, wholly to Him who originated the heavens and the earth, and I am not of the polytheists. (6:75-9)

We also find this tendency to idolatry amongst other peoples to whom prophets were sent. Moses, for example, after his remarkable stand and victory against the most powerful ruler of his time, returned to his people after a forty-day retreat to find many of them worshipping a golden calf, just after they had witnessed the miraculous parting of the sea, and seen Pharaoh and his army drown. Another example was the prophet Solomon: he overcame the Sabean queen who worshipped the sun.

After the introduction of idols into the Sacred Precinct and the resultant spread of idolatry throughout the Arabian peninsula, religious practices among the Arabs diversified. As was

mentioned, each tribe had its own object of worship. When the Prophet entered Mecca in victory, there were 360 idols in the courtyard surrounding the Ka`bah.

### **The Hunafa'**

In addition to those who believed in idolatry, there were groups of Christians and Jews, and people referred to as the Hunafa' (true believers), who believed in unity but were not necessarily satisfied with the practice of Christianity or Judaism. Some of the Hunafa' eventually became Jews or Christians, such as Waraqah ibn Nawfal, who confirmed the first angelic revelation to the Prophet, after adopting Christianity.

The Hunafa' were not organized as a group or sect. They were individuals who lived in different places and had different ideas, but who could not accept unsound beliefs and sought to follow the path of Abraham. There is not a great deal of information about what books they studied or what their practices were, but we do know that they were generally the intellectual and spiritual elite of Arabia. Historians say that many of the Hunafa' knew how to read and write and spoke several languages. Because they usually came from the wealthier families of Arabia, they were able to buy books and travel outside the peninsula.

The Hunafa' were seekers who sought the path to God. In their travels they met with monks, priests, rabbis and other learned men in search for the truth. They were reformers who called their people to the unity of God and the abolition of idolatry, which they regarded as foolish. They asked their people to use their intellects in order to discern how useless idol-worship was. The Hunafa' were strongly opposed by the majority of the Arabs, particularly those who had a stake in seeing idol-worship continue in Arabian society. Some of the Hunafa' were forced to seek refuge in the caves and mountains outside Mecca. They used to go on retreats like the one performed by the Prophet in the cave of Hira, and their poems mention that they knew of and practiced rising in the night for spiritual exercises. At the coming of the Prophet Muhammad, most of the Hunafa' became Muslim. Some of them performed the Greater and Lesser Pilgrimages in the same way as Abraham, although others, who did not understand the meaning of the Pilgrimage and who were confused by the different religions, did not perform the Pilgrimage.

## **Beginning the Journey**

The tribes of Arabia had continued to perform the Pilgrimage since the time of Abraham, although through the centuries they began to differ in their observance of some of the rites. Four particular months were deemed best for the performance of the Greater and Lesser Pilgrimages. Al-Tabari mentions that Dhu al-Hijjah was the month of the Pilgrimage, but there is confusion as to which month was considered Dhu al-Hijjah. Esin says that the date for the Pilgrimage was computed every year by a seer, and was always made to coincide with a major fair. Pilgrims would begin preparing for the event as much as three months in advance. The Pilgrimage was made not only to the Ka`bah but also to other temples in the peninsula where idols were kept. Ta`if, `Arafat and Mina were all places of residence for idols, and the Pilgrimage included stops at these spots. On the way to Mecca the pilgrim would attend a series of smaller fairs, where merchants bought and sold pieces of gold and silver, or the precious ore taken from the mountains of Arabia. They brought slaves from Africa, Persia and Anatolia, tanned leather, senna leaves, balsam, scented woods, oils, perfume and spices, cottons and fine white linen fabrics from Egypt, Chinese silks, and from Basrah finely worked arms and the grain that was a commodity in the infertile region of Mecca. Wandering surgeons attended the ailing.

Poets also came, straight from the poetic contest held at the fair of Ukaz, near Ta`if, to chant short *rajaz* (verses), in a four-syllable meter said to have been suggested by the camel's pace, or to recite long odes describing their life in the desert. Minstrels would direct bitter satires against their enemies. A soothsayer would select the seven best poetic compositions, which would then be written out and hung upon the inside walls of the Ka`bah. All the tribes would send delegations ahead with gifts. Upon arrival, the pilgrims would first go to the market, and then to where their own idol was located. (The people of Medina, for instance, went to Mina.) There they awaited the moon of Dhu al-Hijjah.

