



JOURNEY

TOWARDS

AlIah

BY DR. ASIF MAHMOOD JAH
Sitara-e-Imtiaz

**Journey
Towards
Allah** ﷻ

(Travelogue of the Holy Cities)

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah
Sitara-e-Imtiaz

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Dedication

I dedicate the humble work of mine
to our beloved Prophet Muhammad,
May peace and blessings of Allah ﷺ be upon him
and souls of the Holy Companions of
Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Journey Towards

Allah سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ
وَتَعَالَى

(Travelogue of the Holy Cities)

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah

Sitara-e-Imtiaz

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Preface

In the name of Allah ﷻ, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

All praise is due to Almighty Allah ﷻ. I praise Him ﷻ and seek His ﷻ help and forgiveness. I seek refuge in Allah's ﷻ protection from the evil of ourselves and from my sinful deeds. Whomever Allah ﷻ guides, no one can misguide him; and whomever He leads astray, none can guide him. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah ﷻ, and I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger. May Allah ﷻ bestow His peace and blessings upon Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, upon his good and pure family, as well as upon all the *Noble Companions* and those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgement.

It is 4 o'clock in the morning, second day of *Muharram* 1433 AH. I am sitting in *Masjid Al Haram*. Allah's ﷻ House is right in front of me. I am writing preface to my book. I have just performed my last *Tawaaf*. I have completed my stay in the Holy Land. I have to leave the House of Allah now. "Allah, Kaaba Aur Banda" (*Journey towards Allah ﷻ*) is not a travelogue in the conventional sense of the word. It has not been written to provide information, historical facts or even the details of *Hajj* rites, but it is an account of spontaneous outflow of feelings, emotions and honest description of the sentiments that I felt and experienced during my journey to Holy Places in Makkah and Madinah. Offering prayers in the *Haram*, performing *Tawaf* and *Sae*, each moment has an exceptional and extraordinary effect that I tried to record there and then. I have tried my best to reflect my emotions in their true service.

You shall find an essence of love and devotion that came out of my heart and soul. You will find my inmost feelings, longings and

emotions in this book. I have candidly expressed whatever I discerned in these pages... There were times when I could not find appropriate words to describe my feelings. I am a humble writer and use simple and straightforward words to communicate my thoughts and feelings. Still, I have tried as much as humanly possible to be careful and respectful. It has been more than a month when I came to this Holy Land. I kept writing whatever I felt and experienced. Now the reader will decide if I had been successful or not.

The glory of "Baitullah" is ineffable. You have to visit it to experience peace and blessings of Almighty Allah ﷻ directly. You will find a glimpse of the same in this book.

The purpose of writing this book is to transfer the passion for visiting the Holy Places of Islam to my readers. As many of you might know, my primary concern has always been to serve the humanity in distress by all means. By the grace of Almighty Allah ﷻ, I served the pilgrims from all over the world at that occasion. Anticipating the opportunity, I had taken large quantities of medicines to treat the pilgrim patients but these were distributed among them within a few days and twice I had to arrange more medicines from Pakistan. It was really a rewarding experience to serve the pilgrims alongwith performance of Hajj.

(Muharram 2nd) Baitullah, Masjid Al-Haram.

Second part of this book encompasses my visit to Madinah. I wrote different chapters of this Part in *Masjid e Nabavi, Riaz ul Jannah*, in front of *Gumbad e Khizra* and during visit to other Holy Places in Madinah. The account of every place I visited was recorded on the spot. Being at the *Masjid* of Prophet ﷺ is an exhilarating, intoxicating and captivaiting experience. One cannot believe how fortunate one could be to be present at the *Mausoleum* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ...

Now, I am sitting in *Riaz ul Jannah* that is in fact a sacred peace of land from Jannah (Paradise). The environment is serene, fragrant, soul lifting and rewarding... There is nothing but love, peace noor (spiritual light), blessing, spirituality and tranquility around me. Blessed is the pen I am writing with, blessed are the words of my book being penned down at this sacred place...

I am satisfied as if all my longings, wishes and desires have been fulfilled today. I am not dreaming. I am awake and writing these words, sitting in paradise. People are astonishingly looking at me. They are supplicating, crying, saying prayers and I am writing. Guards are asking the people to leave immediately to give a chance to others but they do not bother this humble servant of Almighty Allah ﷻ. Moreover, I keep on writing....

(Muharram 5th) *Riaz ul Jannah, Masjid e Nabawi* ﷺ

I am extremely gratified to Almighty Allah ﷻ that He blessed me with an opportunity to write a book, which has been admired and appreciated all over the world for the last three years. Twelve thousand copies of the book, "Allah, Kaaba Aur Banda" have been printed and sold out / gifted so far. The book reached every part of the world and it is rewarding for me that many readers telephoned me from *Baitullah* and *Masjid-e-Nabawi* that they had gone there after reading my book, "Allah, Kaaba Aur Banda" (Journey Towards Allah). I am thankful to Almighty Allah ﷻ, for it is nothing but His blessings and the sacred name of our Holy Prophet ﷺ that gave this book so much prominence, appreciation and admiration all over the world. Ever since the publishing of "Allah, Kaaba Aur Banda" Muslim brothers and sisters from abroad have been regularly requesting and insisting upon me to bring out the English translation of the book as soon as possible. On Seeing enormous response and appreciation, I was impelled to produce English version of the book to enable the readers around the globe

to benefit from this soul catching account of my feelings during the performance of *Hajj*.

Mr. Afzal Mahmood initiated the translation of the book in English. Later the job was assigned to Syed Imtiaz Ahmad who took up the challenge and completed the task. Professor Muzzafar Bukhari minutely reviewed and edited the English version. He has also written the Foreword of the book. I am very grateful to all friends, scholars, family members and my publisher for their kind support without which this book, "*Journey towards Allah*" could not have reached the readers. Online edition of the book has already been published by [lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com) and available at <http://www.lulu.com/shop/asif-mahmood-jah/a-journey-towards-allah/ebook/product-22523171.html>.

I pray to Almighty Allah ﷻ to make this humble effort successful and accept it as an attempt for His sake alone and to make it of real benefit to all those who read it, for it is ultimately Allah's ﷻ acceptance alone that really counts and I believe that all success is only by His will.

I pray to Allah ﷻ to bless all the readers with a chance to visit His House and the *Mausoleum* of His Holy Prophet ﷺ. Āmen!

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah

Sitara-e-Imtiaz

1st Ramzan ul Mubarik 1437 AH. June 7, 2016.

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Their Hands shall speak to Us And their Feet shall bear Witness

Almighty Allah ﷻ declares, in the context of the Day of Judgment, in the *Holy Quran*, Chapter "Ya-Seen"

"We will set a seal upon their mouths and their hands shall speak to Us, and their feet shall bear witness of what they earned" (36:63-65).

I can imagine what Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah's hands are going to say to Almighty Allah ﷻ. They will say, "We have stitched wounds of countless human beings. Helped hundreds of distressed, dislocated, unfortunate people and treated millions of helpless patients. Following in the footsteps of Your Prophet Jesus ﷺ, revived many who had lost all hope "and his feet will bear witness that, "We reached everywhere to help Your creatures in need and shared their sorrows without any intent of personal gains and self projection. From far flung settlements of *Kohistan* in the earth quake-struck *Kashmir* to *Swat* and *Sindh* and from there to our House to heal and serve Your sick and afflicted devotees. We reached everywhere."

I have written about every book of Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah to express my love and solidarity with him. I am always afraid that he might forget me while writing his next book but fortunately he never does and I am thankful to him.

This travelogue is such a remarkable description of the journey of *Hajj* that instead of just a little preface, we can write books about it. While reading the book, we feel a strong yearning and desire that our eyes should have replaced Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah's eyes and we could have seen all the Divine, marvellous and mesmerizing sights.

I will call this travelogue a small miracle, because after coming back from *Hajj*, I had to spend hundreds of nights writing my book "*Mun Wal Ka'bah Sharif*" and could not do it as it should have been done. Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah did not write using his memory and imagination, he depicted everything while being physically present there and looking at Allah's ﷻ House, Prophet's ﷺ pulpit or the *Green Dome*. He wrote whatever his heart felt at *Mina, Arafat, Muzdalifah* and other places. I am thankful that he remembered one of my books "*Ghaar-e-Hira Main Aik Raat*" when he went to see the *Cave of Hira*, though the *Bangali Baba* who used to send me greetings from *Ghaar-e-Hira* is no more there.

Hundreds and thousands of *Hajj Travelogues* have been written so far and will be written in future, but no doubt, this book will also hold a distinct and prominent place because of the witness of Dr Asif Jah's hands, feet and eyes.

Mustansar Hussain Tarar

Fascinating Description of Journey to Hijaz

Allah ﷻ, Ka'ba aur Banda is, in book-form, a fascinating, inspiring and elevating description of the journey to Hijaz undertaken by Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah in order to perform pilgrimage. Originally written in Urdu, the book is remarkable for the graceful simplicity both of diction and of theme, the maturity and sweep of thought, the exuberant emotion of love for God and the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the consummate skill with which it has been written.

The author describes various stages of the pilgrimage so vividly and with such sincerity that one feels one is accompanying the author and himself performing the pilgrimage. The author expresses his strong love for God and His Last Messenger with such intensity of emotion that the readers are carried away with it.

Even during his service to God, he does not forget his service to mankind. He carries with him his medicines and treats the ailing pilgrims irrespective of their nationality. The philanthropist in him is always active and willing to provide comfort to the needy.

All those Muslims who go on pilgrimage experience the same feelings as the author did but what distinguishes Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah from them is his brilliant expression of such feelings. He has a natural gift of expressing in words what is going on in his heart and mind. His strong belief in God and profound love for the Prophet ﷺ enable him to select impressive and appropriate words for the expression of his experiences while performing the pilgrimage.

The author, an officer in the Customs Department, is known for his honesty and efficiency but more than that, he is a doctor and social worker. His love for mankind is evident from his life-style.

Besides performing his official duties, he has been running a free dispensary for those patients who cannot afford costly treatment. Over the years, he has established a large net-work of free dispensaries for the poor. He is the servant of the poor in the truest sense of the word. He avails himself of every opportunity that he finds to serve the suffering humanity. He is full of, as Shakespeare said, "the milk of human kindness".

He is a true devotee of God and a passionate lover of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. His book is a mirror of his personality. He is a true Muslim, an honest officer, a kind, compassionate, able and selfless doctor and above all, a gentleman par excellence. His immense emotion of love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ is his most remarkable virtue and the most distinctive feature of his beloved personality.

His book is not only a source of inspiration for the believers, but also a guide for those aspiring to perform pilgrimage. It gives the readers a spiritual joy and also necessary knowledge to perform pilgrimage. Hence, this book is doubly useful. Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah deserves congratulations for writing such a wonderful book.

Professor Muzaffar Bokhari

دل بدست آور کہ حج اکبر است

I am venturing to write few lines to eulogize a true humanist doctor Asif Mehmood Jah, a beautiful soul about whom I have been learning through print media and some likeminded friends since long and longing to meet and talk to him.

It was in the last week of January 2016. That my long cherished dream came true while visiting Lahore with my family. The credit for quenching my thrust goes to a very, very old friend of mine, Mansha Qazi, who fortunately happens to be, a good friend of Dr. Asif Jah. My Columbus arranged an evening with Dr. Sahib taking me to his charity clinic. Where it was, "Seeing is believing", in the true sense of the Idiom. Dr. Asif Jah's clinic crowded with a fairly large number of patients, young and old, being taken care by a highly motivated team of medical Doctors and Para-nedics under the benign leadership of our Dr. Asif Jah, engaged with every dedication, devotion and spirit of service beyond self. Dr. Asif J. h, while talking to me, kept examining his patients also.

I, before seeking permission to leave, wished to go around the facility, which was very cordially granted. What I witnessed there was unbelievable, rejuvenating my spirits. While bidding "Good by" after spending an hour or so at "Khanqah e Asfia" he complimented me with two of his exceptionally though provoking Books;

1. Allah, Ka'bah aur Banda (Journey towards Allah) Travelogue of Holy Cities
2. Hira, Hijrat aur Khidmat.

I, on my return to Abbottabad, started to read the books, so much enjoyable, could not resist reading them repeatedly, unfolding before me incomprehensible faculties of the author. Particularly the book on *Hajj*, elaborated to me of a Persian classics couplet,

منعم بکوه و بیابان غریب نیست
 هر جاہ کہ رفت خیمہ زد و ساخت
 دل بدست آور کہ حج اکبر است

He while, performing rituals of *Hajj*, continued his medical practice by serving the ailing 'Guest of Allah' reminding me of an Abbottabadi colloquial expression once a PIFFER always a PIFFER, so Dr. Asif Jah not only exhibited 'Once a Doctor Always a Doctor' thus, a Doctor can never stay away from Sick and clinic but also establishing the spirit of

He was not only performing ordinary *Hajj* but *Hajj Akber* by winning the hearts of pilgrims from all over the globe. I had not yet come out of hangover of Dr. Asif Jah's Account of *Hajj*, then I began my journey to Waziristan's IDPs settlements by Hira, Hijrat Aur Khidmat an account of 'Wardat Haie Qalb' in the form of purely humanitarian relief activities for the Waziri IDPs and mentioning of a little Waziri Girl 'Hira' so prominently along her to youngest sisters brought before my eyes my own three school going daughters, Zarlisht, Mezghan and Malalai. Thus every reason to feel rational behind symbolizing Hira's Sisters Dr. Asif Jah's two daughters (*Yumna, Mahnoor*) both the works of Dr. Asif Jah not only along him but also bring before him the physical

manifestation of a pure and pure lover of Humanity, treading the path to Allah by persistently His Creatures in distress whether during *Hajj* or helping the victims of natural calamities like floods, drought in Thar, Earthquake or IDPs fleeing the FATA war zones.

While endeavoring to know the real self of Dr. Asif Jah I found in him the true manifestation of Moulana Rumi is following lines in the physical form of him.

*All through eternity
Beauty unveils His exquisite form
in the solitude of nothingness;
He holds a mirror to His Face
and beholds His own beauty.
He is the knower and the known,
the seer and the seen;
No eye but His own
has ever looked upon this Universe.*

*His every quality finds an expression:
Eternity becomes the verdant field of Time and Space;
Love, the life-giving garden of this world.
Every branch and leaf and fruit
Reveals an aspect of His perfection-
The cypress give hint of His majesty,
The rose gives tidings of His beauty.*

*Whenever Beauty looks,
Love is also there;*

Moulana Jalal ud Din Rumi

بجوشید که ما اهل شعاریم
هنر عشق بجز عشق دگر کارنداریم

Each word of above lines portrays Dr. Asif, as a true lover of humanity trading eternity, step by step, through the love of fellow human beings. Thus, Dr. Asif Jah's "Journey towards Allah ﷻ" road to Allah like any prudent fellow proclaiming loud and clear.

Nurturing the 'Ishq' of Humanity leading towards Allah and this very Ishq is all the time boiling in and oozing out from his heart and soul.

Dr. Kewan Qadir Khan

A Unique Travelogue

The book titled '*Journey towards Allah*' is a unique travelogue written by Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah who went to Saudi Arabia for pilgrimage and while there documented all his worldly and spiritual experiences in a highly appealing manner. The narrative is candid and fascinating, transporting the readers to the venue, which the writer is describing.

Those who have been to Makkah and Madinah for pilgrimage earlier have an urge to return and observe what they had missed. The minute details mentioned by the author surprise even the regular visitors to the Holy Land who are all praise for his strong sense of observation.

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah points out that around three million Muslims perform *Hajj* every year. He observes pilgrims of different nationalities and ethnicities and concludes their behaviour has a lot to do with their origins. Moreover, those who have not been there cannot resist the temptation of flying to that part of the world. It would not be an over-statement if one says this travelogue is a must-read for all those who are planning to go to Saudi Arabia for *Hajj* or *Umra*. The reason simply is that this book discusses almost all the issues that confront or may confront pilgrims, starting from their departure to their arrival in Saudi Arabia until the completion of the pilgrimage and their return to their homeland.

For example, the author warns the intending pilgrims of fraudulent activities of some private *Hajj* operators, penalties imposed by Saudi government on those carrying contraband items and narcotics, the risks of not vaccinated before embarking on the journey, the common diseases contracted by pilgrims, the problems related to health service delivery etc. He does not only identify the problems but gives solutions and suggestions as well.

This information is extremely important keeping in mind that a large number of Pakistani pilgrims embark on this journey in their old age. They have slow reflexes, problems with mobility, difficulty in communicating with Saudi officials and sometimes serious health issues. This is in total contrast to pilgrims coming from Indonesia where people try to perform *Hajj* before they are married.

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah claims the content of the book is relevant to many and has an impact on readers. The reason is that he has written the book in real time while making all these observations and depended less on his memory. To make the message clear and far-reaching, he has identified various characters and described different situations through them.

Another distinctive feature of this travelogue is that it is not merely a narration of events and description of scenes in a chronological order. In fact, it discusses things in their context, traces the history of various religious traditions, recreates the events of pre-Islamic era and those during, after the times of the Prophet ﷺ through imagination, makes comparisons between older and modern times, and discusses the philosophy of *Hajj*. He also tries to find out how much pilgrims gain from performance of this religious ritual and what are the wrong attitudes and behaviours that make the whole exercise futile for many.

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah points it out in his travelogue that around three million Muslims perform *Hajj* every year. They come from all over the world and behave differently. There are pilgrims from Pakistan, India, Turkey, Arab countries, Africa, Malaysia, Indonesia and so on. He praises the Saudi government, the police and the armed forces for controlling the flow of events, arranging foolproof security and managing such a huge population so efficiently.

He observes pilgrims of different nationalities and ethnicities and concludes their behaviour has a lot to do with their origins. There may be exceptions but he narrates in the book that in order to reach Hajre-e-Aswad and acquire a place in Riadh-al-

Jannat, people wriggle through crowds and resort to pushing each other with full force.

He finds Pashtuns and Africans to be the most aggressive, followed by non-Pashtun Pakistanis, Indians and Bangladeshis. On the other hand, he finds Indonesians, Malaysians, Nepalese and Turks very harmless. They are calm, composed, polite, and accommodating towards other pilgrims.

In this book, Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah counts the difficulties encountered by pilgrims during their stay in Makkah and Madinah and gives suggestions to pre-empt them. He also shares his personal experiences of dealing with pilgrims who suffer from cold and flu, bronchial diseases and stomach disorders. Being himself a medical doctor, he explains reasons why these diseases spread during *Hajj* and how he provided free medical treatment to the affected pilgrims, and distributed medicines amongst them.

He regrets some people are shamelessly involved in negative activities in the name of facilitating pilgrims. For example, he says, there are tour operators and travel agents whose attitude totally changes once they have pocketed money from intending pilgrims. They forget the promises they had made and leave the pilgrims in the lurch. His point is that while it is the duty of the state to take them to task, the clients should also know how to distinguish the genuine service providers from the non-genuine ones.

He tells the adventurous pilgrims that there are more than 1300 steps to Ghar-e-Hira (The Cave of Light). However, he soothes them by saying that many Pakistanis, Indians, Bangladeshis and people from Africa have established their shops along the path. The pilgrims can take rest there and purchase juices or hot cups of tea.

His description of how the car he was travelling in achieved great speed in Wadi-e-Jinn (Valley of Djinn), with engines switched off, fascinates the readers a lot. They keep wondering whether djinns push the car with great force or it is the magnetic field at work.

Being a senior civil servant who has a lot of charity and relief work to his credit, Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah knows where the

problems lie at policy level and what are the major issues related to awareness and service delivery in Pakistan. He has made such issues a premise of this book in context of *Hajj* management and participation of Pakistanis in this religious ritual.

Shahzada Irfan Ahmad
The News International, Lahore

Introduction

Whenever I hear Dr. Asif Mehmood Jah's name, Abdul Sattar Edhi always comes to mind who has devoted his whole life to serve the humanity. The whole world has complete faith in his honesty and piety. When I met Dr. Asif Jah, all those qualities were visible in his character as well. You will be surprised to know that he has opted medicines as his Profession. Nevertheless, after successfully completing MBBS he started serving in the Customs Department. He lives in a Government Officers Colony situated in Sutluj Block Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore... While going to his office in the morning and on returning home, he used to see burqa-clad women trying to get their ill children treated at different private clinics. Seeing this Dr Asif Jah realized his medical education was not being used to serve the humanity. Therefore, he started a dispensary in the local mosque where, after returning from office, he assumed responsibilities of a doctor and started treating men, women and children free of cost, until late at night.

Allah ﷻ accepted his efforts, society showed confidence in his honesty and piety and now that small clinic has become a full-fledged hospital. The hospital has capacity to treat all types of patients and Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah known as a Messiah there.

I found out the extent of his passion to serve the humanity when an earthquake played havoc in the Northern Areas of Pakistan. To help victims of the earthquake, Dr Asif Mahmood Jah took lot of medicines, a team of medical professionals and treated people from Mansehra to Muzaffarabad. He also provided similar mobile medical services at the time of the earthquake at Awaran in Baluchistan and at the time of the floods in Sindh, Khyber Pukhtoonkhwah and Punjab. The fruit of these efforts was that a sense of national unity among people strengthened. People from other provinces became less prejudiced against Punjab when they

realized that at the time of calamity Punjab is standing beside them like an elder brother and A Punjabi doctor helps and sympathizes with them cordially.

Dr Asif Mahmood Jah is a senior Customs Officer. He also realizes that his primary concern should be treating and serving the humanity and these sentiments are the result of his religious inclinations. He expanded these inherited passions with the help of study. Allah ﷻ accepted his selfless efforts to serve the humanity and he not only invited him to Makkah and Madinah but also provided means to travel. His wife Asma had been trying to convince him to perform *Hajj* for many years. He has mentioned this in the book;

"Hajj is a compulsory obligation but, somehow, I could not feel that clarity and peace of mind regarding the decision. Whenever the subject of Hajj was discussed with friends, they tried to satisfy me by saying that serving the humanity was also a sort of pilgrimage and probably the same argument kept delaying my decision to perform Hajj for so many years."

He also had a firm belief that:

"You cannot plan and arrange for Hajj. It happens when there is some Divine intervention. At last Asma's prayers got heard by Allah ﷻ, and after years of waiting, Divine approval was granted..."

When approval was granted, travel expenses for *Hajj* were also arranged. Actually, Government of Punjab bought ten thousand copies of Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah's book "*Swat, Hijrat aur Khidmat*", and income from that was used for *Hajj* expenses. Here I would like to mention another belief of Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah;

"Hajj is not essentially related with wealth. Many wealthy people, who have millions in their accounts, still cannot fulfil this obligation. Many rich people die before they can perform Hajj, while many poor men somehow get a chance to do so. It's a matter of providence... it depends on approval from a Higher Authority."

Many people have now realized that Asif Mehmood Jah is not only a Customs officer and a servant of humanity but there is man of letters inside his personality who is well versed in the art of converting his observations into expressions. My guess is that he had made his mind to put all his sacred observations of *Hajj* into words at the time of wearing *Ihram*. It is therefore obvious from the contents of the book that he had kept pen and paper handy to write down his feelings at each stage of *Hajj*.

I consider this book a miracle because the manuscript of his travelogue was in a bag, after *Tawaaf-e-Ziyarat* while going to *Mina* from *Harem* the bag was forgotten in the Taxi. In the crowd of thousands of Hajjis, it was almost impossible to find the bag and the notebook, but fortunately his prayers were heard and he found the address of the Arab driver. The manuscript with the bag was found. If the bag was not found, this travelogue could not have been written and even if written, it would not have been the same.

Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam and to perform *Hajj* is every Muslim's dream of a lifetime. When he performs *Hajj* he feels that he is directly connected with the centre point of religion and the greatest leader ﷺ of the religion of Islam and thus strengthened his devotion and affection.

While performing *Hajj*, Dr. Asif Jah experienced dozens of instances of passion, commitment, submission and devotion. All his feelings are reflection of the surges inside him. That is the reason he has not composed this book in a traditional informative travelogue, instead he describes it as a book of his inner experiences and feelings. Depiction of every scene of the holy place enriches the heart with purity and enlightens it with Divine illumination. Emotional outburst and the flow never seem to slow down...

Now when I am reading this travelogue I am recalling my *Hajj*, I went to perform in 1988 with my family. When I threw pebbles at *Satan*, he attacked me and snatched my notebook, in which, I was taking notes to write my travelogue of *Hajj*. That is why I could never write that book.

The overall effect of this Travelogue is immense. Dr Asif Jah could smell the fragrance of the Holy Prophet ﷺ from every particle of that sacred land. He enriched himself with the fragrance and is proud of his fortune that he was walking in the streets where once the Holy Prophet ﷺ had travelled to spread Allah's ﷻ message. He writes:

"Right there behind the mountains, Allah's ﷻ servant and Prophet ﷺ is calling people towards Allah ﷻ. He ﷺ is preaching them to accept the faith that there is no God save Allah ﷻ. He assures them that they will succeed if they accept this faith. Some people pay attention, and accept the faith while others mock and ridicule him. Allah's ﷻ prophets are coming one after the other. They are performing the duties assigned to them and returning to Allah's ﷻ court. Those who believed in Prophet's teachings, succeeded. Prophets keep coming in the area of Masjid Al-Khayf and after carrying out assigned duties they are being buried there after death."

In this quotation, ancient history is reflected in the mirror of the present and Dr. Asif Jah is overwhelmed by his feelings:

"Fajr prayer at Masjid Al-Khayf revitalized the faith. When Imam Sahib recited the holy verses from chapter Al-Asra, I felt that the verses were being revealed then and there. Holy Prophet ﷺ has just gone to Masjid-e-Aqsa from Harem, and then for a heavenly voyage."

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah sees through his imagination and writes:

"The field of Arafat is full of men and women. Today the Holy Prophet ﷺ is very happy. The mission for which he was sent to this world and the duties that were assigned to him by Allah ﷻ are completed. Allah ﷻ has declared that:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَاتَّمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا (مائدة: ٣)

This day I have perfected your Deen (A code of life) for you and completed My favors onto you and have chosen Islam as your Deen.

Qaswa is walking enthusiastically. She is happy that the Holy Prophet ﷺ is riding on her back. His Holy Companions surround the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Mercy for all. The Devoted Companions are all around him. Allah ﷻ has exalted the name of His Prophet ﷺ for eternity. Islam has spread throughout Arabian Peninsula. Allah ﷻ granted magnificence to His Prophet ﷺ! The Holy Prophet ﷺ summarizes the golden principles of Islam in his farewell sermon in *Arafat*. He mentions all the fundamentals of Islam. The last sermon of the Holy Prophet ﷺ at *Hajja-tul-Wida'* is the "*Magna Carta of Islam*."

Now let us join Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah at the *Masjid-e-Nabavi*: "*Masjid-e-Nabavi* is well illuminated. People are present to enter the Mosque, to visit the *Green Dome* and to say *Salaam* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. There is a flood of light. The Mosque is full inside. We go to the roof. Cool wind is blowing. There is a mild fragrance. We are seeing the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and the *Green Dome*. The call for *Fajr* prayer was given in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. *Makkah* was awe-inspiring but here is coolness, luminosity and spirituality everywhere. Here people, too, are soft and kind-hearted. They take care of each other. We offered *Fajr* prayer. Imam Sahib's recitation created a delectable atmosphere. After prayers, Tariq Shah said, "Let us go for *Umrah*". The fellows were amazed at this and they asked where to go for *Umrah*. Shah Sahib said, "*Masjd-e-Quba*". He was right. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had said that to offer two *Nawafal* prayers in *Quba* was equal to the reward of *Umrah*."

Now at *Rauda-tul-Rasool*, Dr. Asif Jah is feeling completely different. Differences and divisions among the Muslims are making him gloomy and prayers for forgiveness are on his lips: "After *Asr* prayer, I impulsively started walking towards the sacred *Mausoleum*. I was feeling shameful that I was very late to visit the *Mausoleum*. Why did not I present the gifts of *Durood-o-Salaam* earlier? I am feeling shame and repentance for my sins, misdeeds

and betrayals. I will supplicate to the Holy Prophet ﷺ as Maulana Altaf Hussain Haali says:

اے خاصہ خاصانِ رسل وقتِ دعا ہے
 اُمت پہ تری آ کے عجب وقت پڑا ہے

"O Holy Prophet ﷺ, we are worried. Ummat is at odds. Muslims of the Islamic world are disturbed. The conspiracies of foes are on the increase. There are conflicts among them and the enemies are slaying your followers."

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah has presented very honestly all his feelings on every page of this travelogue and made the journey of Hajj even more attractive for us. It is important to mention that he never forgot his passion of selfless service. He would set up his clinics at different places and distribute medicines among patients generously. In Dr. Asif Jah's words:

"Besides us, many pilgrims from India, Bangladesh and other countries are staying in Rehab al-Roudha hotel. Indian pilgrims also have come to know about our medical services. A whole group of Indian pilgrims arrived at 11:00 p.m. I had turned the light off and was about to go to sleep. Many Indian men and women were there. Five patients came into the room. Zafar Iqbal and Sabir Baig left their beds for patients. Four patients were waiting outside and five women were waiting for their turn in Asma's room. They were suffering from fever, flu, cough, eczema, and body pains. They had gone to Indian dispensary, got medicines but they were not cured. All the pilgrims belonged to Mumbai and Madras. They were suffering from flu, fever and chest infection. I examined all of them one after the other. Patients are not satisfied until the doctor checks them with a stethoscope or feels their pulse. That was why I had brought a stethoscope and B.P. Apparatus with me. I examined all the patients attentively and gave them medicines. Old women from Mumbai returned praying for me. In the evening, another group of pilgrims from Abottabad came to the room. I praised

Allah ﷻ Who blessed me to serve His guests in His House, Harem."

Serving humanity is a unique feature of his journey. Dr Asif Mehmood Jah was not only performing *Hajj* but also serving Pakistan as an ambassador by helping patients from all over the world. I have written a detailed book with the title "*Urdu Adab Main Safarnama*". One of the chapters of this book is about *Hajj* travelogues. In my humble opinion Shorish Kashmiri's "*Shab Jaye Ke Mann Boodum*", Mumtaz Mufti's "*Labbaik*", Dr. Naseer Ahmad's "*Rudaad-e-Safar-e-Hijaz*", Ghulam-us-Saqlain Naqvi's "*Arz-e-Tamimanih*", Sadiq Qureshi's "*Su-e-Haram*" and Abdullah Malik's "*Hadees-e-Dil*" are some of the remarkable modern Urdu travelogues. In these travelogues pilgrim's imagination, travels through history along with their physical movement in geographical locations but their feelings are their unique intrinsic experiences that bring forward different aspects of thought.

Dr. Asif Mehmood Jah has developed his own unique style in the multihued genre of *Hajj* Travelogues. He has involved us in each moment of his journey. His final feelings were:

"Man is Allah's ﷻ wonderful creature. In Ihram, you have a different appearance. During Tawaaf, you have different feelings. While being present at Rauda-tul-Rasool, you are unmindful of everything else. All were weeping while returning from Madinah but their mood changed on reaching Jeddah Airport... All are worried about the luggage. No one thinks of prayers. Everyone has his own problem: lost bags, leaked bottles, dates.... Everyone is worried about luggage and concerned about oneself. Those who find the luggage are satisfied whereas others remain disturbed, anxious and restless. In an hour, everyone found his or her luggage. Indeed man is hasty."

"Now the pilgrims thought of prayer. Some went to buy food others sat comfortably. All the pilgrims had done a lot of shopping. They had purchased dates, Zamzam water and other gifts. Everyone had more luggage than the standard weight limit. How will be the weight adjusted? What will

happen? The Devil's apprentices were all around. We had pelted him and he had turned revengeful. He whispered in pilgrims' ears, overweight luggage was not a problem at all. I will solve this problem. Bribe the officials."

I had seen similar events. After reading this, I felt sad that human beings could not get rid of the greed in their nature even after performing *Hajj*... This travelogue also reflects this negative aspect of human nature.

Dr. Asif Mehmood Jah in his travelogue has used a particular literary style and technique of journal writing although he does not mention dates of events. His narrative is fluent. When he expresses his innermost feelings, he can successfully transfer them to his reader. No doubt, this book is a precious addition to the tradition of *Hajj* Travelogues. This is a unique account of a doctor's journey to Hejaz.

Dr. Anwar Sadeed

Part One
Allah ﷻ Almighty
and
His Humble Servant

Chapter 1

Blessed Are Those...

It was as if, I had been waiting for centuries... At last, the blessed moment of October 17, 2012 arrived. Allah ﷻ knows how many centuries ago, the word "Labbaik" (لبیک) was uttered in response to the call of Ibrahim ؑ, and since then it has enriched the endless waves of air... I did not know when I was going to be called to set foot in the court of our beloved Prophet ﷺ.

جسے چاہا ڈر پہ بلا لیا جسے چاہا اپنا بنا لیا
یہ بڑے کرم کے ہیں فیصلے یہ بڑے نصیب کی بات ہے

He invites whom He wishes, adopts whomever He likes;

These are the decisions of utmost kindness; it is a matter of great fortune.

Asma had been insisting for many years that we should perform *Hajj*. *Hajj* is a compulsory obligation but, somehow, I could not feel that clarity and peace of mind regarding the decision. Whenever the subject of *Hajj* was discussed with friends, they tried to satisfy me by saying that serving the humanity was also a sort of pilgrimage and probably the same argument kept delaying my decision to perform *Hajj* for so many years. Nevertheless, the reality is somewhat different. You cannot plan and arrange for *Hajj*. It happens when there is some Divine intervention. At last, Asma's prayers were heard by Allah ﷻ, and after years of waiting, Divine approval was granted...

Once the supplication was heard, things started falling in place. *Hajj* is, in fact, a sort of migration towards the court of Prophet ﷺ, towards the House of Allah Almighty ﷻ. A few years earlier I had written a book titled, "*Swat, Hijrat Aur Khidmat*" (Swat, Migration & Servitude). I did not know that this book would

become a source of funds needed for our *Hajj*. By grace of Allah ﷻ, 10,000 copies of this book were purchased through a project of Punjab Government and the money required was arranged. Nevertheless, *Hajj* is not related with wealth. Many wealthy people have millions in their accounts and still cannot fulfil this obligation. Many rich people die before they can perform *Hajj*, while many poor men somehow get a chance to do so. It is a matter of providence... it depends on approval from the Highest Authority.

Sheikh Zahid is my comrade in social work. He is always with me when we travel to serve and provide medical facilities. When I told him about my intentions, he readily agreed to go along. Sheikh Sahib considered it a visit just like those to Swat, Hunza or Nowshehra...

A festival has been going on in our home for last two days. People are calling and sending messages from Sharqpur, Sargodha, Rawalpindi and Karachi, rather from all over the country... People I know, and people I have never seen before, are coming and requesting me to convey their prayers and pray for them. They are treating me with love and reverence.

We are being considered consecrated even before we could perform *Hajj*.

Significance of Ihram (Particular dress for the Pilgrims)

The environment at *Hajj* terminal is invigorating for the faith and revitalizing for the soul. Thousands and thousands of "shrouded" pilgrims are visible everywhere. The first step of *Hajj* is wearing the shroud or *Ihram*. As soon as one wears this white dress, one gets rid of all the impurities, wickedness, depravities, prejudices and biases just like a snake shedding its skin. All the differences of colour and caste, wealth and poverty or social stature just vanish. Just like a dead man departing for his last voyage, you get rid of all your worldly distinctions at your home or at *Hajj* terminal and wear a white shroud. At His court, all are equal, all are worthy...

بندہ و صاحب و محتاج و غنی ایک ہوئے
تیرے دربار میں پہنچے تو سبھی ایک ہوئے

*The servant and the master, the poor and
the rich are the same,*

In Your court, all are but equal.

The women clad in black *Abayas*, some of them wearing *Hijabs*, some of them in scarves, have a sacred aura around them. FIA, Customs and PIA officials are trying to serve the pilgrims in the best possible way. Thanks to Head Bursar Tahir, we are also being treated nicely inside the plane... After wearing *Ihram*, one can feel that his mind and soul are unburdened. One has no connection with the material world. Everyone was imagining the House of Allah ﷻ and the *Roudha-tul-Rasool* ﷺ. Faces of all the pilgrims are radiant with joy.

It was time for *Zuhr* prayer. Call for prayer (*Adhan*) was given in the aeroplane. Prayers were offered in an open space inside the plane. Looking at us, other pilgrims also started coming there and during the next hour, all of them offered their *Salat*. For the whole last week, all my friends, colleagues and patients had been requesting me to pray for them as I used to request every friend and acquaintance leaving for *Hajj* to pray for me. Now Allah ﷻ had turned me into one who prays for others.

All the pilgrims became attentive and sat upright as the captain announced that we were about to approach *Miqaat*. Someone said, "We have reached *Miqaat*" and everyone started chanting:

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ، لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ
إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ

"O my Allah! Here I am at Your service. Here I am. There is no partner with You. Here I am. Truly, the praise and the provisions are Yours, and so is the dominion and sovereignty. There is no partner with You."

All the pilgrims started getting their attendance registered symbolically in the court of Almighty Allah ﷻ by chanting *Talbiyah* aloud with excitement, enthusiasm and passion... Whenever the chanting stopped for a moment, one of the pilgrims would say "Labbaik..." and the sound of *Talbiyah* would start echoing in the plane again. To be present there is a great fortune and now I was among the fortunate. It was indeed a blessing of Allah ﷻ ...

Labbaik, Labbaik...

I am here I am here...

Your humble servant, Your poor supplicant, is present in Your court.

He is here with a blank slate and repenting over all his sins, faults, wrongdoings and transgressions ...

May his presence here be approved!

Labbaik

Today while chanting *Labbaik* with a sense of deficiency I am feeling seriously ashamed of my sins, faults and mistakes.

کعبہ کس منہ سے جاؤ گے غالب
شرم تم کو مگر نہیں آتی

Ghalib! How would you dare visiting Ka'bah?

You are but a barefaced (sinful) person

Yet, at the same time, I also feel proud. Centuries have passed when Ibrahim ؑ had chanted these words and, while raising the walls of *Ka'bah* prayed to Allah ﷻ that his voice might reach all over the world, and Allah ﷻ promised that his call would reach everywhere; souls of the people who were to visit *Ka'bah* had said *Labbaik*. Today I am feeling proud of my soul, which said *Labbaik* at that time, and by virtue of Allah's ﷻ mercy now I am present here. Thus my *Labbaik* is actualized and a most lowly and humble beggar, teemed with sins, is present at the most prestigious gate. Streets of Makkah and paths of Madinah are inviting me...

Chants are echoing in the plane. The journey is going on. The travellers are talking about Makkah and Madinah in whispers, thinking about *Baitullah* and *Raudha-tul-Rasool* ﷺ. Those who had already availed themselves of the opportunity to be present there are sharing their experiences and feelings... The Captain announced that we were about to land in Jeddah.

The aeroplane lands at King Abdul Aziz Airport, Jeddah. Worn-out but calm passengers alight with glowing faces. All are worried about their luggage, which they would get after the immigration clearance.

Old Woman from Dera Ghazi Khan and Polio Vaccine

An old woman from Dera Ghazi Khan was worried about one thing only: "Son, I have not been inoculated with polio vaccine, a disease may catch me." I assured her, "Don't worry; nothing will happen to you here." Nevertheless, the old woman kept saying, "I could not get inoculated with polio vaccine, I might get a disease". Another old woman from Multan was saying that a carpenter from her village lived there. We should call him and ask him to come here and take care of us. I said "You have come to *Baitullah*; He Himself will look after you to Whom you are a guest." Nevertheless, she kept saying, "Son! Abbas Raa'n assured me not to worry in Saudi Arabia and that he would come to stay with me and to look after me."

Baby Pilgrim, Stout Saudi Officials, Need for Patience

Ahmad and Amina's two-year-old son, who was wearing *Ihram*, drew everyone's attention in the plane. Everyone was happy to see him. The baby was gleeful in his *Ihram*, unaware of the world and all its charms. He turned towards those touching him and responded with a smile. He was looking just like an angel in *Ihram*. As soon as we entered the airport, two stout Saudi officials ordered us to open our mouths and poured a few drops in our mouths. Later on, it was known from the Arab News that Saudi Government had vaccinated one million pilgrims arriving from Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Nigeria and other countries; and Ministry of Health had announced that they were also going to

vaccinate the pilgrims against influenza and take other precautionary measures. During and after *Hajj*, almost every pilgrim has to face influenza, cough and flu. In *Hajj* season, you should not argue with Saudi officials, and simply do whatever they say. The language problem is complicated and they are too short-tempered.

There were long queues for immigration clearance at the airport. People were waiting for their turn. Old or middle-aged officials were behaving rudely and with an air of indifference but the younger officials were cheerful and dealing the pilgrims enthusiastically. A young man there was particularly remarkable. He was welcoming the pilgrims with a smile. Whenever he noticed a pilgrim getting anxious, he would immediately respond, saying, "Respected pilgrim! Be patient, Allah ﷻ likes patience". He was educating pilgrims while performing his duties. After processing the documents, he would turn towards the pilgrim with admiration and request for prayers. After immigration, you have to identify your luggage yourself, and the ramp was all stacked. Now I realized, why Shah Sahib was asking repeatedly to mark the luggage with two coloured strings so that they could be easily identified. Sheikh Sahib's bag was lost and we got worried. We prayed to Allah ﷻ, it was found immediately. Here, prayers are accepted almost immediately.

From Jeddah to Makkah

We came out of Jeddah Airport. Jeddah is a magnificent city. It is a seaport and a trade center as well. There are multi-storeyed buildings, departmental stores, flashing lights and clean wide roads everywhere. A Sudanese driver got on the bus with hauteur. After confirming that all the passengers were seated, he took the driving seat. He contemplated for a while before deciding to start the bus. We departed for Makkah. It was a journey towards our beloved Holy Prophet's ﷺ home. As we drove nearer to Makkah, my imagination took me to the past. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ birth in Makkah, his meditation in the *Cave of Hira*, Gabriel's arrival, Hazrat Khadijah's consolations, preaching Islam to the infidels of Makkah, Companions' embracing Islam, migration to Madinah...

my imagination went through these events one by one. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ words, which he spoke when he left Makkah, also came to mind:

"O Makkah! I swear to Allah ﷻ that you are my most beloved land on Allah's ﷻ earth and Allah ﷻ, too, loves you the most. If your residents and inhabitants had not driven me out, I would never have left you".

An hour passed, travelling on the clean wide roads of Jeddah. The bus stopped in front of Hajj Ministry Building. Young and efficient employees encircled our bus, as if the pilgrims were about to be abducted. Quite swiftly, they opened the gate and entered into the bus. They offered gift packs, prayer-mats and umbrellas to all the pilgrims. From the next place, we received palm-dates and Zamzam water. We were being honoured before even entering the city of Makkah. After all, we were Allah's ﷻ guests.

The Saudi Government, its officials and their public are generally very pious and generous. They try to provide every facility to the pilgrims and shower gifts at every step. These people truly and genuinely deserve to be the guardians and servants of the holy cities.

We were approaching Tai'f and Makkah. I glanced at the road sign of Tai'f, and the whole incident of Holy Prophet's ﷺ visit to Tai'f and the behaviour of the people of Tai'f came before my eyes. The Holy Prophet ﷺ prayed for them even after they had thrown stones at him. The Vagabonds and hooligans were hurling stones at him... My beloved Holy Prophet ﷺ was bleeding and blood was trickling down to his feet... The injured Holy Prophet ﷺ goes to a grape-yard to take rest for a while. An angel comes and says, "If you so order, I shall turn that mountain upon them" but Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is mercy incarnate for all the worlds; he prays for them so that even if Islam is not their lot, their generations to come, will embrace Islam.

It was 11 p.m. when we arrived at Aziziyyah. Again the luggage was unloaded from the vehicles and again the search

started. Nevertheless, Sheikh Sahib went straight to the bed. He was too tired to search for his luggage. Soon after that, he was fast asleep.

Tariq Shah and Inam were helping the pilgrims. Despite his old age, Tariq Shah tried to help his fellow pilgrims like a young man...

We stay in hotel's room number 303. Besides Seikh Sahib, Muhammad Khalid is also with us. Two more roommates will arrive soon. Asma, sister Najma and other women are staying in the adjacent room number 304. Late in the night, meal was served by Saudi food chain "Al-Bake". Al-Bake is Saudi food chain like KFC and McDonald but its meal tasted more delicious. According to plan, we were going to perform *Umrah* at *Tahajjud*. Now Tariq Shah informed me that after consultation, we decided to go to *Harem* for *Umrah* at 7 a.m.

First Day in Aziziyyah

I cannot sleep well in a new place, probably due to unfamiliarity and the fatigue of travelling. Night passed in shuffling and turning over in the bed, waiting for dawn. I asked time from Muhammad Khalid. At 4 o'clock, I got up for *Tahajjud* prayer. I praised Allah ﷻ Who invited me to His House and blessed me with the opportunity to attend His court. I prayed for Pakistan's prosperity, survival, and relief from all current internal and external threats and sufferings. I prayed for my children's education, their betterment and progress and for all those people who had requested me to pray for them. Allah ﷻ has blessed this land with His special benevolence and prosperity is obvious everywhere.

Looking at the mountains, my thoughts once again flashed back to the past. These are the very mountains where the Holy Prophet ﷺ strolled... Here, in this very place, the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to walk and preach while his Blessed Companions escorted him.

We went to the adjoining Masjid to offer *Fajr* prayer. However, call for *Fajr* prayer was yet not given, still the Masjid was full of people. It was a scene worth looking at. Pilgrims of different nationalities, colours and races along with the natives, were busy in remembrances of Allah ﷻ. Some of them were reciting the *Holy Quran*.

Today's programme is to go out of Aziziyyah to perform *Umrah*. It is our first attendance in Allah's ﷻ House. A humble beggar is going towards His House, a sinner seeking Allah's ﷻ mercy and forgiveness. We set out for *Harem*, reciting *Talbiyah*, chanting *Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik* loudly, my heart is pounding and breath is rapid. Today is the day of attendance at the doorstep of Almighty Allah ﷻ.

Chapter 2

The First Sight

Allah's ﷻ House, *Baitullah*, is right there, before our eyes... It is the House of Allah ﷻ, the most Magnificent and Glorious. It is, no doubt, the most splendid sight! All our life, we offer prayers resolving, "*Our direction is towards Ka'bah*" and today it is exactly before us with all its grandeur and glory. It is my Allah's ﷻ House, where the most Glorious Allah ﷻ makes Himself manifest.

