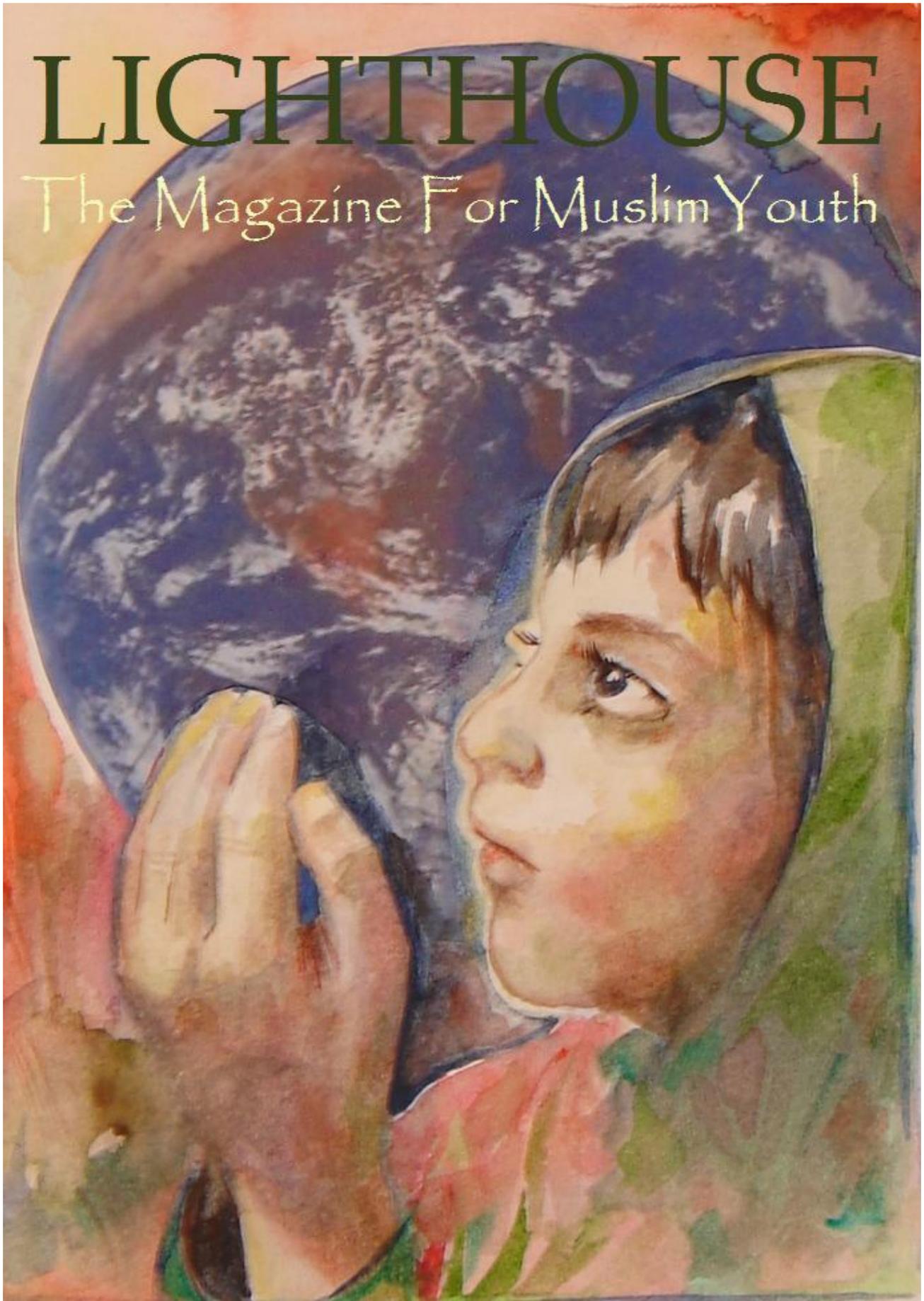


# LIGHTHOUSE

The Magazine For Muslim Youth



# Hajj and Eid al Adzha issue

November/December Lighthouse Magazine

## In the Quran, Allah put an end to human sacrifice

“But when he (Abraham’s son) became of age to work with him he said: O my son, I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice you: so consider what you see. He said: O my father, do as you are commanded; if Allah please, you will find me patient.