## **The Rites**

Upon the arrival of the moon of Dhu al-Hijjah, the rites began. The aristocracy of Mecca directed the Pilgrimage, having gone out beforehand to Muzdalifah, a widening of the Meccan pass not far from `Arafat but still within the sacred precinct of Mecca. There the custodian of the

Ka`bah lit a fire, and the ‘Scarlet Tent’ Ishmaelites pitched their red leather tents. The noblemen’s guests and allies had the right to join them in their camp; while everyone else among the rank and file of the pilgrims, including the common people who lived farthest from the House, the outlaws and vagabonds who had been cast out of their tribes, the desert Bedouin, and all the foreigners who were not guests of the Meccan aristocracy, gathered together on the plain of Arafat, just outside the Sacred Precinct. At a given sign, they ran towards the fire at Muzdalifah, where a feast was served to them by the Meccans. Then the crowd continued the rites, offering loud homage to each idol, monolith or sacred oracular effigy. Sacrifices were made at the altars and at the pointed leather tents that were erected over tombs: these took the form of libations, gifts of grain and ostrich-eggs, and sacrificial animals.

Circumambulation was the ritual most generally practiced by all the tribes. They processed around the idols and the pillars, upon which stones were cast, in Mina as well as in Mecca around the Ka`bah. Some poured milk over the idols and then went around them: it is said that only goat’s milk was used. Some used to circumambulate with one hand tied to another person by a rope or piece of cloth, the two people making a vow not to be separated. The Prophet Muhammad, upon seeing this in his time, used to cut the rope with a knife.

Circumambulation of the Ka`bah always began by touching the Black Stone. Touching the stone by hand was an important rite, for the stone was said to have healing properties. In addition to the Black Stone, the people used to touch, kiss and rub injured or diseased parts of their body upon the stones and idols that were worshipped, believing that these objects also had the power to heal them from sickness or injury. If it was too crowded, and the object could not be physically touched, the pilgrim would attempt to touch it with a long stick from a distance.

During the Circumambulation, some performed it silently and would say nothing during the remaining rites of the Pilgrimage. Others would call upon the idols in the loudest possible voice, clapping their hands in the belief that the idol would be more sure of hearing them. They would utter many phrases and supplications to make their Pilgrimage acceptable, asking forgiveness of God and requesting what they wanted through the intercession of the idol, for each of which there was a specific phrase or formula.

A common practice among some of the tribes was to perform circumambulation around the Ka`bah while wearing no clothes; some historians suggest that ridding themselves of clothes was symbolic of divesting themselves of the sins they had committed. Most historical versions relate that they would not wear their old clothes again but would put on new, clean clothes upon completion of the circumambulation. Women who practiced circumambulation in this fashion would do so under cover of darkness. Other tribes made circumambulation fully dressed, and were strict about wearing clothes during this ritual, the Khuza'ah from Medina and the Quraysh from Mecca among them. The Quraysh also went out to `Arafat, returned to Muzdalifah and then went to Mina.

There were differences regarding the practice of going back and forth between the two hills of Safa and Marwah, the path taken by Hagar in her search for water. The Quraysh performed the rite, but some of the other tribes did not consider it necessary to perform this ritual, especially the tribes from Medina. A group of Muslims who did not accept this ritual confronted the Prophet Muhammad when he included it in the Pilgrimage of Islam, substantiating their resistance by the absence of the ritual from their own pre-Islamic practices. Thus the verse was revealed:

Surely Safa and Marwah are among the signs appointed by Allah; so whoever makes a pilgrimage to the House or pays a visit to it, there is no blame on him if he goes round them both; and whoever does good spontaneously, then surely Allah is Grateful, Knowing. (2:158)

Some of the tribes refused to go to `Arafat with the Prophet as part of the Pilgrimage of Islam, because they were residents of Mecca and felt that as the people of the Sacred House they should not leave its boundaries.

The other rites associated with the Pilgrimage of Islam, such as collecting small stones at Muzdalifah, stoning the pillars in Mina and sacrificing an animal, were generally practiced by all the tribes. Another practice, which preceded the performance of the Pilgrimage, was attention to cleanliness of the body and clothing.