Looking at Allah's ﷻ House I was feeling elated, unable to control my excitement. I forgot all the prayers. Once again, I was feeling proud of myself; surely, my creation was of the best stature. Today all my hopes, desires, longings and wishes came true. I was in a state of oblivion and tears started streaming down. First, I glimpsed *Baitullah* through the niche of *Malik Abdul Aziz Gate*. Then the full view of *Baitullah* was before my eyes.

This was the first true House of Allah ﷻ in a world full of Idols / Temples... All our lives we directed our faces towards it and offered the prayers. Lowered was the gaze, then it ascended with respect and awe, and never lowered again; it was fixed on *Baitullah*, focused on that one place alone. Body winced and hair stiffened; I was in a state of serenity. For a moment, it all seemed a dream and fantasy; I blinked my eyes, rubbed them and then realized that the glorious and *grand Ka'bah* was actually before my eyes.

I was wonder-struck; my eyes were fixed on that building. For a very long time, these eyes had been waiting desiringly to see and cherish Allah's ﷻ House. I am not a competent writer and have no words to describe the grandeur of Allah's ﷻ House. If all the oceans are converted into ink and all the trees on earth are turned into pens and equal to the same are brought in even then His glory

could not be described. I am just a humble devotee and my pen is worthless.

کتے مہر علی کتے تیری ثناء

Your praise is but beyond Mehr Ali's capabilities

I am in an extraordinary state of mind. Every inch of my body is filled with ecstasy. I am full of pride after having seen Allah's ﷻ House and capture it with my eyes. I am in a state of ecstasy, spiritually elevated and oblivious of myself. I am experiencing that my body is dissolving and becoming a part of Allah's ﷻ House. As a poet says:

شکر ہے تیرا خدایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
تو نے اپنے گھر بلایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
اپنا دیوانہ بنایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
گرد کعبے کے پھرایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا

*O Allah ﷻ! I praise You, I was not worthy of this;
You invited me to Your House, I was not worthy of this;
You made me Your Lover, I was not worthy of this;
You let me walk around Ka'bah, I was not worthy of this (honor).*

Seven rounds around the House of Allah ﷻ ... a strange system, a wonderful image. People from all over the world, the black, the white, the yellow, the pale... people with short, thick, golden, black, grey and curly hair... tall and short, strong and weak, young and old, men and women, all are present here. All are beggars at Allah's ﷻ House. For years, they waited to visit this House and today their desires are fulfilled. All are happy, delighted and proud of their good fortune. In the middle of all these people, there is a single grand symbol of unity for all the Muslims, a center of gravity for the Muslims around the world. Asma is continuously weeping and praying, "We never imagined all of this. We are not worthy of being here... at Your House!"

There is a vista spread before our eyes and everything is visible. It is as if Allah ﷻ has descended from heavens. As if He is there in His House, smiling. He is delighted at His obedient

servants who are saying *Labbaik, Labbaik*. He is responding to their prayers. As if, He has manifested in His House. I can clearly imagine Allah's ﷻ presence in His House and gladly looking at all His devotees and pilgrims.

O Allah ﷻ! All these believers and pilgrims are suffering from hardships.

O Allah ﷻ! Help them.

Most of the prayers are for Pakistan, for my children and for all those who had requested us to pray for them. My grandfather who used to say that my grandson would become a civil surgeon, my paternal and maternal grandparents, maternal uncle and above all my respected mother-in-law who always blessed me with prayers, all of them came to mind. I had forgotten everything when I first saw Allah's ﷻ House, but now as soon as I came to my senses, I started praying for all of them. I recalled all those who had requested for prayers but the feeling of a blissful trance persisted until the last round of *Tawaaf*.

O Allah ﷻ! How fortunate I am. I am blessed with the felicity to write these words while sitting in the courtyard of Masjid-e-Haram, right in front of Allah's ﷻ House. Now it is time for Zuhr prayer and I am restless to offer my first prayer in Masjid-e-Haram.

Circumambulation of Ka'bah

The feelings, when you pass through *Baab-ul-Fatah* or any other gate to enter *Harem* and have the first glimpse of beloved Allah's ﷻ House through the windows, are beyond narration. Even the most apathetic heart softens and skepticism wears away...

Slowly we made our way forward and suddenly all was revealed; here, the master and servant became equal. Allah's ﷻ House, the *Ka'bah* was exactly before my eyes... I was dumbfounded. A crowd of millions was praising Allah's ﷻ greatness while seeing *Black Stone*.

The Importance of Seven Rounds of Tawaaf

The digit of 7 is very significant since there are seven earths and seven heavens, seven stages of life from inception to death, seven sub-divisions of the *Holy Quran*, seven recitation styles of the *Holy Quran*, seven continents, seven days of a week and seven times seven pebbles are thrown at *Jamaraat*. Moreover, there are seven rounds of *Tawaaf*. There are seven *Takbirs* in *Eidain* and we are ordered to induce children to offer prayers at the age of seven. It is narrated that in his mortal disease the Holy Prophet ﷺ ordered to bathe him with seven buckets of water. Allah ﷻ continued cyclone on people of *A'ad* for seven nights. Allah ﷻ has symbolized the reward for charity, to be given to those making charities, with seven spikes growing from a single seed and containing one hundred grains each. The reward for charity is seven hundred times or even higher multiples of seven. When Hazrat Yousuf عليه السلام was in prison the king called him in his court and said: "I saw in a dream seven lean cows, eating seven fat cows and seven green spikes of corn and other seven dry". The pot licked by a dog must be washed seven times including at least once with soil. There can be seven partners in the sacrifice of a camel or a cow. Prayers are seven as well; five are obligatory and *Tahajjud* and *Ishraq* are supererogatory prayers. Hazrat Suleman's عليه السلام seal was in the shape of a heptagonal star. Besides this, in the digit of 7 there is wisdom and meaning which only Allah ﷻ knows.

First Round

In the first round, man is struck with amazement when he sees Allah's ﷻ House. People from all over the world cease to exist; they become particles and dissolve in Allah's ﷻ House. Hundreds of thousands of people are there but not there. There exists only Allah's ﷻ House and everything else dissolves and absorbs into *Baitullah*. In this dissolution, everyone loses his identity. Coming to Allah's ﷻ House and Court, everyone loses his individuality...

Second Round

From *Rukn-e-Yamani* we set forward praying for betterment in this world and the world Hereafter. The *Black Stone* (*Hajar-i-*

Aswad) from paradise is so important that every year millions of people wish to kiss it. They struggle for it, fight for it, forget themselves but this opportunity is only for the lucky ones. You have to jeopardize your existence for this; you have to cross the streams of blood, as did an Indian old man. If you get the chance, cling to it. Put your head inside to kiss and caress it because Allah ﷻ has commanded so and the Holy Prophet ﷺ did so. Then do the kissing quickly because people of Hazrat Bilal's ﷺ area try to stick to this *Stone* exclusively and nudge away others approaching near it. I was fully absorbed in Allah's ﷻ House during the first round. I was delighted at my good fortune.

O Allah ﷻ! Your House is splendid and magnificent, beautiful and supreme. Eyes do not rest; they see it now and again. Prayers come from the core of heart: O Allah ﷻ, grant me some place there in Your House to live there. As soon as I did *Istilaam*, I remembered that it was time to pray. I wept beseechingly. This weeping was because of sudden happiness and joy. We had offered our prayers all our life, resolving to be in the direction of this House and today it is in front of us.

I remembered all the friends. Baba Nizam-ud-Din, grandmother, maternal grandfather, uncle, and mother from Lahore, all were before my eyes. I can see Yumna, Huzaifa and Mahnoor; they are here. "Father, you must pray for me so that I would memorize the *Holy Quran*", my saint-like son requested only for this prayer. Yumna had said, "Father, you must make all the prayers for me". Mahnoor said, "Father, pray for everything for me". I am praying for everything, today I am a beggar at Allah's ﷻ House. My hands are empty and it is time for begging. I will keep on begging from Allah ﷻ until my hands are full. I will not go from there; I will continue to walk around *Baitullah* like a lover and a beggar whether my life ends in these rounds. O Allah ﷻ! My Pakistan was established in Your name, basis of "There is no god save Allah ﷻ". Today my country is under threats and facing many internal and external conspiracies. All the enemies intend to weaken this country, which came into being in Your name. O Allah ﷻ! Save this country and destroy her enemies.

I recall Mehboob Shah, too. All friends and fellows in service of humanity are before my eyes. I miss generous Adeel Hashmi, Ghulam Ahmad Bambal, Khawaja Faisal and Sikka Brothers. Eyes are fixed on *Ka'bah*; O Allah ﷻ, do favours.

Third Round

Third round starts. Millions of eyes are fixed at Allah's ﷻ House. There are tears, sobs and sighs... They have arrived here weeping and crying from all the corners of the world. They are lovers intoxicated with the Divine love. They are praying in their own languages and in their own ways. Some are silent, others are crying, everyone has his own style. They are circumambulating Allah's ﷻ House. Sun is hot, breathing is hard but the environment is filled with a strange air of spirituality: no voice of breathing and no smell of sweating. Frenzied looks are fixed at His House, looking at it fondly. It seemed Huzaifa was present there near me. This dervish child said nothing except to pray for him to be a bearer of the *Holy Quran*. Asma said, "Pray for your betterment in this world and Hereafter".

Fourth Round

In case, *Black Stone* is not accessible, you have to raise your hands and give a kiss pointing towards it. How strange the way of infatuated devotion is this. *Istilaam* is obligatory; *Tawaaf* is incomplete without this. Allah ﷻ has bestowed such an honour to this *Stone*.

In the first three rounds, we are ordered to walk fast. Raising your shoulders walk in jogging style so that the enemy is terrorized. Purpose is to show power to the enemy. Lovers are walking around *Ka'bah* like lunatics. They are presenting their hearts and souls with keen devotion. They are proud of their good fortunes. In the fifth *Istilaam*, Asma moved another bead from the rosary. Today I understood the importance of rosary.

Fifth Round

This rectangular and cuboid shaped magnificent and splendid *Baitullah* is the only House in the world around which

millions of lovers and devotees continue revolving the whole year, raising their slogans "Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik". Allah's ﷻ obedient men and women remain thankful for Allah's ﷻ blessing while circumambulating. Circumambulating around *Ka'bah-tul-Allah* ﷻ has been going since it was built and every moment, save prayer-time, it is being circumambulated and this will continue forever. When it stopped, that will be the *Doomsday*. Eyes are static and fixed at the same point in the same direction. They are not diverting. Why do they should divert? The magnificent and splendid House of the magnificent Allah ﷻ is before them. It is the same House we face all our lives while offering prayers.

It was Holy Prophet's ﷺ desire that *Ka'bah* should be the *Qiblah*. He used to look towards heavens during his prayers. Allah ﷻ knew what was in Holy Prophet's ﷺ heart so the command to change *Qiblah* was revealed during the prayer. By Allah's ﷻ command the Holy Prophet ﷺ along with his Companions turned towards this House. Since then until now, millions of people offer their prayers facing this House. Fifth round is going to end. Asma moved another bead of rosary and reminded me of something. Father, mother, brothers and sisters are all present with me in my imagination. Shahnaz, Nighat, Nasira, Munir Ahmad, Dr. Naveed Anwar, Masood-ur-Rasool, Nasir Mahmood, Farrukh, Faheem, Shahroz Sultan and families of all of them are in my prayers. Yumna, Huzaifa and Mahnoor were, too. Shah Sahib, Ejaz Sikka, Ghulam Ahmad Bambal, Adeel Hashmi, Dr. Tahir, Ashfaq, Rafique, Taufique, Safdar Bhatti, Shafqat, Hanif Abid and Amjad, all were there. I remembered Aftab Sahib, too. Sobia, weeping and requesting for prayers and all my friends are with me in this round. My Pakistan is also with me in this *Tawaaf*. I am praying for all:

"O Allah ﷻ! Take away difficulties from all, solve the problems of all and grant prosperity to all of them".

Fellows in Service to the humanity are escorting me. Millions of men and women from Burma, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Korea, Japan, Turkey, England, America, Britain, Bosnia, Somalia, Thailand, Sudan, Yemen, Philippine, Malaysia, Iran, Palestine,

Lebanon, Mauritania, Afghanistan, Kirgizstan, Myanmar, India, Finland, Austria, Australia, Hungary, Greece, Turkmenistan etc. are present here. There is no area of the world, from where people have not arrived. All are present in His House and circumambulating. None of the events or religious festivals in the world can be compared with *Tawaaf* of *Ka'bah*. Prays come from the core of heart: "O Allah ﷻ! Unite the Muslims in a unit as they are now in this gathering... Asma spoke, "Be yourself and get rid of the thoughts and see Allah's ﷻ House". I am already looking there. I want to capture these moments in my eyes. I wish that these moments never pass and the views of *Ka'bah* always remain there in front of my eyes. I am proud of my good fortune. Asma moved another bead of the rosary.

Sixth Round

Now starts the sixth round. Heat of the sun is less intense now but devotees have no concern with heat, these millions of moths are ready to die around the candle of *Ka'bah*. They are restless to become a part of it. There are millions of people, weather is hot and humid and everyone is sweating but there are echoes of prayers in the air. Normally, Asma feels the odour of sweat even from a distance but today she says that spirituality is prevailing everywhere. It smells like fragrance and scent in the air. There is serenity and light on the faces, no signs of tedium and boredom. Every face is bright and delighted with the light of His presence. It is the result of invitation. Another bead of rosary moved.

Seventh Round

Seventh round started. Lips trembled with prayers and wailings: I seek Your mercy, Your blessings. O Almighty, I do all prayers." Allah's ﷻ House has such an attraction that man can continue circumambulating it all his life. O Allah ﷻ, make me a beggar of this House, never push me away and invite me every time. Asma reminded me that seventh round is complete. Now we have to offer two Raka't of prayer at *Maqam-e-Ibrahim*.

What is *Hajj*? It is a reply to Khalil-ul-Allah's ﷻ call. Millions of devotees are ready to say *Labbaik* to Khalil-ul-Allah's ﷻ call and

to pay a visit there. All the prayers and requests were at my lips. O Allah ﷻ, bless my Yumna, Huzaifa and Mahnoor with higher education and success; bless my parents a long life, bless safety to Pakistan and destroy her enemies.

Prayer in Harem

Namaz (Salat) is the fundamental element of Islam. To offer prayers five times a day with congregation is obligatory and compulsory for every mature and adult Muslim. Prayer has been made rather difficult and complicated in Pakistan that is why *Namazi's* (worshippers) are sparse. However, here, as soon as the prayer call is given shops are closed. Everyone stops worldly business and runs towards the Masjid. A short time after the prayer call congregational prayer is offered. In a short time, the Masjids are full of *Namazi's*. People begin to assemble even before the prayer call.

Spirituality drizzles everywhere. People are reciting the *Holy Quran* or busy in supererogatory prayers. We have completed seven rounds around Allah's ﷻ House. *Zuhr* prayer is just about to start. Today, fortunes are good. In the spacious prayer-yard of *Harem*, people going for *Tawaaf* and returning from *Tawaaf* are arranging rows for prayer. Men, women and children are waiting for prayer. It is an out of the ordinary environment. Luminosity is everywhere. As poet says:

شکر ہے تیرا خدایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
تو نے اپنے گھر بلایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا

O Allah ﷻ, I praise You, I was not worthy of this,
You invited me to Your House, I was not worthy of this.

When prayer call comes from the corners of *Harem*, silence prevails at once. Allah ﷻ is great, very great. Soon after the prayer call ended, ranks for prayers were arranged. After *Takbeer* millions of devotees gathered to bow their heads before Allah ﷻ. O Allah ﷻ, what a scene the countless Believers have gathered! Here blessings shower every moment. If you want to see the actual scene and interpretation of "light upon light", then you

should come here. One prayer offered in *Harem* is equal in reward to one hundred thousand prayers. Moreover, the spiritual growth, tranquility, purity of hearts and comfort experienced here is unmatched. The Imam-e-Ka'bah asked the people to stand for a funeral prayer after the prayer. Who is the deceased and from where he has come? He is so lucky that he died in Allah's ﷻ House. Imam-e-Ka'bah is leading the funeral and millions of pilgrims are following him.

Zamzam, the Healing Water

Not all the stages of *Umrah* are complete yet. *Zamzam* water is to be drunk, glass after glass until satiation. It is to be poured on the body; every inch of body will be touched with it. It is water of blessing, healing water, a gift from Mother Hajira to Ummah until the eternity. Even the *Hajj* is for Mother Hajira. It is the result of her sacrifices. Mother Hajira is the benefactor of *Ummat-e-Muhammadiyah* ﷺ. The well of *Zamzam* originated after Hazrat Ismail (عليه السلام) rubbed his heels on ground and angels struck the wings there. Centuries passed, this spring of love, sacrifice, passion, compassion and struggle is still flowing. Water of *Zamzam* is wonderful. Whatever is the purpose of drinking it, it is readily fulfilled. As the poet says:

مدتوں کی پیاس کو سیراب تو نے کر دیا
جام زمزم کا پلایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا

*You quenched my thirst of centuries;
I drank a bowl of Zamzam, I was not worthy of this.*

I had heard many stories about *Zamzam*, being healing water. Recently, an employee from Philippine in Sri Lanka drank *Zamzam* water continuously for fifteen days. She was suffering from epilepsy. She was cured and she embraced Islam. Shah Faisal told that his eight-year-old son Shu'aib Shah's eye was swollen. Doctors had no treatment for this. They went to *Umrah* and washed the child's eye with *Zamzam* water repeatedly and it was cured. Something like that happened with me, too. There was a wound on tongue for two months. It became worse during *Hajj*. I tried every

kind of antibiotic and ointments but the wound did not heal rather it spread more. While drinking *Zamzam* in *Harem* I prayed to Allah ﷻ that it be cured only and only by *Zamzam* water; no other medicines or ointments will be used. Allah ﷻ is to be praised that ulcer on my tongue was cured by drinking *Zamzam* water. The scientists grouped, conducted analysis, tried to find out defects but all in vain. The well of *Zamzam* has been covered since long. The Saudi government and Saud Family is to be appreciated that they installed machines and pumps and fixed water-tanks at different locations in *Harem* therefore cool and fresh water is available all the time. This spring will never dry, neither its water will diminish. What a variety of blessings in Allah's ﷻ House. He is to be praised. I praise Allah ﷻ that He blessed and invited me to His House. Asma had been saying for two years to go for *Hajj*. I would say, "Asma, surely we will go when we will be invited". At last invited we were, and arrived in His Court as beggars and supplicants. Come here and see the direct showering of Allah's ﷻ blessings. If Allah's ﷻ *Noor* (Light of blessing) is showered anywhere, it is showered here. If you want to view, the unity and solidarity of the Muslims then come here. Lo! Here is *Zamzam* water. Drink it as much as you want and cheer yourself up. What a strange intoxication! Drink more and more. Allah ﷻ has sprouted this strange well, the beneficence of which will continue forever.

Mother Hajira's Sa'ee

Now what should we do?

Dear Asma! *Sa'ee* remains yet.

From where to start it? We are separated from Tariq Shah and Sheikh Sahib. It is a *Sa'ee* before *Sa'ee*. The area of *Harem* covers many kilometers. Keep walking and you will not reach the last point. From what place do we start *Sa'ee*? Looks are turning to *Ka'bah* repeatedly. Prayer comes from heart: "O Allah ﷻ! You showed mercy and blessed us by inviting us here. We are not good enough." We are full of sins and smeared with impurities but Allah ﷻ invited us to His House and made us pure and clean. What is *Sa'ee*? Allah ﷻ says in the *Holy Quran*, "*Safaa* and *Marwah*

are among the signs of Allah (ﷻ)". All praise is to Allah ﷻ who honoured Hajira like this. Hajira's sacrifice was to surrender to Allah's ﷻ command. When Khalil-ul-Allah (ﷺ) was about to go, leaving Mother Hajira and Ismail (ﷺ) behind in the wilderness then Hajira asked the reason for doing this. Finally, Mother asks, "Has Allah (ﷻ) ordered you to do so?" and Khalil-ul-Allah (ﷺ) replied "Yes". At this Mother says that Allah ﷻ will be our guardian. Mother Hajira was obedient and had firm belief in Allah ﷻ. Nothing would be there if Hajira were not there. Ismail (ﷺ) Islam, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and everything else is because of her. We had to struggle to find out *Safaa Hill*. Asking the police officers and fellow citizens, we reached there. Tariq Shah also came into contact. With the help of others, we reached the starting point of Hajira's *Sa'ee, Safaa*.

My imagination takes me back into the past. Mother Hajira is standing before my eyes, nobody else is there. Above is the scorching sun, below is the howling wilderness and barren land. She is alone with her baby only a small quantity of dates and some water in a goatskin. Khalil-ul-Allah (ﷺ) is departing away. What will be her means of subsistence? How will she care for the child?

"Go, my Allah ﷻ is with me, He will protect me and my child." Mother did not worry at all. Mother trusted in Allah ﷻ and those who trust in Allah ﷻ do not worry. Hazrat Ibrahim (ﷺ) left Mother Hajira and Hazrat Ismail (ﷺ) in this desolate valley and prayed to Allah ﷻ, standing behind the mountain:

"And when Ibrahim (ﷺ) said: Lord! Make this city secure. Our Lord! Lo! I have settled some of my posterity in an uncultivable valley near unto Your Holy House, our Lord! That they may establish proper worship; so incline some hearts of men that they may yearn toward them, and provide them with fruits in order that they may be thankful."

Allah ﷻ approved Hazrat Ibrahim's (ﷺ) prayers. Today Makkah is secure and despite of being uncultivable valley all kinds of fruits and grains are so abundant there that man is struck with

wonder and awe. Every year five to six million people arrive there on *Hajj*, there is no dearth of edibles, and fruit supply is never scarce.

The baby began crying. Mother worried, baby needs water and water is nowhere; only the jungle, insects and snakes, hot sand of desert and bare rocks are all around. In these circumstances, the Mother goes here and there. Mother raises her head towards *Safaa* hill. She lays the baby on the ground and intends to go there. Mother gets worried doing this, feared leaving the baby unattended, it is natural to humans. After all, she was a mother and mothers are softhearted; they are always concerned about their children's well being. Mother laid down Ismail ﷺ and ran towards *Marwah*. Mother is running with her full vigour towards *Marwah*, taking no care of pointed stones and scorching sun. Her feet are being bruised with pebbles and sand. She is in search of water but finds it nowhere. When she reached *Safaa* sixth time, she saw a strange scene. While the mother was running, looking for water, Ismail ﷺ was restless, too. He was strained and turning over. The baby struck and rubbed the ground with his heels. Allah ﷻ loved Hajira's struggles. Millions of angels were watching the scene from heavens. They were appraising mother's struggle. Mother is running for the seventh time. She is drenched in sweat; she is out of breath and disturbed. Water is not found; how will the life go on? Nevertheless, Allah ﷻ has liked Mother's struggles. Allah ﷻ liked her way of struggle and approved it. Angels have received *Divine* command. An angel arrived at *Safaa* and *Marwah*. Jibrail ﷺ touched his wing at the place where Ismail ﷺ has rubbed his heels.