So when they both submitted and he had thrown him down upon his forehead,

And We called out to him, saying O Abraham,

**You have indeed fulfilled the vision.** Thus do we reward the doers of good.

Surely this is a manifest (clear) trial.

And we ransomed him with a great sacrifice.

And we granted him among the later generations (the salutation),

Peace be to Abraham!

Thus do We reward the doers of good.

Chapter 37, verses 102-110.



On the blessed occasion of Eid al Adzha Muslims around the world remember the great sacrifice of Prophet Abraham, peace and blessings of Allah upon him. Allah tested him by asking him to sacrifice his only son whom he loved beyond words. Prophet Abraham was willing to do anything for Allah and his son Ishmael was also willing because he knew his father was a wise prophet and *the dreams of the Prophet are not like the dreams of an ordinary person*. The dreams of a Prophet are **true visions from Allah**, part of the revelation or *wahy* that Allah sends down

to these special and holy people. At the last minute Allah accepted the intention and a ram was slaughtered in place of Ishmael.

The question that may come to mind is: why did Allah ask Prophet Abraham to sacrifice his son? If we think about this matter and read other parts of the Holy Quran, we know that Allah is All-Powerful and Mighty. He does not need anything from any person in this world, no matter how special that person might be. Allah does not need our prayers, our charity or our fasts. **We need these things** to grow closer to Allah and *we need to make sacrifices* so that our soul grows stronger, and it does not depend on anything other than Allah. Allah asked Prophet Abraham to sacrifice his son because it was a test to see how strong his faith was and how far he would go in his obedience to Allah. A person can only become truly purified and selfless when she or he is willing to give up the most precious thing they have in order to do the right thing and fulfill the commands of Allah.

### **WHAT DOES SACRIFICE MEAN TO YOU?**

Can you name some things that parents sacrifice for their children?

Talk about some of the sacrifices of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) with your family.

Sadly, many people around the world are using the name of Islam to become suicide bombers. They think this is a way to sacrifice themselves and go straight to Jannah. **It is very important to remember that Allah does not allow taking your own life under any condition.** Our life is a precious gift and a sacred trust from Allah; only He can give it and only He can take it away. Those who think they can fight others by becoming suicide bombers are doing something that is clearly *haram*, or forbidden by Allah. Allah has allowed Muslims to fight in self-defense but that means that they should bravely face an enemy who comes to fight with them, after efforts have been made



for peace, even if it puts their life at risk. People who fight to defend themselves are in danger of losing their lives, just like police officers and firefighters face danger for a good cause, but they are not taking their own lives on purpose. Islam does not allow people to blow themselves up in order to kill other people, for *any* reason.

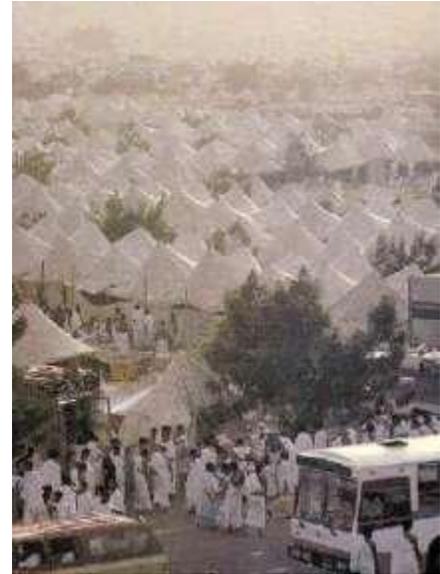
Some people believe that Prophet Jesus was the son of Allah whom Allah sacrificed by letting him die on the cross. They think that Allah made this sacrifice so the suffering of Prophet Jesus could make up for the sins of other people. As Muslims, we know that Allah does not have any parents, wife or children. Prophet Jesus was called a son in a metaphorical way because he was close to Allah, like all prophets and saints. Allah has the power to forgive all of us out of his mercy. He does not need any excuse or any sacrifice to forgive us. The concept of sacrifice goes against all the qualities of Allah. We, as humans, need to make sacrifices so we can overcome our greed and our weaknesses and make our soul strong enough to do anything. Allah is not like a human and the word sacrifice does not apply to him because that would mean that He is weak and needy like a human. Muslims rejoice in the fact that our Allah is Powerful; Powerful to help us in every way and Powerful to forgive the mistakes we make as we try to live a good life.