### **Individual Customs**

During the Pilgrimage before Islam, men used to wear a certain kind of necklace which was generally accepted as a symbolic deterrent from being attacked by enemies; after completing the Pilgrimage, they would put on another necklace made from a sweet-scented plant. Some also put a necklace of beads made of wood from trees nearing the Ka`bah around the neck of their camel, so that upon returning home, a person would be easily recognized as having made the Pilgrimage. Women wore white veils on their hair. Upon return to their home, those who had performed the Pilgrimage were celebrated in feasts lasting up to seven days. People who made the Pilgrimage would allow their hair and beards to grow long, believing that if they cut their hair their Pilgrimage would not be accepted. Some of the tribes, such as the Aws from Medina, used to keep their hair long until they returned to Mecca, whereupon they would cut their hair to dedication to their idol. This marked the completion of their Pilgrimage.

### **The Lesser Pilgrimage**

The Lesser Pilgrimage was performed at any time, but the months of Shawwal, Dhu al-Qa'dah, Dhu al-Hijjah and Rajab were most preferred. The Lesser Pilgrimage consisted of circumambulation, going back and forth between Safa and Marwah, and the sacrifice of an animal. In Islam, the sacrifice is no longer performed as part of the Lesser Pilgrimage.



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*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

The first two chapters of the Qur'an give guidance regarding inner and outer struggle. Emphasis is on understanding key Qur'anic terms.

#### **Keys to the Qur'an: Volume 2: Commentary on Surah Ale-`Imran**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

A commentary on the third chapter of the Qur'an, the family of `Imran which includes the story of Mary, mother of `Isa (Jesus).

#### **Keys to the Qur'an: Volume 3: Commentary on Surah Yasin**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

Commentary on chapter *Yasin*. This is traditionally read over the dead person: if we want to know the meaning of life, we have to learn about death.

**Keys to the Qur'an: Volume 4: Commentary on Surahs Al-`Ankabut, Al-Rahman, Al-Waqi`ah and Al-Mulk**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

The Shaykh uncovers inner meanings, roots and subtleties of the Qur'anic Arabic terminology in these four selected Surahs.

**Keys to the Qur'an: Volume 5: Commentary on Juz' `Amma**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

Insight into the last *Juz'* of Qur'an, with the objective of exploring the deeper meanings of Qur'anic Revelations.

**The Essential Message of the Qur'an**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

Teachings from the Qur'an such as purpose of creation, Attributes of the Creator, nature of human beings, decrees governing the laws of the universe, life and death.

**The Qur'an in Islam: Its Impact & Influence on the Life of Muslims**

*`Allamah Sayyid M. H. Tabataba`i*

`Allamah Sayyid M. H. Tabataba`i shows in this gem how the Qur'an contains the fundamental roots of Islam and the proof of prophethood as the Word of God.

**The Qur'anic Prescription for Life**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

Understanding the Qur'an is made accessible with easy reference to key issues concerning life and the path of Islam.

**The Story of Creation in the Qur'an**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

An exposition of the Qur'anic verses relating to the nature of physical phenomena, including the origins of the universe, the nature of light, matter, space and time, and the evolution of biological and sentient beings.

***Sufism & Islamic Psychology and Philosophy***

**Beginning's End**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

This is a contemporary outlook on Sufi sciences of self knowledge, exposing the challenge of our modern lifestyle that is out of balance.

### **Cosmology of the Self**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

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### **Decree & Destiny (Original and a Revised Version)**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

A lucid exposition of the extensive body of Islamic thought on the issue of free will and determinism.

### **Happiness in Life and After Death – An Islamic Sufi View**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

This book offers revelations and spiritual teachings that map a basic path towards wholesome living without forgetting death: cultivating a constant awareness of one's dual nature.

### **Leaves from a Sufi Journal**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

A unique collection of articles presenting an outstanding introduction to the areas of Sufism and original Islamic teachings.

### **The Elements of Sufism**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

Sufism is the heart of Islam. This introduction describes its origins, practices, historical background and its spread throughout the world.

### **The Garden of Meaning**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

This book is about two gardens, one visible and fragrant, the other less visible but eternal. The beauty and harmony of both gardens are explicated in this magisterial volume, linking outer to inner, physics to metaphysics, self to cosmos.