Tired, drenched in sweat, panting and gasping mother Hajira returned to *Safaa* and beheld an amazing scene. There is water all around Ismail ﷺ. Water is streaming from everywhere. Mother ran again. Baby might be drowned. She is taking water in her palm and feeding it to the baby. Water is gushing forth; it is not stopping. She tried to build embankment of stones gathering from here and there. Desperately, mother gave a loud cry: *Zam Zam*, "Stop! Stop!" Water obeyed Mother Hajira's order and stopped. It stopped to spread around but it continues to gush forth until this

day. This spring of water of life was originated by mother's struggles and rubbing of Ismail's ﷺ heels. It has quenched the thirst of billions of people for centuries and many more billions it will serve until the *Doomsday*.

Mother Hajira is visible to me during the *Sa'ee*; she is there with me. Asma said, "Let us start the *Sa'ee*". The *Safaa* hill was before the eyes.

Seven rounds of *Tawaaf*!

Seven rounds of *Sa'ee*!

The digit of 7 is strange and lucky. Allah ﷻ mentioned Mother Hajira's *Sa'ee* in the *Holy Quran* and declared her *Sa'ee* among His grand symbols. Whoever does not do *Sa'ee* imitating Hajira, his/her *Hajj* and *Umrah* will not be completed. It will not be accepted. What a glory Mother Hajira has! There are seven rounds of *Tawaaf* and seven rounds of *Sa'ee* between *Safaa* and *Marwah*. Lo! *Sa'ee* starts. Some traces of pointed and rocky hill of *Safaa* can be seen. A fabulous building has been built on the hilly path of *Sa'ee*. Green light indicates the path where disturbed, restless and helpless Hajira had run. All the men are ordered to run here as did Mother Hajira. It is Saudi's marvel that they have made everything easy and excellent for the sake of pilgrims' comfort. Doing *Sa'ee* over stones and pointed rocks and doing *Sa'ee* in the air-conditioned hall are quite different.

In every round, I imagined Mother Hajira's description. Asma, look there, Allah's ﷻ House is visible. Fix your gaze there. *Ka'bah* remained before our eyes during the *Sa'ee*, too. My looks never distracted, never tired. Seven rounds of *Sa'ee* completed. Some marble pieces from *Marwah* are fixed into the floor where thousands of visitors are offering supererogatory prayers. I tried in every round but could not find a place. The descendants of Mother Hajira occupied the whole place. *Sa'ee* completed. *Umrah* was almost complete. Traiq Shah is accompanying us and guiding us at every step.

Sister Najma Was Lost

In the gathering of millions, somebody going astray; being separated from fellows and caravan is not something extraordinary. It happens. Travelers particularly women are often separated. For this reason, Tariq Shah had advised me never to be separated from Asma. Allah ﷻ has attached her with me forever so there is no question of separation. Allah ﷻ has coupled me with a pious soul and I am grateful to Allah ﷻ for this blessing.

...Sheikh Zahid is a saint-like man, always lost in his own thoughts. Sister Najma, though older than Zahid, always takes care of him. She was teaching some prayers to Zahid when there was a push of crowd. Sister was separated and was out of sight. We looked here and there, searched a lot but of no avail. What should be done? First time Sheikh Sahib was concerned. Asma is repeating, "What will happen now? How will she perform *Umrah*? Her family has sent her with me. Why did I not take care of her?" All fellow hajis are gone with Tariq Shah to look for sister Najma. Many women wearing white veils were taken for sister Najma but when we approached them, they were other women. It was a real worry. Zahid was pale with fear. Then we decided to perform *Umrah* first and then to search for sister Najma.

Sheikh Zahid Was Lost, Too

Sheikh Sahib and Allah Diya were accompanying us in the first four rounds of *Sa'ee*. In the fifth round, they were out of sight. What should be done now? We were already worrying about sister Najma. We decided to stay there. Sheikh Sahib is assiduous; he might have stopped somewhere. Allah Diya, whose wife is also lost, is with him. Nevertheless, that pious woman herself did it. She asked Tariq Shah not to talk to her, not to intervene between her and Allah ﷻ. She said, "Do not guide me; I know what to do and where to go. He, who has invited me to His House, will Himself guide me. I will ask Him where I felt any problem." He was satisfied that she was absorbed in her own, thoughts. Why to worry if she is lost? She will be found. She will appear from here and will start arguing with me. The more time is spent in Allah's ﷻ House,

the better. I am satisfied; I will perform *Umrah* with much ease without her.

Return to Aziziyyah

The whole set of *Umrah* is almost complete but head-shave is to be done yet. Professional and novice barbers roam with their hair-cutting tools around *Harem*. There are so many hair-saloons around *Harem* but Tariq Shah said that a bus is arriving and a fellow has a hair-cutting machine therefore we all will be head-shaved. We reached back. *Asr* prayer's time was approaching. We hurriedly ate our meals and went to Masjid. Namazis are arriving even before *Azan*. Men offer prayer in the lower-floor and women in the upper-floor. In Masjid, women offer prayer with congregation. The Congregational prayer has its own joy. Turkishs, Lebanese and Iranians mostly occupy the nearby hotels, offices and companies. The Turks is very strange nation. In Ottoman dynasty, the service of *Haramain Sharifain* was assigned to Turkish caliphs. They had performed their duties well but the Saud family really did excellent. They have provided so many facilities to pilgrims and made these sacred places very attractive, charming and comfortable.

Housekeeping in Harem

There are thousands of employees in *Harem* for housekeeping, protection, emergency and to control the crowd. All of them perform their duties very well. They have their own way of cleaning the *Harem*. You are doing *Sa'ee*, resting after offering prayer or drinking *Zamzam* water and suddenly there is a noise to be attentive and careful. A specific area is covered. They start cleaning with machines and wipers. First, they sprinkle liquid on the floor then mop the floor passionately with big wipers from one side to the other. After mopping, they dry the floor with machines. In a short time, the floor is crystal clear, not a single stain there. If anything of yours is lying there at that cleaning area, it will be thrown into the dustbin. The chores of cleaning *Harem*, supplying *Zamzam* water, filling water-tanks and cleaning the toilets are assigned to Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indian, Malaysian and

Indonesian Muslims whereas supervisory staff is hired from Saudi Arabia or other Arab countries. Bin Laden Company is responsible for the housekeeping, safety and administration of *Harem* and *Masjid-e-Nabawi*. Here, all the colours, manners and styles are wonderful. Spiritual light (Noor) is enveloping all surroundings. The voices of *Allah-o-Akbar*, *Subhan-Allah*, *Istighfaar* and *La Ilaha Illa-Allah* can be heard at every moment.

Struggle for Head-shave

Umrah is complete but we cannot take off *Ihram* until we shave our heads. Our fellow's machine was out of order. He said, "The machine may be working but I am not experienced at all." I said to Shah Sahib to go out and look for a barber's shop. A novice with his machine may give us a bad head-shave or may wound our heads. When we asked around, we were told that hairdresser's shop was at the next crossroad. We reached there in half-an-hour. Time for *Maghrib* prayer was approaching. At last, we reached the shop that was owned by two Turkish brothers. Five or six of our fellows got their heads shaved off; *Umrah* was complete and all the essentials were fulfilled. Now there were no restrictions of *Ihram*. It was time for *Maghrib* prayer; we offered prayer in the nearby *Masjid*.

Ihram and Kafan

What is *Ihram*? It is a *kafan*. *Ihram* is very similar to *kafan*. There are two shrouds for *kafan*. We wash and bathe the corpse and wrap it in the shrouds of *kafan* so that when it is presented before Allah ﷻ, it might be tidy and washed.

Ihram is a *kafan*, too. Wash and clean your body, rub away all the impurities and stains. Wear the shrouds on your clean and tidy body. All these conditions are imposed so that a man may be ready to attend Allah's ﷻ court in his original, cleaned and purified form... When the attendance is to be in Allah's ﷻ court there is no need for artificiality.

I took a bath, took off the *Ihram* shrouds and put on my usual clothes. I thanked Allah ﷻ Who blessed me to attend His court. Therefore, we became "Semi-Haji" though people already have started calling us *Haji*. Every time people call us "ya *Haji*". So

to speak as you enter into *Harem* rather in Makkah, you become a *Haji* and wherever you go people call you *Haji*.

Sister Najma was found

Asma was worried. Where is sister Najma? How will she be found? What will I say to her family? She suffers from high blood pressure. What will she do if she is ill? Not to speak of sister Najma, Zahid Sheikh was also missing. Tariq Shah came and told us that sister Najma had made a phone call, and informed that she was well, inside the *Harem* and she had performed *Umrah*. Asma was delighted to hear this good news.

After a while, Sheikh Sahib also made a phone call and informed us that he was safe and enjoying the blessings in *Harem* with Allah Diya. Tariq Shah was right. People are separated and united. We happily set towards *Harem* in a taxi. At night, *Harem* is really a luminous spot. You have to come here to see the luminous wonders. Since morning, millions have been added to the crowd. When taxi reached near *Harem*, we heard prayer call. Tariq Shah told us to walk fast so that we might participate in prayer. Millions of people offered prayer in the leadership of Imam-e-Ka'bah. What a scene of spirituality. What a beautiful and fascinating scene: millions of people, different colours, different cloths, different languages and different voices. Nevertheless, all of them are lovers and devotees, believers of Allah ﷻ and followers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, revolving around *Ka'bah*. They have arrived from thousands of miles. They are not looking tired; everyone is calm and contented. Satisfaction, peace and comfort prevail everywhere.

Hundreds of fans are working and dispensing cool wind. Modern cooling system is wonderful. After offering the prayer, we were separated again. Tariq Shah was not there. Contact was made near Safwan Hotel. We met Sheikh Sahib near *Marwah*. He was peaceful and relaxed. He did *Umrah* very easily and participated in all the prayers offered in *Harem*. He said that he had eaten nothing since morning except drinking *Zamzam* water. *Zamzam* water is so delicious, nutritious and healing that for whatever purpose you drink it, it is readily fulfilled. Once I did not had my supper; I had

to observe supererogatory fast and Sahri was not arranged. I drank four or five glasses of *Zamzam* water. I was satiated and until Aftari, I did not even realize that I had eaten nothing in Sahri. We informed him about sister Najma and he felt relieved.

Asma caught sight of Najma from a distance and warmly hugged her. Najma said 'I did *Tawaaf* from very close. *Baitullah* was before me. All of you warned me that I would not be able to walk but all was done without any pain and difficulty. I enjoyed *Umrah*, *Sa'ee* and drank *Zamzam* water. After the prayers, a Pakistani who had arrived there from Holland helped me to make contact. We are Allah's ﷻ guests and He protects us". Allah Diya's wife has not been found but he is not worried at all. She will come; I do not care. We returned by bus and soon were asleep. We had not slept for the last two days therefore we enjoyed a sound sleep.

Chapter 3

Medical Service and Treatment in Saudi Arabia

While preparing for *Hajj* I had decided to take as much medicines with me as was possible. Medical service and treatment is my way of life. Allah ﷻ has blessed me with the opportunity to visit different villages in different areas, treat, and serve people at the time of natural calamities. My intention was to continue this service and treatment in the Holy Land. Soon after arriving, I told all the fellow hajis that whoever needed medicines, could have it after going through check-up. As soon as they heard the news, patients started coming. Check-ups are going on and medicines are being distributed. It gives a great pleasure to serve Allah's ﷻ guests. Some fellow is suffering from stomachache and the other has some allergy. Someone's legs are stiffened; the other one is suffering from fever. I checked-up all of them and gave them medicines. Pilgrims were astounded that all the medicines were available.

Friday in Harem

It is a matter of fortune and luck that we are blessed with attendance at this sacred place. We are sitting inside *Harem*. Millions of pilgrims are seated in rows since the morning to offer *Friday* prayer. To my right is a Nigerian and a Turk is to the left. There is a Kyrgyz in front of me and behind me is a Britisher. People from Iran, Daghistan, Somalia, Thailand, Finland, Alaska, Japan, in short, people of all countries and races are gathered here. Colours and cloths are different but the creed is same.

They all have one chant at their lips, *Labbaik*, "O Allah ﷻ, I am here". Allah's ﷻ House is before them; all are facing the same *Ka'bah* but not from just one side. The Muslims have gathered in a circle around *Ka'bah*. Wherever you go, *Ka'bah* is in front of you.

The *Holy Quran* is being recited... Everyone is proud of his luck. O Allah ﷻ, Glorious is Your House. You are Omnipresent. The voices of "Allah is great" are echoing and sinners are imploring forgiveness. Everyone yearns for a place in front of *Ka'bah* for his prayers. It is a gathering of millions and radiance prevails.

Tariq Shah awakened me early in the morning to go to Masjid. We arrived there at 5 a.m. Masjid was full even before the prayer call. We found a place with much difficulty and offered our prayers. Here all the Masjids are full. Offering prayers here gives a greater satisfaction. The Arab Imams recite the *Holy Quran* in such a way that one feels as if the Holy Verses are revealing at ones heart.

Breakfast is served; hurry up, otherwise we will be late and will find no place. Lovers of Allah ﷻ are present there since *Tahajjud*; they are not leaving. They do not want to part from *Harem* even for a moment. First bus has gone. We will not wait for the next otherwise one more hour will pass. We hired a taxi. It was the same Bangladeshi driver that we had found yester-night. He took us to *Harem* in just ten minutes. There is a strange scene inside. Blessings are showering over *Harem*. Lovers of *Ka'bah* are rushing from all over the world. A splendid gathering of humans can be seen as far as one can see. Content faces and awaiting looks long for seeing *Ka'bah* as soon as possible. We entered the *Harem* and found a place. Asma and Najma also found a place in women's row. Melodious recitations of the *Holy Quran* and repentant voices in the form of sobs and sighs are heard repeatedly. All are equal at His court. All the believers are gathered. Allah ﷻ is great. Allah ﷻ is great. He is the Greatest. Allah is Omnipresent. O Allah ﷻ, You are praised everywhere! All Your lovers, men and women who bow before You are present in Your House. All are happy and delighted in Your House.

Two Old Men from Bahrain and Tumult

Two old men from Bahrain are stretched there. I massaged one old man's head. He became happy and kissed my hand. The second old man gestured to give him a head-massage, too. I served him, too. There is a Nigerian brother and an Indian pilgrim from

Bombay. A Pakistani woman is cleaning the cabinets for the *Holy Quran* with the hem of her cloth. Although there is no dust but she is doing this for the sake of eternal reward.

Thousands of pious daughters, wives, mothers, sisters, young boys and girls are there but there is no carnal attraction. Sexual excitement is out of question. O Allah ﷻ, what is this miracle? What a magical appeal in Your House. All the carnal desires are gone in Your House. Prayer time is approaching. Everyone is trying to do more and more virtuous deeds. As the prayer time approaches, crying and weeping for forgiveness gets intense. Now it is prayer time; call for *Friday prayer* is over. Believers of Allah ﷻ have been waiting for this prayer for a long time. Silence prevails. Fatigued faces are refreshed. Thousands of foreheads are ready for prostration in His court.

The second prayer call echoed in *Harem*. The echoes of prayer call in *Harem* produce a sense of pleasure. Sermon started. Imam-e-Ka'bah hymned Allah's ﷻ praises and then praised benedictions for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He preached the importance of *Hajj*, greeted the pilgrims and paid tribute to *Khadim-ul-Harmain Sharifain*. He implored for Allah's ﷻ blessings and prayed for the betterment of the Muslims, unity of Islamic world and rise of Islam. While Imam prayed, the voices of "Āmeen" echoed. Leading the millions, he made the prayer short: *Surah Al-Kausar* in the first *Raka't* and *Surah Al-Nasr* in the second. The true spirit and essence of Islam is actually seen in *Ka'bah* and *Masjid-e-Nabavi*.

Earthquake of 8th October 2005, Mansehra and Muhammad Sadiq

After the prayer, everyone was busy in prayers. Muhammad Sadiq from Mansehra also joined the lamentation. How lucky we are. We have been offering our prayers for years saying "Our faces are towards *Ka'bah*" and today it is actually in front of us. It stands before us with its entire splendour. Lo! Behold it. Eyes neither divert from it nor are they tired.

All members of the family and friends are coming to my memory. I am praying for all of them. Yumna, Huzaifa and

Mahnoor are with me. Dr. Naveed joins me, too. This holy man remains active for the betterment of his family and serving his parents. The pious and good-natured brother Munir Ahmad is also here. Dr. Awais, my parents, Asma's brothers Farrukh, Faheem and their children are all here. Tears are rolling down. I am feeling happy at my good fortune. Above all, these lines full of love and praise of Allah ﷻ are being written in *Harem*. As the poet says:

شکر ہے تیرا خدایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
تو نے اپنے گھر بلایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا

*O Allah ﷻ, I praise You, I was not worthy of this;
You invited me to Your House, I was not worthy of this.*

We visited the earthquake-affected areas of Mansehra and Balakot during the year 2005 and provided relief to thousand of earthquake affectees. Muhammad Sadiq said that I had wiped their tears and helped them in their sufferings. Allah ﷻ has invited me to His House as a reward for this service. Moments earlier, I was talking to Sheikh Zahid that together we have been serving the victims since 2005 and today Allah ﷻ has invited us to His House. Humanitarian service really connects one to Allah ﷻ. Muhammad Sadiq said, "When you go to the Prophet's ﷺ city, take off your shoes and offer my salutations. The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to walk there. I am going before you and I will offer your salutations".

Allah's ﷻ House stands before us with its entire splendor and magnificence, beauty and greatness. Eyes are watching and preserving every moment and every scene. The wheel of time rotated in reverse and took me back to the past. It is Khalil-ul-Allah's ﷺ time. Ismail ﷺ is fetching mud and kneading clay. He stands there beside the *Black Stone*, beneath *Meezab-e-Rahmat*. They are constructing Allah's ﷻ House with clay-bricks and mud. They are doing this according to Allah's ﷻ command. Concerns come to Khalil-ul-Allah's ﷺ mind. Who will come to worship in Allah's ﷻ House in this barren land, desolate wilderness and pointed rocks? What sort of people will be they? How Allah's ﷻ name will be spoken at this distant place? Allah ﷻ directly talked to His Khalil ﷺ and said that you have finished your work. Now give a call. Invite

people to My House. I will spread your call worldwide. We are here because we answered Khalil-ul-Allah's ﷺ call.

Where are Asma and Najma?

It is very important to remain together with your family or team members during the performance of *Hajj*. Try not to go far away from one another. In such a huge gathering, it is quite possible to be separated or make a mistake. A slight diversion of your eyes and the man is out of sight. The same happened to us. We were so absorbed in Allah's ﷻ House that we forgot our whereabouts and ourselves. Only Allah's ﷻ House was there and nothing else. Our bodies were dissolved into this House. Officials came and ordered to clear the way: "*Haji!* Leave this place; it is a path; others are being disturbed." Their orders are to be obeyed immediately otherwise they get angry instantly. I forgot the way and next six hours were spent moving from one gate to the other but no trace of women. Where have they gone? I was roaming about without any sense of exact location. Whenever looks befell on *Ka'bah*, I stopped there. At last, they came into contact about *Isha* prayer. They were on the same spot where they were left.

During *Hajj*, you have to show patience and tolerance. If you keep patience and show tolerance, Allah ﷻ will be with you and *Hajj* will be easy. It was time for *Asr* prayer and after that a funeral prayer. Here a funeral prayer after every prayer is very common. People feel proud to bring their dead ones there especially during the *Hajj* days. Surely, it is a matter of good fortune for a Muslim that his funeral prayer is offered in *Harem*, where Imam-e-Ka'bah leads the prayer and millions of people join the prayer. I offered *Asr* and *Maghrib* prayers in *Harem*. About the time for *Isha* prayer, I contacted Asma and they were still there. It was my mistake. A slight diversion from Abdul Aziz gate resulted in the ordeal and suffering of the whole day. Nevertheless, such incidents happen quite frequently there. One should be mentally prepared for such experiences during *Hajj*. Cell phones become useless in such situations.

After *Isha* prayer, eyes were on *Ka'bah*. O Allah ﷻ, Your House is very beautiful and sacred. Above *Baitullah*, *Bait-e-Ma'moor* is visible to me. Millions of angels are circumambulating it. Each angel gets only one opportunity to do *Tawaaf* around it. Allah ﷻ has made the man His viceroy. Allah ﷻ had told angels that He is sending man to the world because only He has the knowledge of the Hidden. Allah ﷻ knew what the angels did not. For this reason, millions of believing lovers remain busy doing *Tawaaf* all the time and Allah ﷻ expresses His pride in front of angels.

Khilafat-e-Uthmaniyyia and Khadim-ul-Harmain Sharifain

Harem is in front of me. It has not dawned yet. These are last hours of night but streets of Makkah are lighted. The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to go out at this time. I looked here and there. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ presence seemed to be visible to me on the mountains. We thought that at *Tahajjad*, there would be fewer people and we would have the chance of doing *Tawaaf*. We alighted from the vehicle and quickly ran towards *Harem* so that we may find a place inside. We wished to be present before Allah ﷻ early in the morning but many devotees and lovers had already arrived there. The Muslims were there since night. Asma spread her prayer-mat outside the *Harem*. We got the opportunity to offer *Tahhajad* prayer in the area of *Harem*.

I salute the efforts of Khadim-ul-Harmain Sharifain; they have made all the efforts to beautify and adorn the *Harem* and to provide every facility to the pilgrims. They spend abundantly so that Allah's ﷻ House remains beautiful and Allah's ﷻ guests face no difficulty during *Hajj* and *Umrah*. The Turks also extended the *Harem* and made it beautiful. They were crazy about the possible extension of *Harem*. The prayer call in *Harem* recalls me of Hazrat Bilal رضي الله عنه Lo! It is time for *Fajr* prayer. All people are attentive. They are busy in sanctifications and prayers. This place is adjacent to the *Marwah* hill. It is said that the holy and sacred place where Muhammad صلوات الله عليه was born, is little farther from here. I recall Hassan Nisar's encomium on the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I could not comprehend it in Pakistan. Nevertheless, here I crave that if I were

born on this Holy Land during Holy Prophet's ﷺ life, no one would be lucky like me.

Azan and Namaz in Harem

The melodious sound of prayer call echoes from the corners of *Harem*. Millions of believers are all attentive. They are repeating the phrases with Moazzin. Allah ﷻ is great. Allah is great. I testify that there is no god but Allah ﷻ. I testify that Muhammad is Allah's ﷻ messenger. Come for prayer. Come for success. Prayer is better than sleep. This call is same raised five times a day from all the masjids of the world at different times.

وہ سحر کہ جس سے لرزتا ہے شہستان و جود
ہوتی ہے بندۂ مومن کی ازاں سے پیدا

The dawn, which shakes the Universe:

Is dawned by Muslim's call to prayer early morning.

What a call! This call starts with the testimony of Allah's ﷻ greatness and the Holy Prophet's ﷺ prophethood. It invites for prayer and success and ends with the testimony of Allah's ﷻ greatness, superiority and Oneness. All the people stood up for prayer as the prayer call ended. Prayer is presence. Some have folded their arms higher on the chest, others lower. Some are standing with open arms. Some are doing *Rafa Yadain*, others not. Nevertheless, all of them are present in Allah's ﷻ court. All are begging from Allah ﷻ. All are united and there is no distinction among them. The Muslims from all over the world are standing together without any discrimination of colour and race, lineage and status, riches and poverty. They are present before Allah ﷻ, gathered and united. Prayer in *Harem* has its unique pleasure. Particularly during the *Fajr* prayer Allah's ﷻ blessings and mercies are directly revealed. Allah ﷻ Himself is present there. He is inside His House, *Ka'bah*. He is showing Himself among His angels. He is looking from behind the cover of His House and *Multazim*, His believers, men and women bowing before Him. He is delighted and expressing His approval to angels. The Imam said *Allah-o-Akbar* and the crowd became silent at once. Imam's voice created an

exemplary discipline, order and organization. After prayer, it was announced that all people should stay for a funeral prayer.