**May Allah help us all to live a life of devotion and sacrifice like his blessed Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and all the other prophets and saints.**

## Big Nana's Hajj Adventure

When Farheen came home after her piano lesson, she found her grandmother in a great state of excitement. Big Nana was usually a very calm person. She smiled a lot but never clapped her hands and danced around as Farheen did when she was happy, and she never screamed and yelled as Amir did when he won a soccer match. In fact, Farheen was sure she had never seen Big Nana laugh out loud like her friend Tara who often laughed till her face was as red as a fire truck. Today was different. Big Nana was twiddling her hands, fiddling with her shawl, while her cheeks were bright pink and her eyes looked moist. "Are you ok, Big Nana?" asked Farheen. The last time her cheeks were that red, she had the flu.

"OK? I am more than what is called ok, my dear, I am going for Hajj!" She shouted out, and now everything made sense to Farheen.



Big Nana had wanted to go for Hajj as long as Farheen could remember. Each year when the month of Dhul Hijjah came, Big Nana would be excited and mournful at the same time. She told Farheen that she was glad for all those relatives and friends who were lucky enough to go for Hajj, but she was sad for herself, as she had wanted to go since the time she was five and her own grandmother went for Hajj, yet she had not been able to make the sacred journey so far. Something always happened to the money she had saved, or she fell sick, or there was no one who could go with her. Many times Nana would cry when she was praying *salat* and Farheen knew it was because she wanted to go for Hajj so badly. And now her dear Nana was going.

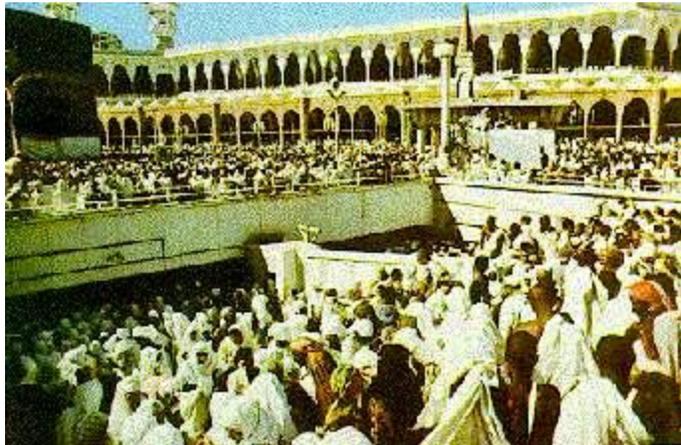
Farheen jumped up and hugged Big Nana and danced around with her in the living room till they were both breathless, and collapsed on the sofa laughing.

“Oh you crazy child,” puffed Big Nana, “I knew you would be happy that I am going. This means no more grumbling from your old granny about Hajj all the time.”

Farheen was glad to see her Nana so joyful and she knew that when adults were happy it was the right time to ask them for something.

“Big Nana, please, *please*, can I go too? Take me with you and I will be so helpful. I can hold your hand during *tawaf*, and I will help you gather stones to throw at the *Shaitan*, and I’ll even pray *nafal salat*, as much as you tell me to and...”

Big Nana gently patted Farheen on the head. “Your time will come too, Farheen. I wish I could take you with me, not just to help, but for you to experience the



Kaabah for yourself. But Hajj is tough, and I cannot take the responsibility for a child at my old age. But I will pray for Allah to call you very soon to visit His sacred house.”

Farheen was disappointed, but then she thought about how long Nana had to wait for Hajj, how she had saved money, and prayed every day to be able to go. She would just have to wait, and help Big Nana get ready for the long journey.

There was a lot to do. Farheen’s uncle was a travel agent who was helping make all the Hajj arrangements. He had sent a list of things to buy, and even though Big Nana hated shopping, she made a lot of trips with Abdussalam to buy the things she needed. Abdussalam, who was from Somalia, had been staying with their family as a paying guest for almost a year now while he attended the university. He was like a member of the family, always ready to help Farheen with her homework, and her mother and father with chores. Big Nana had promised to pray for him to be successful in his education while she was performing Hajj.

The preparations went on. Friends who had already performed Hajj came by to give their advice and offer their help. The whole house was in a flurry of excitement. Farheen's father hung a big poster about Hajj on the wall and the whole family took turns reading things out to Big Nana, whose eyes would shine and sparkle at every mention of the holy land. She had been yearning to go for Hajj for so long that she was ready and could barely wait to get on the plane that would take her to Meccah.