### **The Journey of the Self**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

After introducing the basic model of the self, there follows a simple yet complete outline of the self's emergence, development, sustenance, and growth toward its highest potential.

### **The Sufi Way to Self-Unfoldment**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

Unfolding inner meanings of the Islamic ritual practices towards the intended ultimate purpose to live a fearless and honorable life, with no darkness, ignorance or abuse.

### **Witnessing Perfection**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

Delves into the universal question of Deity and the purpose of life. Durable contentment is a result of 'perfected vision'.

## ***Practices & Teachings of Islam***

### **Calling Allah by His Most Beautiful Names**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

Attributes or Qualities resonate from their Majestic and Beautiful Higher Realm into the heart of the active seeker, and through it back into the world.

### **Fasting in Islam**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

This is a comprehensive guide to fasting in all its aspects, with a description of fasting in different faith traditions, its spiritual benefits, rules and regulations.

### **Pilgrimage in Islam**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

This is a specialized book on spiritual journeying, offering the sincere seeker keys to inner transformation. **Note:** It was formerly titled, *The Pilgrimage of Islam*.

### **Prophetic Traditions in Islam: On the Authority of the Family of the Prophet**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

Offers a comprehensive selection of Islamic teachings arranged according to topics dealing with belief and worship, moral, social and spiritual values.

### **The Wisdom (Hikam) of Ibn `Ata'allah: Translation and Commentary**

*Translation & Commentary by Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

These aphorisms of Ibn `Ata'Allah, a Shadhili Shaykh, reveal the breadth and depth of an enlightened being who reflects divine unity and inner transformation through worship.

## **The Inner Meanings of Worship in Islam: A Personal Selection of Guidance for the Wayfarer**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

Guidance for those who journey along this path, from the Qur'an, the Prophet's traditions, narrations from the *Ahl al-Bayt*, and seminal works from among the *Ahl al-Tasawwuf* of all schools of thought.

## **The Lantern of The Path**

*Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq*

Each one of the ninety-nine chapter of this book is a threshold to the next, guiding the reader through the broad spectrum of ageless wisdom, like a lantern along the path of reality.

## **The Sayings and Wisdom of Imam `Ali**

*Compiled By: Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

*Translated By: Asadullah ad-Dhaakir Yate*

Carefully translated into modern English, a selection of this great man's sayings gathered together from authentic and reliable sources.

## **Transformative Worship in Islam: Experiencing Perfection**

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This book uniquely bridges the traditional practices and beliefs, culture and language of Islam with the transformative spiritual states described by the Sufis and Gnostics.

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This workbook explores the entire cosmology of the self through time, and maps the evolution of the self from before birth through life, death and beyond.

### **Ask Course TWO: The Prophetic Way of Life**

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*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

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### **Songs of Iman on the Roads of Pakistan**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

A series of talks given on the divergence between 'faith' and 'unbelief' during a tour of the country in 1982 which becomes a reflection of the condition occurring in the rest of the world today.

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*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

This is a 1990 conversation with Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri, in which he talks about wide-ranging topics on Islam and presents it as the archetypal, universal, Adamic path that began when humanity rose in consciousness to recognize duality and began its journey from the relative back to Absolute Unity.

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*Professor Ali A. Allawi*

In this wide-ranging conversation with Professor Ali Allawi, Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri talks about his life story and the spiritual journey that he embarked on and the path he has been on ever since.

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*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

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*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

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### **Ripples of Light**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

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### **Sound Waves**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

A collection of aphorisms that help us reflect and discover the intricate connection between self and soul.

### **Sublime Gems: Selected Teachings of Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani**

*Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani*

Spiritual nourishment extracted from Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani's existing works.

## ***Autobiography***

### **Son of Karbala**

*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

The atmosphere of an Iraq in transition is brought to life and used as a backdrop for the Shaykh's own personal quest for self-discovery and spiritual truth.

## ***Health Sciences and Islamic History***

### **Health Sciences in Early Islam – Volumes 1 & 2**

*Collected Papers By: Sami K. Hamarneh*

*Edited By: Munawar A. Anees*

*Foreword By: Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

*Health Sciences in Early Islam* is a pioneering study of Islamic medicine that opens up new chapters of knowledge in the history of the healing sciences. This two volume work covers the development of Islamic medicine between the 6th and 12th centuries A.D.