Another Tawaaf

Asma told, that it was early morning, let us do a *Tawaaf*. The place is overcrowded; it will be difficult but let us try. We walked from Baab-e-Abdul Aziz to *Mataaf* and reached in front of the *Holy Ka'bah*.

Masha-Allah, Subhan-Allah, The bright and luminous *Ka'bah* is before our eyes. What a wonderful scene! Millions of devotees are walking around it with their bright faces. They walk around as if they are intoxicated. Look there, a group of strong muscular six-foot tall women are not caring for anyone, claiming exclusive right on *Ka'bah*. These women are trampling others under their feet. A group of Iranians is doing sanctifications in loud voice. Malaysians are also in groups. African, Tajik, Indian, American, British, Spanish, Daghis, Bosnian, Afghani, Somali, Malaysian, Pakistani and Indonesian are all praying in their unique styles.

Thousands of birds are doing *Tawaaf*, too. Asma said, "Observe these birds, they are doing *Tawaaf* in a disciplined way. They do not fly over the *Ka'bah* but fly around Allah's ﷻ House just like humans". I observed the birds... Even aeroplanes are never seen flying above Allah's ﷻ House.

Swallows and Allah's ﷻ House

Oh! There are swallows! The wheel of time took me back into the past. Abrahah from Yemen is raising an army to demolish *Ka'bah*. For years, he remained busy in making preparations and training his elephants. He fed the elephants so well that they grew very healthy. When the elephants were in rut and ready to trample everything, he drove them towards Makkah. Abraha's army with a unit of elephants approached *Ka'bah*. The inhabitants of Makkah were terrified and frightened that if Allah's ﷻ House is demolished they might be destroyed as well. Abrahah caught Holy Prophet's ﷺ grandfather Abdul Muttalib's camels to threaten him. Abdul Muttalib was a leader of Makkah and an experienced man. He went to Abrahah and asked

him to release his camels. The maledict Abrahah gave a hideous smile and said, "I am here to demolish *Ka'bah* and you are worried about your camels". Abdul Muttalib said, "Camels are mine, return them. The Owner of *Ka'bah* Himself is its guardian. He Himself will protect it."

Abdul Muttalib recovered his camels and took his family to the mountains of *Safaa* and *Marwah*. Swallows were flying in circles; they were doing *Tawaaf*. Abdul Muttalib was just back from his conversation with Abrahah. They had not reached the mountains yet. He heard a noise. He looked back and saw that the situation had changed. Allah ﷻ protected His House in a miraculous way. People with the elephants were destroyed. They had come to demolish Allah's ﷻ House but they themselves were annihilated.

"Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the owners of the Elephant? And made them like hay devoured (by cattle)?" [Al-Fil: 105]

The swallows pelted so heavily that the owners of elephants were perished and became like hay. Allah ﷻ warned all the enemies of His House forever that whoever cast a bad look at His House, would have to face the consequences. Allah ﷻ does not need armies to protect His signs. Poor creatures like sparrows can become Allah's ﷻ army. The whole stock of world's missiles can end but Allah's ﷻ missiles and his swallows will never exhaust. The tiny birds called swallows, many of them have nests in the verandhas of the *Harem*. They seem to be decendants of those swallows, which pelted the Army and Elephants of Abrahah. Allah ﷻ has made them dwell in *Harem* to remind us of the historical event.

Swallows and birds are doing *Tawaaf*. The devoted men and women of different colours and cloths are busy in *Tawaaf*. They do not even have a feeling that it is a gathering of women and men. No one winks at nobody. "Three rounds are completed", Asma, told me. I was lost in the past. Fourth round started. It gives a unique pleasure to do *Tawaaf*, to look at *Ka'bah*, to gaze at it, to capture it in

the eyes and to pray for forgiveness. May Allah ﷻ bless everyone to come here and to enjoy all feelings!

In the fifth round, the crowd gets dense. Group after group are joining the crowd. At some places, it becomes difficult to breathe. Many devoted lovers of Allah ﷻ start genuflection and prostration while doing *Tawaaf*. They do not care that people are walking around. These men and women from Hazrat Bilal's رضي الله عنه tribe pay no regard to others. They believe that they have a privileged right on *Ka'bah*. From first to the last round, I was under a strange sensation. It was the most intense of all my earlier feelings. There came many happy moments during every round. My whole body could feel the spiritual sensation. I did not want to leave *Ka'bah*. I offered two *Rak'ats* of supererogatory prayer at *Maqam-e-Ibrahim*.

Friends in Hajj

Leaders of this voyage for *Hajj* are Inam-ur-Rahman and Tariq Shah. They run a travel agency. Travel agencies have their own problems. Their attitude changes after booking. I decided to go for *Hajj* and consulted my friends. My old friend Mehboob Ali Shah told me about Tariq Shah. Tariq Shah was also contacted through Dr. Shahid from Sargodha because he is brother-in-law of his brother Prof. Ahmad Shah. A meeting was arranged. Tariq Shah took great pains to convince me but I remained a blank slate despite all the lectures, videos and books. Maulana Yousuf Khan from Jamia Ashrafia spent a whole day instructing me the *Hajj* rites in his impressive way and with detail. Maulana Yousuf Khan's style is so effective, simple and touching that, his words go straight to the heart. After his speech, I concluded that *Hajj* is not so difficult. Wearing of *Ihram* involved much intricacy. Tariq Shah did it causally. At the airport, Assistant Collector Customs Ammar, Beenish and other were present to bid us farewell. Shahid Butt, Nasir Murtaza and Inspector Bashir carried the day. Ashfaq and Shaheen had arrived with luggage since morning. FIA's pious and honest Deputy Director Naveed Atif had ordered all the FIA staff to take care of us. During the voyage, PIA's Tahir paid regards and served delicious coffee. Khalid is my roommate. Other group

members are Sabir Baig, Allah Diya, Zafar Iqbal, Naveed Aslam, Ejaz Khan, Dr. Shahid, Iqbal, Ateeq-ur-Rahman and others.

Allah Diya is a dervish-like person but fed up with his wife. She does not obey him. She does everything of her own. If she goes to *Harem*, she stays there and tells him to go away. Tariq Shah told her to remain with the group but she said, "Do not meddle into my affairs. Do not intervene between me and Allah ﷻ." On the first, she remained absent all the day and now she is absent again. Allah Diya said, "Say nothing to her; do not search for her. She may go wherever she intends; I will not look out for her." She says, "Your care do not matter; My Allah ﷻ is with me; it is my Allah's ﷻ House. I do not care for you, Allah Diya. I am in Allah's ﷻ House and He is my Guardian."

Service and Treatment to Pilgrims

Service to the humanity is my way of life. I am serving and treating the pilgrims in *Harem*. An Afghan old man, in front of *Ka'bah* was patting his legs. I inquired of him, "What is the matter, do your legs pain?" I patted his legs and gave medicines. Sheikh Sahib fetched water and the old man took the medicines. He prayed for me while looking towards *Ka'bah*. I patted a Bahraini old man's head. I served *Zamzam* water to Turkish women. Whenever I got the chance, I massaged pilgrims. It gave me satisfaction. There was a flux of pilgrims in my room. They are coming to get painkillers and medicines for stomach problems. The medicines stocked for the service of pilgrims are being used for this purpose.

Scene of Holy Harem and Ka'bah

Today is the 4th of Zilhajj. Groups of pilgrims are arriving from all over the world. *Harem* is full of them. From everywhere the believers-men and women have gathered here and they are worshipping Allah ﷻ. They are seeking forgiveness for their sins. They are weeping and sobbing.

This travelogue is not written by some coincidence or just as a guidebook. It is an affair of the heart. It is a straightforward description of the experiences and spontaneous outflow of feelings that effected my mind and soul on the Holy Land. Try to imagine

this wonderful scene. *Harem* is there; pilgrims are doing *Sa'ee* on the hills of *Safaa* and *Marwah*. It is time for *Maghrib* prayer. Imam recites these verses in the first *Raka't*:

“ان الصفا والمروة ...”

You feel as if these verses are directly revealed on you. Mother Hajira has laid down Ismail عليه السلام on the ground and now she is running. She does not get tired; she runs fast to her full strength. She runs fast to see Ismail عليه السلام. Allah ﷻ mentioned this *Sa'ee* in the *Holy Quran*, declared it a sign, and commanded that *Hajj* is incomplete without *Sa'ee*.

In front of me, there stands *Ka'bah*, *Harem* and *Mutaaf* and I am writing these lines. These lines come to my mind inside *Harem*. It is Allah's ﷻ blessing and kindness. It is His glory that he invited this beggar and sinner to His court, made me sit there before *Ka'bah*, and blessed me to write these lines. Nothing happens without His consent and command.

Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan and Islamic World

A Malaysian old man was coughing; he was in a miserable condition. I introduced myself and gave him medicines and he felt relieved. He looked thankful. Although he spoke nothing but his thankful looks were obvious. Beside him was sitting Shams-ud-Din. He is from Indonesia. He could speak English. We exchanged our views. When I gave medicines to the Malaysian, Shams-ud-Din took out Indonesian medicines from his bag. He gave me a capsule and said that it will provide energy for *Hajj*. I took the capsule so that his feelings may not be hurt. We discussed the issues of Islamic world and Muslims' miserable situation. Shams-ud-Din is aware of Islamic History and Islamic world. All the sympathetic Muslims have a common characteristic that they long for a leader who would lead the Islamic world. If Muslims are united under a single banner, even the mightiest global powers can do no harm to them.

Offering *Isha* prayer in *Harem* gives a unique pleasure. Since it is the last prayer of the day so all the pilgrims from near and far come to the mosque. If you wish to offer *Isha* prayer inside *Harem*

then come here at least an hour before the prayer time, otherwise you will have to offer prayer on the road. Inside *Harem*, there is a huge gathering of people. After prayer, I recited the *Holy Quran*. All the fellows were gathered at *Marwah* hill. Allah Diya's wife was found. She got angry with him and did not talk with him. She was also angry with Sheikh Sahib. Allah Diya was listening to all her lectures respectfully and was controlling his anger. Today the place is overcrowded. There are rows of vehicles everywhere. People are arriving in groups. During the *Hajj* season, taxi drivers take the advantage of people's helplessness and their desire to go to *Harem* in the shortest time. They charge whatever they want. Yesterday, they were charging 20 riyals for *Harem*; today, they are hardly agreeing at 100 riyals. Shah Sahib was saying that this rate would increase to 300 riyals.

Chapter 4

Makkah before Hajj

Cheerful Aziziyyah

On this Holy Land of Allah ﷻ, one usually awakes early in the morning, No matter how tired and exhausted we might be, we get up at 4 a.m. If someone keeps sleeping, Tariq Sahib comes to awaken him. He came at 11 p.m. with a patient and now at 4 a.m. he is present again. Blessings are showered all the time in this Holy Land of Allah ﷻ and the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Infidels are not allowed to come here on this Holy Land. I offered *Tahhajud* prayer. I prayed for my homeland Pakistan, for her safety and security from internal and external threats. I prayed for my children and other members of my family. People start coming to Masjid as early as 4 a.m. The shops and stores are mostly owned by the Turks in this area of Aziziyyah where we are staying. There is a public office for complaints and help in case of emergency.

In our neighborhood, there is a multi-storeyed Turkish hospital. Dozens of ambulances are ready all the time. Yesterday when we were passing from there, medicines were being distributed among the patients after medical checkup. There was a flux of Turkish pilgrims. The Turkish Muslims are very strong, tall, with fair complexion and European features. They can be recognized even from a distance. It seems they are governing Aziziyyah.

Aziziyyah is in full bloom on the arrival of pilgrims. Pilgrims are everywhere. Some areas appear to be Pakistani areas because most of the Pakistani groups are staying there. Pilgrims from western countries are also staying there. All sorts of residences, of lower and higher quality, are available. A common residence costs 1200-1300 riyals per bed. In fine quality buildings, the charges are in thousands. Tariq Shah told me that a short *Hajj*

Package costs about 20-22 hundred thousand rupees. The gatherings of recitations, sanctifications and remembrances keep going on in the Masjid. At such gatherings, Allah ﷻ expresses His pride to angels. Allah's ﷻ blessings are directly showered on these gatherings. Allah ﷻ pardons these people and raises their ranks. Although different people are offering their supererogatory prayers and reciting the *Holy Quran* but there is no noise. There is a strange spiritual comfort. The prayer call was given at 5 a.m. and prayer was offered at 5:15 a.m. Most of the people leave the Masjid after prayer but recitation of the *Holy Quran* and sanctification continue till *Ishraq*. (Prayer offered half an hour after sunrise)

A Walk in the Mountains

After *Ishraq* prayer, I made my way to the streets of Makkah. Magnificent and high-rise buildings are erected everywhere. These attractive multi-storeyed buildings are constructed after removing the mountains. I saw hills at some distance. After seeing the barren, gray and brown mountains, my imagination took me back into the past. I recalled the Holy Prophet's ﷺ time. The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to walk on these mountains and preach to the people of Makkah. Two cats came out from somewhere and then ran away frightened. I recalled Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه, a great and devout Companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, who was always surrounded by cats. He loved and cared for them so much that the Holy Prophet ﷺ gave him the title of "Abu Hurairah" that means "Father of Cats" or "The Cat Person". I was delighted looking at these mountains. These are the same mountains where the Holy Prophet ﷺ would walk. The Holy's ﷺ Companions رضي الله عنهم also used to come here. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه, Hazrat Umar Farooq رضي الله عنه, Hazrat Uthman رضي الله عنه, Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه, and other holy Companions رضي الله عنهم used to pass over these mountains to come and meet the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Now mountains are vanishing and buildings are being constructed. Seeing the mountains, I wished that I were born during the Holy Prophet's ﷺ life. I could have walked the same streets the Prophet ﷺ used to walk through. I could have followed Prophet's ﷺ footprints!

Hajj is just about to start. After two days, we shall leave for *Mina*. All the pilgrims are sleeping and resting. They are saving their energies for the mega event. Some roads to *Harem* are blocked. In these days, it becomes difficult to reach *Harem*. People living in *Aziziyyah* or farther from this should not try to go to *Harem* during these days. Taxi drivers have raised the charges a hundred times. It is better to get ready for *Mina*, *Arafaat* and *Muzdalifah*. Tariq Shah has invited some scholars for a detailed discussion about *Hajj* rites. A graduate from *Madinah University* explained *Hajj* rites in authentic and effective way. He discussed the routines from 8th to 9th of *Zilhajj*. At the end of discussion, there was question-answer session. There was a separate discussion for women pilgrims. During the while, it was time for *Zuhr* prayer. We found a place on the roof of the *Masjid*. Women were offering the prayer separately. It is summer season but after prayer cool wind used to blow.

Tour Operators and Travel Agents

There are hundreds of tour operators and travel agents in the country. Each one has a quota. Tour operators' attitude changes after the booking. Before booking, they boast of residence near *Harem*, VIP arrangements and good food. Attractive advertisements are printed in newspapers. Pilgrims are trapped one way or the other. After reaching *Makkah*, they become indifferent. They do not care at all. Three or more groups have arrived since yesterday. No one is ready to take them to *Harem*. Taxi charges are very high. Seven persons are stuffed in one room. Bathrooms are not good; there is no water in the taps. During the prayer time, there are queues of men and women outside the bathrooms. The old and used lift that cannot carry more than four persons often remained out of order. Air-conditioners work off and on.

There is only one common bathroom for sixteen men and women. Group leader is absent. They serve food on their own; there is no fixed time. There is neither any table nor a hanger for clothes. However, drinking water and tea is available for 24 hours. There is an urgent need for code of conduct for tour operators. The promised facilities must be provided. For a proper compensation of

pilgrims' grievances, it is necessary to cancel the licenses of tour operators who do not provide essential facilities.

Pakistani Clinic of Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah

Today more patients are coming. Zahid Sheikh is not well since morning. Khalid is also resting. Patients suffering from cough, fever, influenza and flu are coming and getting medicines after medical check-up. They are praying for me. Here medicines are expensive. Doctors in Turkish hospital do checkups but medicines have to be purchased from pharmacy. In pharmacy, even the most common medicines are very expensive. One packet of painkillers costs ten riyals. Sheikh Zashid is advising everyone not to worry in illness; doctor and medicines are available. Allah Diya was not feeling well since the night. He was puffing partly because of walking and partly because of his wife's reprimands. I gave him medicines and now he is feeling well. Room number 303 has transformed into a "Pakistani Dispensary", Serving and treating the pilgrims is giving great pleasure. Today is the fifth day. Stock of medicines is decreasing. Sheikh Sahib is advising us to be cautious for medicines and not to give more than one or two dosages. A young man was suffering from fever. I gave him medicines. When he felt well, he asked about fee. I said my fee is your prayer. If the pilgrim is happy, then Allah ﷻ will be happy and soon He ﷻ will invite us again.

Mountains of Makkah

Window of my room is open. Before me there is an infinite range of rocky, gray, and barren mountains. These mountains are splendid and magnificent. These mountains were there when our Holy Prophet ﷺ was living in this city. These mountains and paths are sacred. In these mountains, the Holy Prophet ﷺ preached Islam for thirteen years. I am back in the past. I see before me the Holy Prophet ﷺ preaching Islam. The nobles of Makkah are attentive. The chieftains who call him "Sadiq and Ameen" are gathered there. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is preaching them to believe in Allah ﷻ only. He is inviting towards only one Allah ﷻ. He is raising his voice for Oneness. Wrathful are those who used to call

him "*Sadiq and Ameen*" Truthful and Honest. They are saying, "How can we apostate from our idols? He is disregarding our gods." All of them left him alone. A little boy named Ali رضي الله عنه comes forward. He is a cousin of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه و سلم. He says, "My legs are thin. I am weak but I say *Labbaik* to your call." Here there is *Shi'b-e-Abi Talib*. The cave of Thaur and the *Cave of Hira* both are in the mountains of Makkah. We will go to these places and mark our attendance. We will visit all the places where the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه و سلم and his *Companions* used to walk. We will go there with all our humbleness. We will capture Holy Prophet's footprints in our eyes. The high, greyish and brown mountains are looking so pretty. They have Holy Prophet's footprints on them. Holy Prophet's voice is echoing in these winds.

Pattering Rain in Makkah

Since over arrival in Makkah, summer season is at its peak. The sun is hot but there is a dark rain-bearing cloud in the sky since *Zuhr* prayer. Weather is pleasant. Though the prayer call will be given after five minutes, we are late for *Asr* prayer. Masjid is full and a number of people are sitting on the roof. Turkish women are arriving too. Weather of the city is getting pleasant. As soon as Imam uttered *Takbir-e-Oola*, dark clouds appeared. It started raining. Raindrops made the weather very pleasant. People remained seated there after the prayer, enjoying the weather. I had thought of the rain in Holy Prophet's صلی الله علیه و سلم city. Dark and water laden clouds are looking good. Same sky canopied over the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه و سلم. Under this sky lived Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه and Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه and Hazrat Uthman رضي الله عنه and Hazart Ali رضي الله عنه and other *Holy Companions* of the Prophet صلی الله علیه و سلم. As the raindrops touched my body, I experienced a strange sort of spiritual and mystic feeling. These drops belong to Holy Prophet's land. These raindrops are pouring from the same clouds that were present in Holy Prophet's صلی الله علیه و سلم life. After prayer, we went out for a long walk. Aziziyyah is a district of the city as there are Aziziyyah Districts in Riyadh, Jeddah, and Madinah. This name means that foreigners live here. Now these foriegners have complete control. Native Saudis are sparse; staying in their homes or sitting in their shops.

Most of the Saudis have transformed their homes into *Hajj* Centers and they have shifted somewhere else. Only the pilgrims can be seen on both sides of the road.

When I felt thirsty, two little kids appeared there with bottles of mineral water. Saudis' hospitality is matchless. Their government, children and adults all are hospitable. The drizzling and rain on the mountains made the weather extremely delectable. All the pilgrims have come out of their *Maktabs*, hotels and houses and they are enjoying. There is a mountain range on both sides of the road.

There we saw a strange scene. Some women wearing the scarfs and gowns were bowing down and doing something. We were curious. We went near them and saw that they were gathering pebbles. Preparations to go to *Mina* have started because only two days are left to go there.

Our looks do not divert from the mountains. These are the mountains of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ era. The Holy Prophet ﷺ and his *Holy Companions* used to walk in the same mountains. I am walking on those very paths and stones in a state of excitement. I do not want to return.

Government Hajj Scheme and Pakistani Hajj Mission

On our way, we met many pilgrims who had arrived under Government *Hajj* Scheme. They were staying in the *Maktabs* near *Harem*. I interviewed many of them and asked about the facilities. They were satisfied. They were pleased on having found a proper residence. They said that there are proper arrangements to go to *Harem*. Rooms are suitable; each room has six beds. However, you have to arrange for your meals. There was a shop for Lebanese Bread where the customers were standing in long queues. I felt very happy meeting Pakistani pilgrims. I was satisfied that contrary to the previous years, situation was better this year. Pilgrims are happy and satisfied. Government of Pakistan really made proper arrangements and no one was allowed to hijack the administration.

Our Pakistani clinic is running excellently. If I go out of the room for a little while, patients start calling in emergency. I have to

return. Patients are coming in groups for medical checkup and medicines. The supper was served late at night. I went outside with Asma. The Saudis should be appreciated that they cleared the land from mountains and constructed these buildings. There are underground road tunnels. Traffic is congested but under control. When the pilgrims are crossing the road, the traffic stops for the sake of respect no matter how much rush is there. Drivers happily give way to the pilgrims. Today we did not go to *Harem*. The whole day passed in a state of desire. I dreamed that Huzaifa was saying, "Father, let us go to *Harem*." Yumna and Mahnoor were with him. Visiting *Harem* with children has its own pleasure. If Allah ﷻ wishes so, we will come again with children.

Masjids, Imam, Saudi Arabia

In Saudi Arabia, Imam is an important rank. Imams of grand Masjids enjoy VIP status, particularly the Imams of Haramain, *Masjid-e-Quba*, and *Qiblatain*. There are separate Imams for each prayer. Therefore, each Masjid has five Imams. All the Imams whether of a small Masjid or a big one, seem like bureaucrats. They wear the finest dresses and have best cars and houses. Their way of speaking is cultured and forceful; their tone of voice is effective and impressive. I have shaken hands with the Imam of nearby Masjid two or three times. They greet you warmly and happily. They are not offended to see the strangers. If you want to see, the pure smile and saintliness then shake hands and hug the Imams of these Masjids.

I woke up for *Tahajjad* at 4 a.m. and awakened the roommates. I again went back to the past. I am staying in the room number 330 of Hall Road Hostel of King Edward Medical College. It is morning. Malik Rashid is still sleeping. Mr. Jaleel is also enjoying a deep sleep after discussing current affairs till late at night. "Malik, get up it is time for prayer", I used to say to him. "Let me sleep; I could not sleep the whole night", he would say, and I had to go for prayer alone.