Farheen had been noticing that in all the excitement in their home, Abdussalam had been very quiet and often looked sad and lonely. She decided to ask him about it while he helped her search the internet for information about humpback whales for a school project.

"Are you worried about something, Abdussalam?" she asked, "did you really want to go for Hajj like Big Nana?"

Abdussalam smiled and patted her hand. "You are too kind, Farheen. I would love to go for Hajj. That is one of my biggest wishes, but first, I would like to be able to help my parents to perform Hajj. I am young and will have more chances, but they are getting old, and it is best to do Hajj before one gets too old."

"Do you have a big exam coming up? Maybe my dad could help you with statistics. He knows that stuff."

"Yes, I am worried, and it is about my studies, but not about something that is too hard to understand. The professors are so kind here that they help with any problem I have."

"Then what is it? Please tell me. Maybe I can help?" asked Farheen.

"Actually, I am worried because of the terrible drought in most of Somalia. It is very bad where my family lives. My father told me that our crops were failing because it is too dry. There is hardly any money to spare, and so I am thinking, I should leave the university and get a full time job to help my family."

"But you are studying on a scholarship, Abdussalam, and doing so well! You are the first person from your family to go to college. You just have a year left before

you finish.” said Farheen. “You can help your family much more if you first get your business degree.”

“Yes, that is right, but if I keep studying then I will be too busy to earn much money. My family needs money right now. I have to work full-time to support them. Maybe, when things are better, I can study again.”



Farheen could not think of anything to say. She knew Abdussalam worked many nights at the grocery store to earn extra money. She wished there was some way to help him, so he did not have to leave the university. She spoke to her family at dinner about it, on the night he was away working.

“Oh that’s too sad. I wish we could do something to help, but he needs more money than we can spare right now with our business being so slow. He is such a good, hardworking boy,” said her father.

“I thought something was bothering him,” said her mother sighing. “He is such a brilliant student, that it would be a shame for him to have to leave his studies.”

Big Nana did not say anything. She slowly ate her rice and lentils as if her mind was somewhere else. But her eyes were not sparkling so Farheen felt she was not thinking of Hajj.

The following day Big Nana mostly stayed in bed, complaining that her aches and pains were acting up. Everyone was worried that she was getting sick before Hajj. Farheen thought that Big Nana was overwhelmed now that the final preparations for Hajj needed to be made. She had felt like that when she finally went to Disneyland. It was a feeling of being slightly sick with excitement. Little did she know what was going to happen. Big Nana was going to shock them all with news no one would have ever expected. That night she came up from the basement where Abdussalam stayed, with him and Farheen’s Abu. Big Nana’s face was shining like the moon, while Abdussalam’s eyes were red.

“Is everything ok?” asked her mother, looking anxiously from one face to the other. “Abdussalam, did you get any news from your family?”

“My family is fine, in fact they will be very fine, thanks to Big Nana” said Abdussalam.

Big Nana just smiled and said she needed to lie down for a while.

Her father told them what had happened.

“Big Nana is not going for Hajj this year. She has decided to give her savings to Abdussalam so he can send the money to his family who need it to survive the terrible drought. He can continue his education now. She says she can go for Hajj another time, if Allah wants. After all she has waited all these years. She says she wishes soon Abdussalam’s parents can go for Hajj too, once their son graduates and gets a good job and works for a better future for his entire family. She says all those things are much better than just one person going to Hajj.”

No one talked much about Hajj that year afterwards. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of Dhul hijjah Big Nana watched all the *ihram*-clad people circle the sacred black cube on television with a smile on her face. Her cheeks were pink, her eyes were moist and her lips were moving constantly. Farheen felt as if her Nana were somehow actually there in Meccah, moving around the Kaabah, chanting praises with all the other Muslims. And when she raised her hands in prayer the whole family prayed with her and hoped that the Hajj was accepted by Allah for all those who were lucky enough to go and for all those who wished to go more than anything else.

## When can a person go for Hajj?

When there is peace and security: a journey to Hajj should be made when travel is considered safe.

When there is financial security: the haji should have enough money to comfortably perform the hajj while leaving enough money behind for his or her dependents to manage without him.

The journey to Hajj can be made at any age but Hajj is only *fardzh* on adults. A child can perform Hajj and gain the blessings of the holy journey, but he or she would still be required to perform Hajj as an adult.



When one has good health: Hajj is not required for a person who is very sick or very old and cannot make the journey without putting their life in danger.

## The Great Pie Sacrifice

Hani loved pie: apple, pumpkin, cherry, peach, blackberry, in fact once when his mother made a spinach pie, he gobbled it up before he even realized it was spinach! (His sister still teases him about it.) When Hani came in from the park and noticed the large pie dish on the counter, he grabbed a plate and was about to cut himself a big slice of gooey apple pie, when his mother walked in and took the spatula out of his hands.

“Hold it Hani dear, didn’t you see the sign?”

“What sign” said Hani trying to grab the spatula back from his mom.

“This sign” and she pointed to a paper taped to the pie dish.

**DO NOT EAT**

“But Mom” said Hani...you always make pie for me. You know I love pie.”

“Yes dear, I know you love pie and I cannot begin to count all the pies I have made for you. Sometimes I can make a pie for someone else and you can make a sacrifice.”

‘Just one slice....I promise I won’t ask for more.’

“Hani, this pie is for Mark and his family. You know how sick he is with the flu. And his father lost his job so his mother is working all the time. She barely has time to cook anything. I thought it would be nice for us to take some lasagna and some pie for them.”

“But, but we don’t have to give him PIE. We can just buy some ice cream for him or a cake. Pies are just too special to give away.”

“Son, you are right. We can give him anything, but the best and kindest thing to do would be to give him something we made ourselves and that we really like ourselves, like a warm apple pie.”

“I have a great idea Mom. We can give him that painting set that Uncle Bob gave to me and I didn’t use. It’s brand new. He can paint while he has the flu....he can lie in bed and...”

“Hani...Hani dear, you don’t like that painting set and that is why you did not open it. It would not be a sacrifice for you to give that away, would it?”

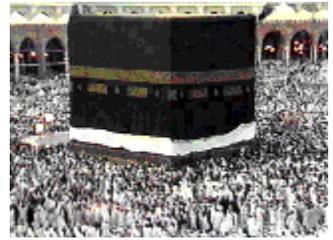
“Why do I need to make a sacrifice anyway? What’s the point?”

“The point is, my dear boy, for you to care for other people as you care for yourself and want to give them the best you have. Giving a sacrifice is also our way of showing Allah that we love Him so much that we can give up anything for Him.”

“Well I do care for Mark, and I’m sorry he’s so sick and I do love Allah too...hey, didn’t Uncle Fazeel say something about that in last Friday’s sermon? It was about Prophet Ibrahim and then I dozed off and when I woke up it was something about a goat, or was it a turkey?”



“I’m glad you made that connection Hani because Eid al Adzha is right around the corner. Your uncle was reminding us about the sacrifice of Prophet Ibrahim when Allah tested him and asked him to sacrifice his beloved son, Hazrat Ismail. Allah accepted his intention and let him sacrifice a ram instead. That is why we all think of sacrifice around Eid al Adzha.”



“Well ok, I guess we should give the pie to Mark. But it’s really, really hard to make this sacrifice.”

“I know Hani, and I am sure Allah is very pleased with you. Who knows, maybe Mark will offer you a slice?”

“That would be great!. Hurry mom hurry, grab the pie and let’s go...”

### One house, many names

Labbayk Allah humma labbayk *Here I come Allah here I come*

Labbayk la sharika laka labbayk *Here I come, I worship none but you*

Innal hamda wan ni mata *For you is all praise and blessing*

Laka wal mulk *Yours is the Kingdom*

La sharika laka *You have no partners*

The Holy Kaabah in Meccah is a house with more than one name. All its names come directly from the Holy Quran. The city of Meccah has been called “this city made secure” meaning it will be blessed by the presence of the Kaabah and people will come to make Hajj **in peace**.

The Kaabah is also called **al Bait al-mamur**. This means “the house that is visited”.

Another name is Masjid al-Haram, or the Sacred Mosque.

Because it is such a special place, many things that are lawful and allowed in every other place are forbidden while in the boundary of the Kaabah. Some of these

things are the killing of animals, wearing a veil, uprooting any plants or cutting down a tree.