Oh! It is Saudi Arabia. We are in Aziziyyah. We have come here for *Hajj*. Mr. Khalid and Zahid are awakened. Asma and sister

Najma are also ready. We went to the Masjid at 4:30 a.m. More than half of the Masjid is full. People are offering supererogatory prayers or reciting the *Holy Quran*. Asma and Najma went to the rooftop. A separate corner is reserved for women in every Masjid. Women reach there before time and offer prayer peacefully. After prayer, Tariq Shah and I went to the streets of Makkah for a walk.

The Wounds of Hazrat Bilal رضي الله عنه

Wherever you see, there are high, brown, black, rocky and barren mountains. Greenery is nowhere to be seen. When my looks fell on the mountains, I recalled Holy Prophet's صلوات الله عليه time. Hazrat Bilal رضي الله عنه is made to lie down on these barren mountains under the scorching sun. The cruel master would put a heavy stone on his chest and would say to him to turn away from Allah ﷻ and His Holy Prophet صلوات الله عليه. The Holy Prophet's lover and devotee Bilal رضي الله عنه would say "Ahad, Ahad". His back would burn and his bosom would be pressed and he gasped but he would not stop saying "Ahad, Ahad" (Allah is One). What a horrible scene it was! Angels would have been aghast. O Allah ﷻ, verily You know better. They would say to Allah ﷻ that they did not know that there would be devoted humans like Hazrat Bilal رضي الله عنه. I wished I were born in Holy Prophet's life. I am imagining that:

Umayyah bin Khalf is tired in laying down Hazrat Bilal رضي الله عنه on the searing rocks. Bilal رضي الله عنه is calling "Ahad, Ahad". Bilal's رضي الله عنه back is wounded seriously. He is almost unconscious. I have reached to him with my medical kit. I am putting pledgets on Hazrat Bilal's رضي الله عنه wounds. I am cleaning his wounds and patting his body. I am inoculating him for pain; I am dressing his wounds. I am cursing the maledict Umayyah bin Khalf. Hazrat Bilal رضي الله عنه has opened his eyes. He was looking at me thankfully, not speaking a word.

I was absorbed in above thoughts when Tariq Shah asked me to go forward.

While passing through the mountains I took every stone and rock as if the Holy Prophet صلوات الله عليه and his devoted *Companions* had

walked on them had seated and rested on them. I adored these stones and mountains. I wished to hug them and yearned to spend my whole life there. On the way, there is an Afghan baker's shop where large fresh breads were being baked. Shah Sahib bought two breads, daal and some fresh and juicy grapes. We awakened Asma and sister Najma. Tariq Shah brought butter and tea. Subsistence is abundant in Makkah and Madinah. Everything is auspicious. Five of us had a good breakfast with two breads and a dish of daal. Early morning breakfast was tasty. Soon after the breakfast, patients started coming. Medicines stock is falling. I told Ashfaq to send more medicines by the last *Hajj* flight.

Chapter 5

Hajj and Islamic Economy

Prices of Ihram and Gifts

According to the Arab News, this year there is a 80% rise in the prices of *Ihram*, gowns and other essentials of *Hajj* as compared to the last year. Last year, an *Ihram* and gown were sold at 55 riyals whereas this year its price is 100 riyals. Most of the cloth for *Ihram* and gowns, belts, caps and other gifts that pilgrims purchase from Saudi Arabia, are imported from China. According to the Arab News, the main reason for the increased prices of *Ihram* and other items is the increased price of cloth. Products used during *Hajj* such as bed-sheets, towels, *Ihram*, prayer-mats, caps and rosaries are also manufactured in Pakistan but a small portion of this production is exported to Saudi Arabia. Besides this, millions of animals for sacrifice are imported from western countries although these animals are abundant in Pakistan and other Muslim countries. If there is a better coordination among the Muslim countries, then there can be mutual trade of billions of riyals that can improve the economic condition of the Muslims. I wish the government of Pakistan looks into this aspect of foreign trade.

Daily Consumptions of Billions of Glasses

During *Hajj* season utensils, plates, glasses, spoons, knives in short everything used is disposable. These items are used in billions of quantity daily. Billions of glasses are daily used in *Harem*. Glasses are disposed of after drinking water once. If five million men use ten glasses daily to drink water then fifty million glasses are used. Millions of men drink billions of glasses of *Zamzam* water daily and they have been drinking since centuries but this spring of water of life, granted by virtue of mother Hajira's *Sa'ee* continues to gush forth. It quenches the thirst of millions of devotees every year

and will quench thirst of devotees coming for *Hajj* or *Umrah* till *Dhoom's Day*.

The Saudi government has left no stone unturned to make the best arrangements. Everything is available in abundance. Water-tanks and water-coolers for *Zamzam* water are installed at many points in *Harem*. Workers are appointed to fill and refill these water-coolers. They collect the used glasses and place new ones. Tariq Shah told me that in Saudi Arabia, there is the largest water treatment plant of the world to purify seawater. Masjids are clean and tidy. One feels purified and cleaned going to them. One likes to sit and worship in these Masjids. People send trucks of bottled water. Huge refrigerators are installed there. Take out a bottle, drink water and offer the prayer contentedly.

Violations of the Visa Rules and Deportation

Millions of workers dwelling in *Aziziyyah* and around it have come from all the corners of world in search of job. Some are legal others are illegal. Indian, Bangladeshi, Indonesian, Burmese, Filipino, Malaysian, in short, every country's worker is here. Some pilgrims come with intention to disappear after *Hajj*. They continue to work hiding from authorities, in some cases for years. Women come, too. Children are born but when authorities come to know, they do not spare them. They are sent to jail and after that, one is deported to homeland with the family.

In the last three days 2230 Indonesian children, men and women are deported to their country due to violation of visa rules. An Indonesian woman gave birth to a baby at the airport because of which she was delayed for a few days. Not only male workers but also the whole families hide there and cannot be found. However, they are deported when identified.

Caravans Heading to Harem

The groups of believers in Allah ﷻ are arriving in thousands. All the caravans are heading towards *Harem*. All of them are bound for the same destination, walking along the same road with the same aspirations. What could be the destination of a Muslim except *Baitullah* and *Masjid-e-Nabavi*? At the time of *Zuhr* prayer *Harem*

was teemed: Namazi are everywhere. In some cases men had to offer prayer in the area reserved for women. Some had to go back. Here there is one more good custom: if the congregational prayer has been offered then three or four persons join making one of them Imam and offer the prayer. They do not differentiate between elder or younger, shaved or bearded. They do not think about minor details... We chew on details and forget the spirit of religion.

Today I intend going to *Harem*. The departure is delayed because of waiting for the meals.

In Allah's ﷻ House

Harem, Allah's ﷻ House is there in front of me and millions of lovers, devotees, followers and believers are walking around Allah's ﷻ House. Sounds of *Allah-o-Akbar* are echoing and reaching the heavens. Amazed angels are gazing from the heavens. Allah ﷻ is pleased at His creature made in the best stature and expressing His pride to the angels. We got the opportunity to offer prayer with Imam-e-Ka'bah. People are offering prayer on all four sides of *Ka'bah* facing towards it. I had not imagined that this *Ka'bah*, *Bait-ul-Ateeq*, will be before my eyes like this; that there will be nothing between *Ka'bah* and me. *Harem* is constructed in such a way that you can offer prayer at any side facing towards it. Namazi stand in a circle around *Ka'bah* during the prayer. Whenever you offer prayer in front of *Ka'bah*, your eyes remain fixed on it. One remains attentive towards *Ka'bah*. Eyes are always directed towards *Ka'bah* during the prayer.

Two Afghan old men from Mazar Sharif were coughing. I gave them cough pills to chew and they became happy. They left praying for me. It gives a strange pleasure to see, look, and gaze at Allah's ﷻ House. Every inch of the body is soothed and delighted. Spirituality pervades the viewer. One aspires that his looks were focused and converged on the same spot for the remainder of one's life. Today pilgrims are gathered everywhere. Roads of *Aziziyah* are thronged with vehicles and people. We found a place in *Harem* with much difficulty. Allah ﷻ is to be praised that we offered the prayer peacefully.

It is Allah's ﷻ House, *Harem*. There are millions of people of different colour and race, of different nationalities and continents but all are circulating in the same direction. They are swaying with delight. Sanctity is dripping and showering. It seems that Allah ﷻ has somehow descended from the heavens. Allah's ﷻ House is in front of our eyes. Millions of devotees are doing *Tawaaf*. Some silently, others loudly, in Arabic or in their own languages, individually or in groups are raising the call of *Allah-o-Akbar*; they are imploring forgiveness for their sins. The Moazzin gave a call for *Maghrib* prayer in *Harem*. Silence prevailed. We offered *Maghrib* prayer in *Harem*. Prayer in *Harem* has its own joy. One prayer is equal in reward to a hundred thousand prayers offered somewhere else. *Maghrib* prayer ended. Thousands of believers of Allah ﷻ are staying for *Isha* prayer. They have occupied their places because if they move here and there then they will not find a place.

There is an extraordinary scene of solidarity, unity and Islamic fraternity. Here is sitting an Indian family; there are sitting a Yaghestani couple and their daughter. All are absorbed in the remembrance of Allah ﷻ. All are proud of their destiny. Some are talking to their families, friends and relatives back in their homelands. They are describing the spirituality of *Harem* in their own words. They are delighted on their fortunes. They are receiving the requests for prayers from their relatives. They will pray for all of them so that they too, they are invited to this matchless House. Sheikh Zahid and sister Najma have mustered up the courage to go for *Tawaaf*. Sister Najma feels difficult to walk but hearing the *Tawaaf*, her eyes are shining. She gets ready at once and starts *Tawaaf*.

Faith-Strengthening and Soul-Stirring Scenes of Tawaaf

The scene of *Tawaaf* of *Ka'bah* is enchanting, amazing and wonderful. *Tawaaf* is going on at the lower and upper floors. Children are doing *Tawaaf* and eighty-year-old disabled, too. The obedient sons and daughters are gladly helping their parents to do *Tawaaf* on wheel chairs. Here you can see all sorts of wheel chairs: simple as well as automatic. A few very old men and women,

seriously ill patients are doing *Tawaaf*, too on wheel chairs. It is a strange scene. It is time for purification, to be pardoned for sins.

Time flies when you are in *Harem*. One prayer ends and next prayers seems to come in just a while. Spirituality showers like rain or flashing lights. A group of pilgrims including young and elderly men and women from some western country is sitting before me after doing *Tawaaf*; they are delighted and enjoying *Zamzam* water. They are receiving the blessings. *Isha* prayer is about to start. I wish to keep sitting in *Harem* and praying to Allah ﷻ. I wish not to be neglectful of the remembrance of Allah ﷻ even for a moment. I desire to keep watching Allah's ﷻ House and capturing it in my eyes. The fellows insisted to take a rest and prepare for mega event but my longing keeps me restless. Sheikh Zahid and Najma have gone for *Tawaaf*. Asma is talking to women from India and other countries. The relation of creed connects the peoples of different colours, nationalities, tribes and races. All the colours of universe are converged here. All the colours and hues of a rainbow are here.

Isha prayer started. Imam recited the *Holy Quran* in such a melodious tone that it seemed to penetrate the soul. Imagine that you are in *Harem* and prayer is being offered. When it comes to say "Āmeen", all the body shivers and quivers. The echo of "Āmeen" resonates in whole of the *Harem* and angels' "Āmeen" is heard. If angels' *Āmeen* is converged in yours then you are really fortunate. *Isha* prayer ended. I looked at *Baitullah* closely. I burst into tears. I prayed for my family and Pakistan. I was offering humble gifts of tears when Asma broke the silence and suggested to go. People are everywhere; there is no room to set foot. Nevertheless, there is no clamour because of proper arrangements. Men and women of faith are walking. The sanctifications of Allah ﷻ and the Holy Prophet ﷺ are being offered aloud. It took us an hour to come out of *Harem*. Sheikh Sahib and sister Najma arrived at *Marwah* hills after doing *Tawaaf*. Today, men and women are everywhere as far as one can see. How will we return? We mustered up courage to walk; Asma, tired and drenched in sweat, was worried again. We covered a distance two or three kilometer and reached at Al-Jamaizia.

Today the return was similar to that of Raiwind *Tablighi Ijtima*. Thousands rather millions of men and women are walking on foot. Taxi drivers were not available. The vans are stuffed with passengers, as in Pakistan, and they were charging as much as they liked. A wagon's owner took pity on us and agreed to carry us; about eight passengers were already in it. However, he did not agree at less than 15 riyals per person whereas, in normal days, a full taxi can be hired for 15-20 riyals from *Aziziyyah* to *Harem*.

Muhammad! ﷺ Exalted is Thy Name

Another thing that I observed here is that they call every stranger as "Muhammad". Many times while getting on and alighting from taxi or while walking on the way I heard "Muhammad". In the beginning, I thought that they are calling somebody else. After a few days, I came to know that the Saudis could not think of a name except Muhammad. No other name has been so sacred in the past nor will it be in future. All the Muslims are named as Muhammad. Allah ﷻ exalted the name of His Prophet ﷺ. Sheikh Jameel asked where I was going. With much difficulty and taking help from my past knowledge about Arabic language, I told him that I am going to "Turkish Hospital". The driver demanded 80 riyals but agreed to take 70. I praised Allah ﷻ who blessed me to offer three prayers in *Harem*.

Aziziyyah, Mountains and Harem

Tariq Shah is an extraordinary man; no matter how late he goes to sleep at night, he knocks at the gate at 4 a.m. or 4:30. He calls, "Brothers! It is time for prayer. Get up and go to Allah's ﷻ court." As usual, the mosque was full. We found a place on the upper floor. Even that would have not been found if we were late a little more. After prayer, we went out towards *Aziziyyah* to see the mountains of *Makkah* and to enjoy its pleasant and spiritual morning. The gentle breeze is blowing. We inhaled deeply to enrich ourselves with the climate of this land. The air may contain the breathings of Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Holy Companions. The intake of that scented air will change our fate. Holy Prophet ﷺ used to walk on these paths. He would breathe in this atmosphere.

We kept on walking and did not think that what will happen if we forgot the way. Since 2005, we are roaming from village to village to serve the disaster-ridden but this walk has its own joy and pleasure. Maybe we will pass through a place where there are Holy Prophet's ﷺ footprints.

Two more roommates have arrived. Dr. Umar Alvi and Saleem Latif are from Lahore. Saleem Sahib has brought medicines with him. Dr. Ahsan and Ashfaq sent these medicines. The need for medicines is increasing because with the increasing number of pilgrims the number of patients has also increased. These patients are coming early in the morning and late at night. Shah Sahib declared the room number 304 "Pakistani Hospital of Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah Pakistani". We caught sight of cats on the mountains. I coaxed and called them and they stopped as if they were assessing and checking whether I was like Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه or somebody else.

Sheikh Sahib is in deep sleep due to yesterday's weariness. Saleem and his friend have gone to perform *Umrah*. Pilgrims coming in the last days face much difficulty. They have to perform *Umrah* and leave for *Mina* on the same day. In this situation not all the rites are performed properly, therefore the last flights should be avoided. Much time passed walking in Aziziyyah. Pilgrims were staying in every street and house. The native people had gone to some other place. It came to our knowledge from the Arab News that in the adjoining areas to Makkah and Madinah, buildings are rented only for ten months and they are evacuated for 2 months during the *Hajj* season in order to settle the pilgrims. On the way, back all the roads and crossroads appeared same. After guessing from the mountains, we reached main road and inquired about the way from an Arab who explained it affectionately. A little knowledge of Arabic language is quite beneficial. After coming to *Harem* and offering prayers, here one realizes the importance of Arabic language. As such, learning Arabic language is necessary in order to understand the true spirit of Islam and the *Holy Quran* and to comprehend its message.

Medicines and Treatment

With increase in stock of medicines, the number of patients also increased. Newton's third law proved right here. The action is delivery of medicines and the reaction is patients' ingress. Just like Pakistan, Sheikh Zahid is truly playing the role of a spokesperson for Customs Healthcare Society in Sadia Arabia. Every morning and evening, he sits outside hotel and invites every rank and file to go through medical checkup and get medicines. By the grace of Allah ﷻ, patients are getting well and this beneficence is going on in Allah's ﷻ House. Allah Diya's wife took medicines two days ago and she has come again. I feared that she might issue a charge sheet against me. There may be some side effect of medicines or reaction of an injection; but it was all right. She complained for bad stomach and said that she wanted to see Allah's ﷻ House before going to Mina. "Do not try to deter me; favor me and force my husband. In the last three days, I have not visited Allah's ﷻ House. We are not here to sleep in the rooms." She said, "I am suffering from eczema and molar ache; diagnose carefully and give me medicines with good wishes." She was delighted to see the eczema cream. She took the medicines and left but reminded me that she would go to *Harem* before going to *Mina*.

Covering the Distance of 5700 Kilometers in 314 Days

What a devotional passion!

"Allah ﷻ invited me to his House. I covered a distance of 5700 kilometers in 314 days walking on foot. I travelled through Bosnia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia; Allah ﷻ guided me throughout the voyage. I was told in a dream to go through Syria instead of Iraq. Nobody stopped me on the way. Rather when they came to know that, I am going to *Hajj* they became happy and helped me. In this voyage, I went through summer and winter seasons. In Bulgaria, temperature was -34°C whereas in Jordan it was 44°C . For an entry visa in Turkey and Saudi Arabia each, I had to wait for two months." Senad Hadzic, a Bosnian, who arrived in Makkah on Saturday, October 19, 2012, gave this statement: "I took this voyage for the sake of Allah ﷻ,

Islam, Bosnia, my parents and my sister." This fervor, zest, alacrity and devotional frenzy is matchless. Bosnian Senad Hadzic is still in Makkah. He is receiving blessings and preparing for *Hajj*. It is not certain whether he intends to return on foot.

Open Heart Surgery of 12 Pilgrims

Pilgrims usually fall ill during *Hajj* season. Flu, chest infection, cough, influenza, eczema, indigestion, body pains and acidity in stomach are common complaints. Women's major problem is to delay their menstrual period somehow by using medicines so that they can perform all the *Hajj* rites without any break. According to the Arab News, 12 pilgrims have gone through Open Heart Surgery. The oldest heart patient is of 91 years and the youngest is 16. Saudi Health Department has reserved 200 beds for pilgrims in 25 hospitals. Moreover, 141 dispensaries are established in the Holy Cities. However, Muallims and Maktabs have not made any special arrangements for pilgrims. The pilgrims have to go out for medicines for headache, cough, flu, and influenza. A friend just returned from hospital and told that he had to wait for three hours. Yet he could not get a chance and came to us instead of the hospital. I checked him up immediately and gave medicines. He became happy and by the grace of Allah ﷻ, he was well next day. Now he daily comes with five or seven patients. I check all of them and give medicines and they pray for me in return.

Body Language

Pilgrims from all over the world speaking different languages and local shopkeepers and taxi drivers communicate through body language and hand signs. Taxi drivers explain the fare with the help of a calculator or gesturing with fingers. Passengers gesture their thumb downward to say to reduce the fare. The Arab drivers tell gesturing their hands that the fare will not be reduced. If they agree at a fare then they gesture in the affirmation. A Turkish woman is moving her hands in different angles to explain to nearby standing Pakistani woman that *Isha* prayer will be after half-an-hour. A Bosnian woman is purchasing a rosary from a shop and tells the shopkeeper that it is too expensive,

reduces the price. Shopkeeper does not agree and waves his hands that the price cannot be reduced. An African woman is trying to ask a Pakistani woman to move away because she cannot see *Ka'bah* clearly. The shopkeepers around *Ka'bah* tell us that though they do not speak any language other than Arabic but they can communicate with the pilgrims through signs and gestures.

In *Harem*, the sweepers, supervisors of administrative staff and the service members of secret agencies have their own way of explaining and telling something. If someone asks about the way, they try their best to explain it in their own way. If this does not work, they get rid of you just saying "Khalas". A Burmese shopkeeper told me that he had been living there for seventeen years and he could speak ten different languages. If he cannot figure what the language is, he communicates through gestures. He said that his guess is never wrong. Active, young, handsome and polite officials at Jeddah Terminal try to explain to the pilgrims in their own style. I was happy to see that most of the instructions and information in *Harem* are printed in Arabic, English and Urdu.

We have been doing preparations for the mega event since morning. Asma has prepared a mini-bag for *Mina*. She has put essential items and Medicines into the bag so that pilgrims are also served while performing *Hajj* rites. The number of people has increased in the mosque. New pilgrims also have realized that they can find a place only if they will come before prayer call. Dr. Umar and Saleem Latif have just arrived after performing *Umrah*.

Allah Diya, Cantaloupes and Hot Debate

Allah Diya appeared worried since morning. He was very hungry. A fellow fetched a cantaloupe from somewhere. Tariq Shah was not there. We were uncertain when will the meal be served. Cantaloupe whetted the appetite and mouth watered. Amir was just about to give a slice to Allah Diya but his wife arrived. "What happened to you? Are you a mendicant? Why are you eating a begged cantaloupe? Cannot you wait for the meals?" Although Amir explained that, it was a gift from friends but she did not settle down. Amir had to leave the room. She snatched the

plate from Allah Diya. She did not let him even taste the cantaloupe. After that, there was such a fuss that Allah Diya's roommates insisted to shift them in some other room. After quarrelling, she said that she had not visited Allah's ﷻ House since last four days. I will go to *Harem* before I go to *Mina*. Whether someone comes along with me or not, I will go."

Chapter 6

Beginnings of Hajj: Travel to Mina

The Mega Event

After *Isha* prayer, instructions were announced for the preparation of Mega Event. Late at night, we will set out for *Mina* following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. A city of tents has been built in *Mina*. Lovers of Allah ﷻ and the Holy Prophet ﷺ are rushing towards *Mina* in groups, walking on foot or in buses. They are passionate but cautious. These same roads have the hoof-prints of the camel *Qaswa*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had come to *Mina* riding on *Qaswa*. Tomorrow is the day of *Tarviyah* and we will stay in *Mina* until evening. Devotees are coming incessantly. They are following in the footprints of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and *Qaswa*. Blessed will be those who find and kiss the footprint of *Qaswa*. Hassan Nisar's *Na'at*, again comes to my mind:

تیرے ہوتے جنم لیا ہوتا

I wish I were born in your times!

Only if I were born in Holy Prophet's ﷺ life, what could be more wonderful! Who could have been luckier! We would have got the chance to observe Holy Prophet's ﷺ magnificence and splendour, we could have observed *Companions'* devotedness and love; could have listened and memorized the Holy Prophet's ﷺ last sermon, the *Magna Carta* of Islam, a constitution for the nations of the world.

The City of Mina

Today is the day of *al-Tarviyah*. It is the first day of *Hajj* rites. We have started preparations since last night. Bus arrived after 12 p.m. Today all are heading towards *Mina*. The city of Tents in *Mina* is the residence for millions of devoted and pious men and

women. Although it is midnight but the whole city is awake to serve Allah's ﷻ guests and to help them reach *Mina* so that they can follow Holy Prophet's ﷺ *Sunnah*. Pilgrims, wearing *Ihram*, can be seen everywhere, from every side. As if, white particles are rustling and moving all around. A long white blanket has covered the roads from *Aziziyyah* to *Mina*. Beautiful patches and strips of different colours are also visible on this white blanket. All are anxious to reach the same destination. White dresses and black robes can be seen in the city of *Mina*. The huge tents seem like snowy mountains. These tents are waiting for their residents. Allah knows how many days and effort was required to establish this matchless city. *Mina* is 3-4 kilometer from *Aziziyyah* and you see vehicles all around. Besides this, many pilgrims are walking on foot to follow the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. When you approach *Mina*, you see people on both sides of the road, on the pathways, at crossroads and on the mountains; they sit, lie down or walk wherever they find a place. Midnight has passed but life is in full bloom with all its attractions, beauties, pleasures and felicities. Pilgrims with bright and smiling faces, wearing *Ihram*, are heading towards their tents and *Maktab*s. All are yearning to follow the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The *Hajj* rites start from stay in *Mina*.