There are special rules of behavior within the boundaries of the Kaabah to remind us how sacred it is. It is a very special mosque that was the first house ever to be built for the worship of Allah. It was the house that was built by Prophet Ibrahim, peace and blessings of Allah upon him, and his son Ismail and it was the place that was cleared of idols by the blessed hands of Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah upon him. It is the house that all people are commanded to visit once in their lifetime to show their complete devotion to Allah and their brotherhood with all men.

Another name for the Kaabah is *Bait al Ateeq*, or the Ancient House. This name reminds us that all Prophets of Allah came with the same mission: to invite people to recognize and love the One God and worship Him by doing good deeds. The Kaabah went through many changes since it was built and was even damaged and destroyed. Since it was a special sign to remind people about Allah, eventually it came into the care of Muslims in the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and since then has been the location of the largest gathering of men and women anywhere in the world: the annual Hajj.

Make your plans to GO!



## A House of Allah

A house of Allah  
is a place  
where Allah is remembered.  
Like the Kaabah in Meccah  
A house of Allah is peaceful  
Kind, open, welcoming, loving,  
A house of Allah is sacred,  
Where light chases away darkness,  
A house of Allah is simple  
and beautiful,  
Where no one is turned away,  
May we all get to visit  
That sacred house in Meccah  
And may we all try to make  
Our hearts places  
where  
Love and kindness live forever  
And where Allah  
Would like to visit



**ASK AYESHA AND SHE WILL ANSWER YOUR WEIRD, WISE AND  
WACKY QUESTIONS**

**Dear Ayesha, my family is planning to go for Hajj next year. I have mixed feelings about it. I want to go but I also feel overwhelmed and scared because hajj is such a big deal. Can you give me some advice?**



Dear Hopeful for Hajj, I certainly understand that the Hajj can seem quite overwhelming. But like all things that seem too big to handle, sometimes breaking them down into smaller pieces makes them easier to handle. Everything about the Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, is about unity among Muslims and equality in the eyes of Allah of all people. It is also about sacrificing for Allah. People who go for Hajj have these things in mind and so all of them try their best to be loving and kind to each other. Even before the proper Hajj starts, a person going for Hajj starts to get in this peaceful mindset. Let's take a mental walk through the Hajj to get you ready for it and calm your nerves! Our journey starts with preparations called *Ihram*.

Ihram is the state of dress required by all pilgrims. It consists of two white sheets and a pair of sandals. Everyone has to wear this, whether you are a millionaire or penny-aire. There aren't any brand name ihrams—Juicy Couture doesn't make one. There aren't any with gold linings on the hem. There aren't tight ones or baggy ones. It's all the same for everyone! When you are in Ihram, not only do you enter a simple state of dress, you also enter a peaceful and simple state of behavior. No makeup, no hairdos, no arguments, no bad words, no dishonesty, no hurting animals, no hurting plants even! So now that you have prepared, you are ready to enter the sacred mosque and start the first part of the Hajj called the *Tawaf*.

*Tawaf* consists of making seven circuits around the Kaabah and pointing towards or kissing the Black Stone. The Black Stone is thought to date back to the time of the first Prophet, Prophet Adam, and some say it fell from heaven. This might mean that it was actually a meteorite! Prophet

Adam and Eve used it to build the first place of worship. Then Prophet Abraham was shown its location by the Angel Gabriel and told his son Ishmael (who was also a Prophet and the ancestor of Prophet Muhammad) to build a mosque that imbedded the stone in it. This mosque is the Kaabah, the first house of worship that we all face when we pray! Prophet Muhammad kissed this stone when he performed pilgrimage and so a lot of people try to kiss it in imitation; but if you can't reach it, you just point toward it. Each circuit around the Kaabah, you are supposed to recite the *Talbiyyah*:

Labbayk Allah humma labbayk *Here I come Allah here I come*

Labbayk la sharika laka labbayk *Here I come, I worship none but you*

Innal hamda wan ni mata *For you is all praise and blessing*

Laka wal mulk *Yours is the Kingdom*

La sharika laka *You have no partners*

With the reciting of these words, keep God in your heart, remember He is our Rabb who gave us everything and brings us to perfection, and let your love for Him reflect in your actions to all your brothers and sisters. If you see someone trip making *Tawaaf*, help them up. Don't push and shove trying to get to the Black Stone. It's not the Stone you are here for, it is Allah!