Now we have arrived in *Mina*. It seems that we are at Lahore Railway Station. Pakistanis are everywhere and still more are coming. Everyone is looking for one's tent and *Maktab*.

In *Mina*, you usually find huge tents where as many pilgrims are stuffed as possible. Each one is provided with a mattress just one and a half foot wide, you can just lie straight on it... There are air-conditioned tents with double bed and attached bathroom available but only wealthy persons can afford them. Tent size and quality depends on the package you have selected.

Masjid Al-Khayf - The Burial Place of Prophets

Sheikh Zahid was reading a book where it was mentioned that you must offer a prayer in *Masjid al-Khayf* if it is possible during your stay in *Mina*. More than 70 prophets had offered

prayers in this Masjid and more than 70 prophets are buried in the hereabouts of this Masjid. When I heard about the Masjid of Prophets ﷺ and their burial place, I became restless to visit it.

Tariq Shah, Afzal and Kashif have gone out. I asked somebody and he directed me towards the minarets of *Masjid Al-Khayf*. It was 2 a.m. but I was eager and yearning to go to the Masjid immediately. The scene of *Mina* above from the bridge was very pleasing. There are tents on the mountains as far as I can see. The pilgrims wearing *Ihram*, as if clad in *Kafan*, are walking around. There is no particular difference between *Ihram* and *Kafan*. Asma had given me a new *Ihram*. People wearing two white shrouds seem as if they are going to heavens or absorbing themselves into Allah ﷻ by losing their physical entity. The pilgrims stretched on roads, pavements, corridors and verandahs appear as if they are washed and cleaned dead bodies ready for burial. Millions of devoted pilgrims, chanting *Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik* are heading towards their destination.

It is past midnight but lights and white dresses have turned it into a scene of broad daylight. When I saw minarets of *Masjid al-Khayf*, my heart thumped with joy. Tariq Shah suggested going to *Masjid Al-Khayf*. We moved forward asking the way from a police officer. Police officers, soldiers, guides and other administrative personnel are alert at each step. Someone told us to come down and then find the way. Moving farther, we asked the way from another person and he told us to go straight and then turn right. After walking one kilometer, we sighted the minarets of *Masjid Al-Khayf* again. When we arrived there, we saw that everywhere people were sitting with their luggage. We entered the Masjid through the main gate. We were wonder-struck seeing the spacious and clean mosque. Spirituality can be felt everywhere in the Masjid. When I looked towards the mountains, my memories flashed back.

Preaching by Prophets ﷺ

Right there behind the mountains, Allah's ﷻ servant and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is calling people towards Allah ﷻ. He is preaching them to accept the faith that there is no god save Allah ﷻ.

He assures them that they will succeed if they accept this faith. Some people pay attention, some accept the faith while others mock and ridicule him. Allah's ﷻ Prophets ﷺ are coming one after the other. They are performing the duties assigned to them and returning to Allah's ﷻ court. Those who believed in Prophet's ﷺ teachings, succeeded. The Prophets ﷺ keep coming in the area of *Masjid Al-Khayf* and after carrying out assigned duties, they are being buried there after their death.

The Masjid is air-conditioned. It was a hot day but when we entered the Masjid, we felt cold. We performed ablutions, offered supererogatory prayers and praised Allah ﷻ. There are thousands of Muslim inside the Masjid. Some are sleeping; others are busy in prayers, sanctifications and remembrances. Shah Sahib said that we should rest here for a while instead of returning to our tents; we will offer *Fajr* prayer in the Masjid as well.

Night will end in a few hours. Hundreds of Muslims wearing *Ihram* are stretched here and there as if dead bodies wrapped in *Kafan*, arranged in rows ready to be buried. We experience a strange sense of spirituality in *Masjid Al-Khayf*. We stretched there for a while. In this spiritual atmosphere, we enjoyed a good rest. Ever fresh Shah Sahib woke us up at 4:30 a.m. I opened my eyes but could not understand where we were. I rubbed my eyes and after a few moments realized that, we were in *Masjid Al-Khayf*. *Fajr* prayer revitalized the faith. When Imam Sahib recited the holy verses from chapter *Al-Isra*, it felt that the verses were being revealed then and there.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has just gone to *Masjid-e-Aqsa* from *Harem*, and then for a heavenly journey. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has returned. He tells about his ascendance. The infidels of Makkah are amused that they have another opportunity to mock the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They do not believe him. They run to Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه who is considered honest, truthful and trustworthy. The people of Makkah respect him although he has embraced Islam. The infidels tell him that Muhammad ﷺ is babbling about impossible events. Nevertheless, this lover of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

said that whatever my Prophet ﷺ has said is all-true. He speaks nothing but truth. The infidels returned unsuccessful. From that day, the *Companion of Cave* got the title of "*Siddiq*".

We returned to our tent after *Fajr* prayer. Not an inch of space was empty there. All the colours of world are present here but covered in white *Ihram*. The pious and virtuous women have dressed differently but they all share the same sanctity. The whole day will be spent in *Mina* following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Medical Service and Treatment in Mina

By the grace of Allah ﷻ, medical service and treatment is going on in *Mina*. Posters inviting to contact for free medical checkup and treatment are pasted on all the four sides of the tent. This news spread across all the tents like wildfire. Patients started ingressing. It is Allah's ﷻ special benevolence and blessing that He granted me the opportunity to serve His virtuous men on this Holy Land. It is nothing but good fortune. There is a flux of patients. Fatigued pilgrims are suffering from cough, flu, influenza, eczema, diarrhea and pain in legs. They are taking medicines and giving prayers in return.

In *Mina*, the groups of pilgrims immersed in love, devotedness, harmony, fraternity, equality and spirituality are continuously arriving and settling in their tents. They have arrived there to perform *Hajj* rites. The air is resonating with the chants of *Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik*, remembrances, supplications and prayers.

Mina, Tents and Patients

In *Mina*, there are separate toilets for women and gents outside the tents. Although there is a large number of toilets but they are not sufficient for so many pilgrims. After a short while, there are long queues outside the toilets. People start knocking at the toilet door and pass comments about the person inside: How long will you stay inside? You are sitting inside and there is a long queue outside because of you. Nevertheless, the person comes out at his own accord. Take the *Ihram* off and enjoy the bath. Pleasing hot water relieves from all the fatigue. The Saudi Government

should be praised for her administration for pilgrims. Arrangements are foolproof from all aspects. Police officers, soldiers, housekeepers and security personnel are performing their duties afoot, on motorbikes, cars and jeeps. Helicopters are hovering for surveillance since morning.

The white *Ihram* clad people are visible everywhere. It seems that little white plants have sprouted on the greyish and black barren mountains. It seems that white particles are in constant motion. These white particles from the Islamic world have given up their individualities. They have become a part of the Holy Land of Adam ﷺ, Ibrahim ﷺ and other Prophets ﷺ. They are constantly raising the voices of *Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik* and *La ilaha illah-Allah* and the mountains are in a state of tremor due to these echoes. Nevertheless, at the same time these mountains are proud of their luck that millions of men and women of belief arrive there to attend the court of the Creator ﷻ of this universe.

I offered *Zuhr* prayer in the tent. Sixteen pilgrims are cuddled in this small tent. There is a strange philosophy in arriving to *Mina*. Here, one forgets one's self and all the impurities and worldly attractions, content with just two shrouds of *Ihram*. Here one realizes that a Muslim is always ready to sacrifice his life and all his possessions for Allah ﷻ. Every Muslim wishes to sacrifice his life and possessions whenever Allah ﷻ demands that.

Patients continue to come. Worship of Almighty Allah ﷻ and medical service for His guests, are simultaneously going on, in this Holy Land of Prophets ﷺ. An Afghan old woman came; I examined her and gave medicines. She was satisfied and departed praying for me. I am feeling a spiritual bliss while performing the sacred duty of *Hajj* and serving Allah's ﷻ guests simultaneously. May our works of medical service spread throughout the world!

Residents of Tent # 73

Nice fellows reside in tent number 73. One of the companions Javaid Ashraf says, "You are trading with Allah ﷻ in the most ideal way". Khalid told him that I have roved many places and that I am a veteran in these matters. Afzal Kashif is working as

a dispenser. He is searching for the patients and guiding them to tent no. 73. Dr. Umar Alvi takes care of the patients in my absence. Ali Akhtar is an engineer in SGS. Saleem Latif has brought medicines from Lahore. He was our roommate in hotel room number 304 and now a fellow in tent. Dr. Ahsan and Ashfaq are also getting the reward for sending the medicines.

According to the Arab News, thousands of Saudi young men have donated blood for pilgrims in case of necessity. Here, I recalled my "bloodthirsty" friend Aslam Marwat. If he had been here, he would have immediately started collecting blood-bags, sending them to children suffering from Thalassemia all over the world.

I offered *Asr* prayer in the tent. It has been narrated that one should offer prayer in *Masjid al-Khayf* on the day of *al-Tarviyah*. Friends told me that it was now very difficult to go there and come back. The Masjid is full of people. I came out of the tent with Khalid and Zahid after *Asr* prayer and proceeded towards the Masjid. The city of *Mina* is in full bloom. Our dwelling place, Maktab 11, Tent 73 is of average quality; some tents are very attractive and comfortable. Some are worth watching. All the tents are air-conditioned. In *Mina*, The Muslims from different parts of the world form a constellation. They have different colours and still all are same after wearing the *Ihram*. They have the same center and their hearts are united. All are chanting the same phrase: *Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik*. With the passage of time this chanting is becoming louder and louder. After a hard struggle and cautiously watching our steps, we entered *Masjid al-Khayf*. A Sri Lankan made room for Sheikh Zahid. On the other side, there were Bangladeshis and Egyptians. An Arab brother showed kindness and shared the place with me. When I found a place to sit I praised Allah ﷻ that I have opportunity to offer another prayer inside the Masjid of Prophets ﷺ, near their final resting places.

What is *Mina*? It is a land of devotees and lovers. Prophet Ibrahim (عليه السلام) came here in compliance of Allah's ﷻ Command, to actualize his dream. The Satan tried his best to seduce and betray him but in vain. Angels were amazed at the scene. I am imagining that incident. Time has stopped. O Allah ﷻ how is it possible?

Ibrahim (عليه السلام) is going to slaughter his dear son. Ibrahim (عليه السلام) laid down Ismail (عليه السلام) to slaughter him but Allah ﷻ sent a lamb for that purpose. Allah ﷻ eternalized Ibrahim's (عليه السلام) *Sunnah*. Every year, millions of Muslims slaughter millions of animals to commemorate his sacrifice.

An Arab Devotee, Talbiyah and Masjid al-Khayf

The Masjid is resonating with the echoes of *Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik*. A Jordanian is reciting *Talbiyah* in a loud voice with devotion and passion, waving both his hands. All other people are proclaiming their presence before Allah ﷻ with the same fervor. The Jordanian devotee is chanting louder and louder. His voice is thrilled, floating, musical and rhythmical with an aura of spiritual presence. Others are thrilled and following him. All are registering their attendance in the court of Allah ﷻ. The Jordanian is in trance while chanting *Talbiyah*. He is in a spiritual nimbus. It seems that his attendance is acknowledged and with him ours, too.

The *Holy Companions* used to recite *Talbiyah* with such a loud voice that it would become hoarse. Like Jordanian brother, Afzal Kashif from tent number 73 is active in reciting *Talbiyah*. He is oblivious and unaware of himself. He is always in varying moods. He enquires about others and takes care of friends. He phones individually to everyone in Pakistan and prays for him / her. He is reciting *Talbiyah* loudly and advising others to do the same, even enforcing them. When a patient comes to take medicines, he says him to recite *Talbiyah* three times. We got the opportunity to offer *Maghrib* prayer in *Masjid al-Khayf*. Imam Sahib recites the *Holy Quran* in his inspiring voice. He recited *Alam Nashrah* in the first *Raka't*; when he recited that "Thy name is exalted!" it seemed as if that he is telling to the whole world. He is announcing and telling to the enemies, infidels of Makkah, that Allah ﷻ has exalted the name of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). No one can imagine this exaltation.

The return was very difficult. Millions of people were returning after prayer. Many patients came to the tent in my absence. Soon they started coming again. I checked them up and gave them medicines. Kashif-ul-Rehman said that people of diverse

colours are gathered in *Mina*; the same scene will be there in the paradise. May Allah ﷻ show us this scene repeatedly!

Towards Arafat

We offered *Isha* prayer in Tent and started preparations for going to *Arafat*. Tariq Shah was giving instructions, that we should take a little bag for convenience and check the necessary items, a mat, a blanket, a prayer-mat, pebbles and a bag for shoes. Stay in the ground of *Arafat* is the most important rite in *Hajj*. After *Isha*, all the fellows took dinner together at a dining-mat according to *Sunnah*. At 11:30 p.m., we were ordered to leave the tent and move forward.

An African guide is leading us. Men and women of faith are gathered. All the groups are heading towards *Arafat*. These groups will enter the paradise in same pattern. There are groups of Indians, Iranians, Australians and English. All of them have the same path and destination. We arrived at *Masjid Al-Khayf* in half an hour. Once again, I saw this *Masjid* and imagined the burial place of Prophets ﷺ. The Saudis have cut the mountains to construct buildings and laid a railway track for metro rail. For every Saudi king, the first priority is extension of holy places so that the pilgrims are comforted and facilitated. It is their aim of life. By virtue of this deed, they are worthy to be called real servants of holy places.

With the help of modern technology, the Saudi rulers conceive new plans to facilitate pilgrims, notwithstanding the cost and time; and they try to complete the project in their life. There are electric escalators to reach the train. Watch your steps at the escalator. There are six flights of escalators to reach the railway station. Enter the station and scan your ticket then start walking. Pilgrims walked for three hours and got tired. Older pilgrims were in bad condition; women complained. There is a shuttle service for very old and disabled pilgrims; others have to walk on foot. They are gasping, tired and drenched in sweat but they are not complaining lest it spoil the *Hajj*. We have to go farther.

After walking for three and a half hours, the weary pilgrims arrived at the platform. They felt relieved when they saw the train.

Train stopped and immediately moved when the pilgrims were boarded. We found a place in the fourth train. The train is clean, tidy, and latest but you have to stand, as there is no vacant seat. Always stand with some support otherwise, you will fall down with a jerk. Train reached the station. We prayed Allah ﷻ for help to find our Maktab. After reaching *Arafat*, we took a sigh of relief.

City of One Day

Arafat is the city of one day. This city is built to facilitate the pilgrims in their stay at *Arafat*. All the facilities are arranged for the pilgrims. A city even larger than *Mina* is before our eyes. In fact, *Arafat* has become a global town: Muslims from all over the world, from all the continents, from all the nations are heading towards it. They are fatigued. An old man from Sargodha said that he was exhausted after walking to the station but he did not mind that. He was determined to face every difficulty and seek courage from Allah ﷻ only. The old man was narrating stories of the City of Prophet ﷺ, Madinah, when there was a sudden jolt and he fell down on me with his full load. Tariq Shah had advised us to keep our bag as light as possible. When my hands and shoulders got numbed carrying the heavy bag, I realized that he was right and that we should have acted on his advice.

Guide from Maktab 11 was there and he took us with him. We were relieved to see Maktab 11 and entered our tent. The pilgrims had reached *Arafat* in four hours and they were very much fatigued. There was a common tent. Tariq Shah borrowed blankets and partitioned the tent for men and women. We were too weary to walk. I pulled myself to the bathroom and performed ablutions to offer *Tahajjud* prayer. After that, I fell fast asleep but was awakened for *Fajr* prayer after an hour.

When we woke up for *Fajr* prayer, there were long queues outside washrooms. As compared to *Mina*, there were fewer facilities for washrooms and ablutions. I saw that some people were performing ablutions with drinking water from water-cooler. It was against the rules but I was forced to do ablution in the same way. We offered *Fajr* prayer after Inam-ur-Rehman. His touching

and impressive voice overwhelmed all of us. We laid down for rest after prayer and slept for three hours.

Washrooms and Comments

I went to washrooms for ablutions but there were long queues. I stood in a queue; next to me was an Indian and behind me, there were Bangladeshis and some men from Peshawar. People standing in the queue were passing interesting comments about people inside washrooms:

- He has occupied the place.
- What are you doing inside for so long?
- Knock at the door.
- He is taking rest.
- Four other people have come out but he is still inside.
- Perhaps he is washing clothes.

Some people have favorable attitude for the people inside the washrooms:

- You have come to perform *Hajj*; do not tease anyone. Do not pass unnecessary comments.
- Do not say that; do not knock at the door.
- You go to washroom when you need it.
- *Hajj* is the name of patience; be patient, Allah ﷻ likes the patient.

I felt light-hearted after listening to these comments. My turn came after 19 persons. I did it hurriedly lest the above-mentioned comments may fit on me. By the grace of Allah ﷻ, medical service and treatment continued in *Arafat* camp, too. People came to know that and they started coming for checkup and phoned for medical advice.

Stay in Arafat

I talked to Aslam Marwat and Younas Khan. Today is the day of repentance and demanding something in prayers. Do prayers beseechingly, weeping and crying like a passionate and devoted servant of Almighty Allah ﷻ. Who knows who will have this opportunity again? Tariq Shah told that in the previous years

we used to reach there by bus. There was no problem at all. Nevertheless, today's travel in train had made all of us weary. It is needed that a shuttle service should be started to carry the pilgrims to train and *Mu'alims* (guides) should be bound to take pilgrims to metro station through shuttle service or bus. Several women were injured while climbing electric escalators. That is why the *Mu'alims* should give advice to people about that.

I came out of my tent and looked around. It is hot today in *Arafat*. People are sweating but air is blowing and making it bearable. Hundreds of vehicles are transferring the pilgrims. Thousands of security personnel, soldiers and traffic wardens are controlling the situation and helicopters are hovering for air surveillance. There are devotees, wherever you see.

Why do they call it the Day of *Arafat*?

It can give us an opportunity for acknowledgment and recognition (*Ma'rifat*) of Allah ﷻ. In the ground of *Arafat*, Hazrat Adam and Eve met first time after leaving paradise. Pilgrims come from different countries and this day is the day of introduction with one another. More important thing is that humans will be collected in the field of *Arafat* on the *Day of Judgment*.

Imam is delivering the sermon. *Masjid Namirah* is at much distance from there. Imam is advising the Muslims to have a firm belief in Allah ﷻ, to live in mutual harmony, with love and fraternity, resolving all mutual conflicts. I wished to listen to the sermon going close to Imam Sahib but that was not possible.

Thousands of vehicles are parked on the road. I walked for a long time. At *Arafat*, wealthy people bring juices, ice cream, fruits and packed breakfast in huge containers and distribute among pilgrims with due respect. "Luban" is a special kind of "Lassi" (diluted curds) here. It is very tasty and you forget Lahori Lassi. Drink it and enjoy. Water, fruits and juice are being distributed. Arabs have an exemplary hospitality. Allah ﷻ has sent His thousands of Prophets ﷺ to this land. These lands are pure and sacred. These lands kissed the soles of Prophets ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ came to this field of *Arafat* riding on the camel *Qaswa*.

Chapter 7

Sermon of Hajjat-ul-Wida' Magna-Carta of Islam

The field of *Arafat* is full of men and women. Today Holy Prophet ﷺ is very happy. The mission for which he was sent to this world and the duties that were assigned to him by Allah ﷻ are completed. Allah ﷻ has declared that:

"This day I have perfected your Deen (Code of life for humanity) for you and completed My favors onto you and have chosen Islam as your Deen".

Qaswa is walking enthusiastically. She is happy that Holy Prophet ﷺ is riding on her back. His holy companions surround Holy Prophet, mercy for all. Devoted companions are all around him. Allah ﷻ has exalted the name of his Prophet ﷺ for eternity. Islam has spread throughout Arab. Allah ﷻ granted magnificence to His Prophet! Holy Prophet ﷺ summarizes the golden principles of Islam in his farewell sermon in *Arafat*. He mentions all the fundamentals of Islam. The last sermon of Holy Prophet ﷺ at *Hajjatul-Wida'* is the Magna Carta of Islam: Read it and get spiritual pleasure.

After praising and thanking Allah ﷻ, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"O People! Lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year, I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore, listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today.

O People! Just as you regard this month, this day, and this city as sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust.

Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners.

Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you.

Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that He will indeed reckon your deeds. Allah ﷻ has forbidden you to take usury (interest), therefore all interest obligation shall henceforth be waived. Your capital, however, is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity. Allah ﷻ has judged that there shall be no interest and that all the interest due to Abbas Ibn Abdul Muttalib (the prophet's deceased uncle) shall henceforth be waived.

Beware of Satan, for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hope that he will ever be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.

O People, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your wives, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under Allah's ﷻ trust and with His permission. If they abide by your right, then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Do treat your wives well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers. In addition, it is your right that they do not make friends with anyone of whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste.

O People! Listen to me in earnest, worship Allah ﷻ, say your five daily prayers (Salah), fast during the month of Ramadan, and give your wealth in Zakat. Perform Hajj if you can afford to.

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black any superiority over white - except by piety and good action.

Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brother-hood.

Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim, which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it is given freely and willingly. Therefore, do not, do injustice to yourselves.

Remember, one day you will appear before Allah ﷻ and answer for your deeds. So beware, do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone.

O People! No prophet or apostle will come after me and no new faith will be born. Reason well, therefore, O People, and understand words, which I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the Quran and my example, the Sunnah (Hadith), and if you follow these you will never go astray.

All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness, O Allah ﷻ, that I have conveyed your message to your people."

The Muslims can prosper in this world and in the Hereafter by following these laws and principles. Otherwise, they will be at loss in both of the worlds.

When Holy Prophet ﷺ finished his sermon, this holy verse was revealed onto him:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا (مائدة: ٣)

"This day I have perfected your Deen (Code of life for humanity) for you and completed My favors onto you and have chosen Islam as your Deen."

Holy companions were disheartened to hear when Holy Prophet ﷺ said that he might not be amongst them next time. They could not imagine to be separated from Holy Prophet ﷺ even for a single moment. Nevertheless, they understood that his time for departure was near.

Hajj sermon ended from Masjid Namirah. Imam Sahib repeated the same things that were said by Holy Prophet ﷺ in his

farewell sermon. All the *Hajj* sermons since then are based upon this farewell sermon. In fact, *Khutba Hajjatul-Wida'* is a constitution intended for universal peace, brotherhood, equality and harmony. All the wars and battles can be culminated if the world follows these principles. After the sermon, following the Sunnah of Holy Prophet ﷺ, we offered the prayers of Zuhar and Asar under the single Azan and double Aqamat. So is ordered for this day and to be Muslim is to be obeying Allah's ﷻ order and following the Sunnah of Holy Prophet.

People are sending gifts of fruits, mineral water, Zamzam water and other food items. I met an old friend Dr. Ejaz from King Edward. We exchanged our prayers. It is time to pray, to supplicate.