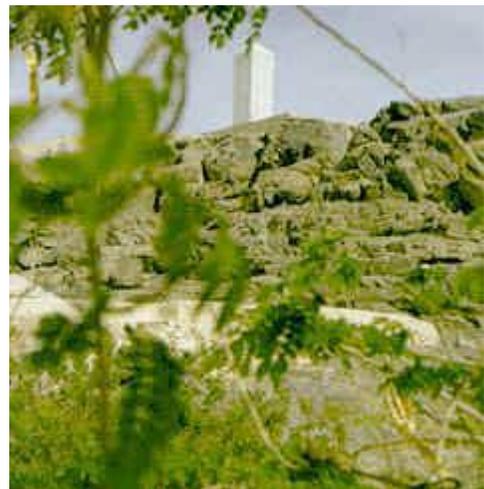
There are a lot of new things that have been done to try and help people on the Hajj. There is a disabled lane and even an air-conditioned part for people who are less physically-able! After the *Tawaaf* you must pray two *rakahs* of prayer near the *Kaabah*. During this time, you are standing shoulder to shoulder equal before God, with your fellow Muslims from all over the world and from all spheres of life. Try to imagine how wonderful it will be to see all those different kinds of people on equal footing before God!

After you finish these two *rakahs*, the same day pilgrims perform the *sa'i* or running between the two hills of Safa and Marwa as Hajra, Abraham's wife and Ishmael's mom ran, searching for water for her thirsty son. God rewarded Hajra's patience and faith when the kicking of baby Ishmael's heels on the ground resulted in a gush of water that became the Spring of Zamzam! The water from this spring is still gushing and although you aren't allowed to take a snack break when you are doing the *tawaaf*, you are allowed to stop for some Zamzam water found in coolers all around the mosque! Even though when Hajra ran frantically between the hills, there was only dirt and rocks, now there are nice lanes to run in and give people more room.



The next day, pilgrims leave for Arafat. Arafat is a hill where the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings upon him, delivered his last sermon. Here, you spend time praying, reciting the Quran. You have to stay here until sunset and most people spend this time praying, and thinking about the course of their lives. This is considered the highlight of the Hajj and your Hajj is considered invalid if you do not spend the afternoon on Arafat.

That evening, you leave for Mina. This is the place where you throw pebbles at three pillars meant to signify the devil. This is all symbolic, of course. This is meant to remind us of the three times that the devil tempted Abraham and the trials Abraham had to face when he was deciding to sacrifice his son as demanded by Allah. Abraham refused to listen to the devil even though he loved his son so much! Despite his love for his son, his faith and trust in Allah assured him that whatever Allah asked him to do had a reason for it, even if it might not be clear immediately. He knew that God's wisdom and love and mercy are greater than everything, so he sacrificed his feelings of wanting to disobey Allah, and made up his mind to obey God instead of the devil. Each pillar marks a location of Abraham's refusal to obey the devil.



The end of Hajj with Eid-ul-Adzha marks Abraham and his family's great willingness to sacrifice. God showed his great love and mercy to Abraham and his family by telling them that Abraham did not have to sacrifice his son, but to sacrifice an animal instead. So now we all sacrifice an animal during Eid, symbolic of us sacrificing our animal desires. We use the meat from this animal to share with those in need, our friends, and our own families.

This is the end of Hajj! Doesn't seem so scary does it? There have been a lot of new measures put into place since the times when people used to get hurt because of the crowds during Hajj. I haven't been to Hajj but those who have, tell me it is quite orderly. It will be wonderful to take part in such a uniting, peaceful occasion!

There have been two studies done about the social effects of Hajj. The first of these shows that Muslim communities are much more open after the Hajj experience. The second shows the Hajj experience promotes peaceful coexistence, equality, and harmony. Specifically, the report states that the Hajj "increases belief in equality and harmony among ethnic groups and the Islamic community and that 'Haji's' (those who have performed the Hajj) show increased belief in peace, and in equality and harmony among adherents of different religions". If I were you, I'd take this opportunity to go in a heartbeat and really try to let the wonderful Hajj experience touch my heart with all that it means.

PLEASE WRITE FOR LIGHTHOUSE MAGAZINE

Send us your questions, comments,  
ideas, stories, quizzes, drawings,  
poems, and suggestions at  
[zamustang@msn.com](mailto:zamustang@msn.com).