It is Time to Supplicate

The field of *Arafat* is packed with pilgrims. All the roads, pavements, corridors and vacant spaces between the tents are filled. All are busy in sanctifications, remembrances and prayers. Some are silent, others are weeping. It is time to supplicate, to weep and cry, to seek forgiveness for all our intentional and unintentional sins, transgressions and mistakes. Men of faith are standing in the every corner of *Arafat*. They are seeking forgiveness for their sins weeping and sobbing. Allah ﷻ has descended with his angels in *Arafat*. He has ordered angels to observe his men busy in his praises. He is proud of His men and He is declaring to His angels that He has absolved all those seeking the pardon.

Hazrat Ayesha رضي الله عنها narrates; Holy Prophet ﷺ said that Allah ﷻ absolves most of His men on the day of Arafah as compared to other days. The number of people absolved on the day of Arafah is always greater than other days. On this day Allah ﷻ comes closer to His men and expresses His pride at His men who are supplicating. Allah ﷻ makes angels witnesses that He has absolved all the sins of His servants.

Tariq Shah told us that *Arafat* was a barren field. There was no greenery. Former Pakistani president Zia-ul-Haq sent soil and plants from Pakistan and thus plantation started here. When I

heard this, the most precious soil of my country appeared to be more sacred to me because it was mixed with the soil of *Arafat* and have become purer and eternal.

Evening is about to set in. The mountains of *Arafat* are in front of us. Thousands of white particles are rustling on the mountains. There are black particles too. These particles have merged into *Arafat*. They are oblivious of themselves. It resembles the day of resurrection. Allah ﷻ has descended with His angels and He has absolved all His men. Fortunate are those who happen to come here.

Arafat: Black and White Particles

There is no vacant area in *Arafat*. All the space is filled with black and white particles. There are free stalls for drinking water. Water, milk, lassi, ice cream, juice and palm dates are being distributed. Hospitality and generosity of Saudis can be observed everywhere. Hospitality and generosity are the intrinsic qualities of natives of Makkah. Their young and old are equally hospitable and helpful. They are serving the pilgrims and providing them food items. In fact, stay in *Arafat* is meant for prayers: to remember Allah ﷻ and to supplicate forgiveness for one's sins. Sheikh Zahid is also weeping and praying. Tears are streaming down my eyes. I am supplicating and praying. I remember all the requests for prayers in *Arafat*. Yumna, Huzaifa, Mahnoor, members of the family, all the colleagues and friends in service to the humanity are right before my eyes. I always remember my dear homeland Pakistan in my prayers. O Allah ﷻ, be merciful and approve my prayers.

All of these pilgrims are connected to Allah ﷻ. They are imploring his mercy and blessings. It is time for sunset. Prayers, supplications, sobbing and crying are intensifying with the passage of time. It seems that they will annihilate and become a part of the soil of *Arafat*. It is as if the doomsday has arrived. One-day after city of *Arafat* will be desolate again until the next year. There will be silence. Vehicles are ready to move ahead towards their destinations. It took much physical and financial investment to

populate this city. Nevertheless, it was commanded by Allah ﷻ to do so and his command was obeyed. Now it is time to move to next destination. Allah ﷻ has commanded thus to stay in *Arafat* till the sunset and then to go to *Muzdalifah*. Now all the attention is focused on *Muzdalifah*.

Return from Arafat

Buses are ready to depart. Shah Sahib advised us to go to washroom. Sheikh Zahid is avoiding that since the morning. There are long queues and crowds outside the washrooms. On one side, there was a variety of people. There were Egyptians, Saudis, Pakistanis and Lebanese standing in the queue. Here too, they are passing comments on those getting inside the washrooms:

- Haji, hurry up please.
- Please come out.
- For how long will you stay inside?

A Saudi administrator was in a hurry; he stood in the queue but kept waving his hand to show that he was in urgency. His turn came after six persons. An Egyptian old man placed his hand on his belly and asked permission to go first. I said, "No problem, you may go". After entering into the washroom, I poured water on my body and the hot water cleaned all the pores of the skin. All the weariness was gone.

Shah Sahib said that we should leave at 8 O' clock. Again, the same drill: first to station, then Metro train to *Muzdalifah*. Call for *Maghrib* prayer is given but pilgrims are not yet permitted to offer *Maghrib* prayers. They will offer *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers collectively in *Muzdalifah*.

سر تسلیم خم ہے، جو مزاج یار میں آئے

I submit unconditionally to the will of my beloved.

Hajj is a unique event of the world in which all the Muslims from all over the world come together. Millions of pilgrims stay in *Arafat* and perform *Hajj* rites. No other festival even of other religions can be compared with *Hajj*. People are collecting their

luggage to set for *Muzdalifah*. Tents and carpets are being folded; the show has ended. Several groups of native people are gathered outside the tents. They are also carrying their luggage to the next destination.

Sudanese Devotees, Benedictions and Afzal Kashif

A group of Sudanese outside our tent is not moving away and its members are absorbed in themselves. These enraptured devotees are praising benedictions. They are raising their hands and praising Holy Prophet ﷺ in their own unique style. Whenever Holy Prophet's ﷺ name is mentioned, their rapture and devotion is heightened. My fellow Afzal Kashif observed them for a long time and then joined their group. He has become a lover in the group of lovers. He understands what they are reciting, at least partially, because he is gesturing in the same way. Sudanese lovers of Holy Prophet ﷺ are praising Holy Prophet ﷺ and Afzal Kashif has joined them. It is a strange and mystic sight. Whenever the verse "Thy name is exalted" is recited, they all wave their hands in a state of frenzy. Verily, Allah ﷻ has exalted the name of Holy Prophet ﷺ.

In Muzdalifah

We set for *Muzdalifah* at 8:30 p.m. Traffic is jammed due to thousands of buses simultaneously heading towards *Muzdalifah*. Even the pedestrians cannot walk on the roads therefore administrators decided that departure to *Muzdalifah* would be at 8:30 p.m.

I am looking at the clear sky. There are barren, huge, lofty, gray mountains of *Muzdalifah* in front of me. Pilgrims in white *Ihram* are arriving. There are people walking on both sides of the mountain road and other paths. They are present here to practice the Sunnah of Ibrahim (عليه السلام) and Holy Prophet ﷺ so that their *Hajj* may be accepted in the court of Allah ﷻ. They are coming from all sides. All the roads are crowded. It seems as if black and white particles are moving on the mountains. Pilgrims are searching for pebbles. They are filling polythene bags with pebbles to throw them at Satan. Every year millions of pilgrims collect pebbles from

the mountains of *Muzdalifah* but the pebbles are not scarce. Pebbles of every size are there. Billions of pebbles are collected every year. The mountains of *Muzdalifah* are same as they were centuries ago; neither their size is reduced nor the quantity of pebbles. Human reason cannot explain this phenomenon. Although some people say that every year, pebbles are collected from *Jamarat* and thrown into these mountains. It is Allah's ﷻ miracle and magnanimity of *Abraha* عليه السلام and Holy Prophet ﷺ.

It is last hour of the night. Some pilgrims are sleeping; others are awake and waiting for the dawn. In *Mina*, there were tents and bathrooms; all the facilities were available in the city of *Arafat*. Nevertheless, here cobblestoned road is underneath and above is the open sky. The rich and poor, black and white, officer and servant, in short everyone is sitting on a blanket or mat. There were different tents in *Mina* and *Arafat* according to "package". There was an impression that wealthy people get facilities everywhere but here, there is no distinction. All are equal in Allah's ﷻ court. Reaching here, all offered the combined prayers of *Maghrib* and *Isha* according to Allah's ﷻ command and Holy Prophet's practice. All are staying in the field of *Muzdalifah* without any tent according to Allah's ﷻ command. All the differences of colour and race, family and social status, wealth and poverty are vanished. If one wants to observe the unity and equality of human beings, he should come to the field of *Muzdalifah*.

We departed from *Arafat* at 8 O' clock. The city of *Arafat* was vacant in moments. All groups started to depart just after *Maghrib* prayer. There was turmoil: we lost the card of our *Muallim* in *Mina*. *Tariq Shah* had to walk back three kilometers in search of card but all in vain. We had to travel on Metro train once again. We walked three kilometer to reach the station. Train arrived after ten minutes. We immediately boarded and alighted at *Muzdalifah* station. Millions of men and women of faith are gathered in *Muzdalifah*. Men and women are gathering pebbles at distant mountains. There is a huge gathering of people. Trains will keep arriving and departing throughout the night.

Night at Muzdalifah

It is 3:00 a.m. The Devotees of Allah ﷻ are staying here without any shelter. They are busy in talking, resting, walking, performing ablutions or collecting the pebbles. Many of them are sleeping. These humble men of Allah ﷻ, though sinful and indulged in worldly affairs, are following the Sunnah of Holy Prophet ﷺ and command of Allah ﷻ. They are happily obeying Allah's ﷻ orders. They are without any shelter; the ground is sandy, the mountains are barren and rocky but they do not mind it.

O Allah ﷻ! They have forgotten their worldly status and prestige. They all are but supplicants, present in your court. O Allah ﷻ! These lovers of Islam, respondents to Your call, are calling You passionately and imploring You to be merciful. They are on the barren mountains of *Muzdalifah*, on the sandy land, on roads and platforms; they are in corridors and pathways but they all are praying to you that today the nation of your dear Holy Prophet ﷺ is in trouble and decline. The infidels and denunciators of Holy Prophet ﷺ have made our lives difficult. They are killing our children. They are humiliating our women, destroying our cities and countries.

O Allah ﷻ, help us.

O Allah ﷻ, destroy the forces of *Devil*.

O Allah ﷻ! These 4 million believers are supplicating and imploring, You help them. Make Islam the dominant force for the benefit of humanity. Help Muslims realize and adopt the right path.

It is a strange scene. Men of faith are delighted after carrying out Allah's ﷻ command. Asma and Najma have gone to sleep. It is twilight. People are offering *Tahajjud* prayers. Some are doing futile effort to sleep. Some lay down to sleep but then get up and start looking around. Mountains of *Muzdalifah* are right before their eyes.

O Allah ﷻ! What were the times when Prophets used to walk in these mountains? How Ibrahim ؑ defeated Satan, all his

efforts proved abortive. Satan was failed and thwarted. Ibrahim عليه السلام, Allah's ﷻ friend succeeded. All the Muslims will slaughter animals to commemorate his Sunnah and they will testify that they are ready to sacrifice their lives, riches and time for Allah ﷻ.

I am fortunate to write these lines on this Holy Land of *Muzdalifah* in Makkah. It is not a travelogue intended to provide information or record incidents. It is the voice of my heart. I wrote down my impressions, my feelings that I experienced on these Holy Lands and the scenes that I witnessed there so that I can share these with you... May Allah ﷻ invite you to His House repeatedly! *Hajj* is a religious obligation and you have to perform it. Do not worry about finance. Make up your mind and pray to Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ will help you and you will be invited. Your job is to make the decision; it is up to Allah ﷻ how he actualizes your decision.

A White Streaked Blanket on the Mountain Muzdalifah

Night is about to end; a few moments are remaining. Allah's ﷻ men are arriving. Arrivals and departures of trains are announced at the station. Saudis have blasted the way through the mountains to run a metro train. They have spent billions of dollars to provide a comfortable transport for pilgrims from *Mina* to *Muzdalifah* via *Arafat*. If you wish to visit these Holy Lands after reading this compassionate travelogue and Allah ﷻ invites you there then do not forget to convey my salutations to these mountains and every inch of this place. If you happen to attend the court of Holy Prophet ﷺ, I humbly request you to convey my salutations. Only those who stay at His doorstep are granted something. No other religion or religious festival can provide such an example that four million men and women are sitting in the open sky, on the sandy land and roads, remembering Allah ﷻ.

Prayer time is approaching. All are attentive to perform ablutions. They are performing ablutions wherever they find some place. They are unconscious of their surroundings. Water splashes are moistening the clothes. Asma said that my clothes are spoiled. I got up and tried to take water for ablutions. I could find a place after quite an effort because there was a long queue. An Indian old

man asked me to give him water. Then, an old woman forwarded her ewer. Another woman asked to fill her bottles of water. One woman had a jug in her hand... After serving all of them, I performed ablutions. People offered *Fajr* prayer in groups in the vast ground of *Muzdalifah*. After prayer, we were ready to move because Allah ﷻ has ordered to leave *Muzdalifah* at twilight.

We boarded the train and watched the mountains, roads and millions of men and women from the window. It is time before twilight. The whole city of *Muzdalifah* is glowing. The black and white, yellow and blue particles are clearly visible from the mountains of *Muzdalifah*. The mountain of *Muzdalifah* is covered in a white blanket with black, yellow and blue streaks. The white particles are *Ihram* wearing pilgrims, the coloured streaks are the pious and noble women. The mountain of *Muzdalifah* is covered in this white blanket. The mountain is not visible, just the slowly moving particles on it. Metro train is running through the mountains. Now there is a pleasant scene of the rising sun. It is rising gradually from behind the mountains. Its golden rays are fascinating. Here all the scenes are attractive and charming.

Train stopped for a while in *Mina* and a group of Arabs entered the train. They created quite a chaos. An Indian pilgrim advised me to stay firm so that women may be safe from jolts. Allah ﷻ gave me valor. When the train gate closed the leader of Arab group reviled us because we did not permit his men to enter the train.

Millions of people are gathered in *Jamarat*. Millions have arrived by train or by bus or afoot. Tariq Shah says we should wait for our fellows at *Jamarat* station. Millions of people are still arriving chanting *Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik*. They are praising the glory of Allah ﷻ. They are happy that Allah ﷻ has invited them to His court. The sun has risen high. It is hot and people are sweating. Nevertheless, I praise Allah ﷻ that all the *Hajj* rites are performed appropriately. Today the *Devil* will be pelted. Then we will offer sacrifice and after that, heads will be shaved.

Stay in Muzdalifah

The stay in *Muzdalifah* is one of the important *Hajj* rites. It is the Sunnah of Holy Prophet ﷺ. I realized its actual wisdom when I spent the whole night in the vast field of *Muzdalifah*. All the distinctions vanish during this one night stay in *Muzdalifah*. Contrary to *Mina* and *Arafat*, there are no tents in *Muzdalifah*. Here the sky is open; land is sandy and mountains are barren and rocky. Here all the *Ihram* men and the virtuous women clad in different dresses stay in the open field according to Allah's ﷻ command and Sunnah of Holy Prophet ﷺ. actually, stay in *Muzdalifah* is the symbol of equality of men. Allah ﷻ created all men equal. All the pilgrims are symbolically shrouded in *Kafan* after wearing *Ihram*. The distinctions of colour and race, wealth and poverty, status and station vanish. Similarly, all the distinctions disappear on reaching *Muzdalifah*. All are equal and worthy reaching in his court.

بندہ و صاحب و محتاج و غنی ایک ہوئے
تیری سرکار میں پہنچے تو سبھی ایک ہوئے

*The servant and the master, the poor and the rich
are alike,*

Reaching Your court, all are but equal.

Hajj is Tolerance

Hajj signifies suffering as well as tolerance. You have to be patient to perform all the *Hajj* rites properly. All the difficulties, sufferings and hardships of travelling are to be tolerated with patience. There are always hardships and difficulties during *Hajj*. Fellows are separated and lost, though usually found in a day or two. Allah Diya's wife remained missing for two days but he did not worry. He remained contented that she will return herself and she did return. Keeping this in mind, if you perform *Hajj* with patience, tolerance, without causing suffering for anyone, caring for others, sacrificing for fellow pilgrims and serving others, such a *Hajj* is approved and accepted in the court of Allah ﷻ as Holy Prophet ﷺ has affirmed. All the sins of such a pilgrim are pardoned and his ranks are raised.

It is very hot. We are going to *Jamarat* to pelt the *Devil*. Problem is that that everyone is carrying a heavy bag. We might not be permitted to go to *Jamarat* due to these heavy bags. Irrespective of the clear instructions from Tariq Shah, we acted on our own. We made our bags heavy stuffing too many things. Nevertheless, it was essential. Medicines were necessarily to be carried with because I wanted to continue serving Allah's ﷺ men on His Holy Land. The heavy bag caused trouble all the way. We alighted from the train. "How we will walk with these heavy bags?" Zafar from Rahim Yar Khan was here with his sister. She was disabled and was on a wheelchair. Shah Sahib thought the best solution and hanged the bags to her wheelchair. We waited for an hour for our fellows at metro station. When gathered, we moved to our destination. Today's destination is strange. It is the day to pelt the *Devil*.

Jamarat, Pelting and Devil

Collecting the pebbles from *Muzdalifah* and then pelting *Jamarat* is the Sunnah of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Ibrahim عليه السلام had pelted the *Devil* and made him run away. Obviously, pelting the *Devil* is a symbolic gesture of disregarding all that is evil. It is Allah's ﷻ judgment to do so and in doing so, a man actually pelts the *Devil* inside him. Man tries his best to get evil. It is a declaration, an assertion that after pelting a symbolic *Devil* here you must lead your whole life in accordance with Allah's ﷻ commandments and practices of Holy Prophet ﷺ. You have to defeat the devilish forces inside and around you. It is a continuous battle with *Devil*. He will obstruct your path and try to deceive you. He will seduce you towards worldly comforts. Whenever he tries to lead you astray, this moment will make you recall the promise that you made to Allah ﷻ alongwith millions of men. By pelting the *Devil*, you promised that you would lead rest of your life according to the teachings of Allah ﷻ and Holy Prophet ﷺ no matter how hard the evil tries to seduce you. It is time to fight with the *Devil*.

Tariq Shah, Zahid, sister Najma and other fellows are moving forward. There are millions of devoted men and women. We were all separated from each other in the crowd. Only Asma

was with me. We came to third Jamrah; it was today's target of pelting. Millions of men of faith were expressing their revulsion. They were expressing their wrath in pelting. It was a strange sight, a sight of battle between good and evil. Allah's ﷻ devoted men and women were enraged to see the symbol of *Devil* before them.

We came closer to it. There are seven rounds of *Tawaaaf* around *Ka'bah*, seven rounds of running between *Safaa* and *Marwah*; similarly, seven pebbles are pelted at the *Devil*. In the name of Allah ﷻ I pelted the first pebble at the *Devil* with full force. On the second and third pelting, I pulled out the *Devil* from me. On the fourth and fifth pelting, I resolved to favor virtues whatever the case may be. I will not be entrapped in the devilish treacheries. I will lead my life according to Allah's ﷻ commandments and *Sunnah* of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Then I pelted the sixth and seventh pebbles. In fact, I pelted myself. My carnal soul was bleeding. Asma was worried that her pebbles could not hit the *Devil*.

We Lost the Way

Devil stood smiling. *Devil's* dance continued despite pelting. When we came out, we saw an Arab and a Sudanese quarreling. Both were bleeding and rebuking each other. We lost the way while walking. We missed the track and nobody was there to guide us. We were worried and nobody was helping us. What should be done and where should we go? *Devil* was smiling at his success. "You came here to fight with me! I made you lose the way, now find out the way."

After walking continuously for two hours, we entered the tent area. Nevertheless, where was *Maktab 11*? We asked from Arabs, Africans, Pakistanis, Lebanese and Bangladeshis but we could not find *Maktab 11*. Asma was desperate. We were exhausted and drenched in sweat. Saleem Latif was saying that we pelted the *Devil* and he took revenge by making us forget our way. We met some fellows of our group but they were lost too, and wandering like us. We asked many people but of no avail. Then we met an Indian. He listened our problem attentively, may Allah ﷻ be pleased with him. He pulled out a map and told us that it was

street number 204; go ahead to street number 56 and then straight to pole number 8. This Indian brother defeated the *Devil*. *Devil's* dance ended.

We lost our card and identity strip. Asma, too, had nothing with her. African guard stopped us. He was about to push us away. *Devil's* dance was to restart when a Pakistani came forward and introduced us. So we returned to our tent, exhausted but with a satisfied soul. Entering the tent, we exchanged congratulations with our tent fellows.

Sacrifice and Head-shave

Today is 10th of Zilhajj. It is the day of sacrifice in the memory of Ibrahim. It is our first Eid that we will celebrate without children, parents and other members of family. All of them are coming to mind but I am contented. Inam Sahib informed that sacrifice is completed. During performance of *Hajj*, it is mandatory to sacrifice animals and millions of pilgrims do so. As per procedure, deposit your money in a bank or with your guide (*Muallim*). You will be informed about the timing of sacrifice subsequently. Once we were informed about the sacrifice, now it was time for head-shave, to revive another Sunnah of Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Dr. Umar Alvi and I went out in search of a barber. Inside the Maktab, some novice barbers were shaving pilgrims' heads. They were shaving their heads very badly. Some foreheads and heads were bleeding. We sat before a barber and told him to use a new blade. He refused to use new blade and insisted to shave the head with the used blade. Many pilgrims agreed. It was a strange scene. Wounded ones were being attended by their fellows. Siddique Tariq from India was a professional barber. He challenged that if there was any cut he will not take ten Riyal fee. He was using new blade for every head-shave. I bowed my head before him and he shaved my head within seconds. When I caressed my bald skull, it felt strange. Saleem Sahib said that we are made bald like naughty kids. O Allah ﷻ, forgive us now and absolve our sins. We

were hungry since night. When meals were served, we ate avidly and went to sleep.

It was time for *Asr* prayer. Slaeem Latif said that here we have to offer prayers consecutively. Medical service continued here too. Patients were coming and receiving medicines after checkup. They prayed for me. I entered the bathroom as soon as it was vacant. I bathed with hot water. When hot water touched my freshly shaven head, it felt painful but it also refreshed the body...

Pelting the Devil Again

Shah Sahib is moving from tent to tent and warning us that gate will be closed at 2 o' clock; take your meals hurriedly and come out so that Rami and *Tawaaf* is done timely.

More than half of the group members were to go there. Today, again, we had to go to *Jamarat* for pelting the *Devil*. It was time to be at odds with it. Yesterday the younger *Devil* was pelted; today, all the *Devils* were to be pelted. Allah Diya was disturbed since yesterday. He said that my wife pelted the *Devil* but I could not understand why she was talking to him. I pushed her away but she continued to speak. I do not know whether she was rebuking him or friendly chattering. When we came out of *Maktab*, millions of men were going to *Jamarat*. Roads, streets and corridors were littered with empty bottles and cans. Today there was no road problem. Tariq Shah and other fellows were accompanying so we reached *Jamarat* quickly. It was hot outside but very cool inside. Air-conditioners are installed in *Jamarat* and the environment is pleasing. Despite being pelted, the *Devil* was standing arrogantly and smiling. It seemed as if it was saying, "My workers will always be with you, any time, any where. They are circulating in your blood. How can you conquer me by mere pelting?"

Jamarat has been constructed up to four levels for the ease of pilgrims. Yesterday we threw stones at the smaller *Devil* from fourth floor. Today all three of them are going to be pelted. They will be pelted with seven pebbles each, following the Sunnah of Ibrahim (ﷺ). We went to first *Jamrah*. Shah Sahib told us a technical way to pelt the *Devil*: "Go closer to it, you will find some vacant

place there". We did the same; last section was vacant. Here the *Devil* was not wounded so severely. I pelted the seven pebbles one after the other. The *Devil* gave a smile, winked at me but was defeated at last. This time Asma's pebbles directly hit the *Devil*. After all, he was a *Devil*; he was not embarrassed. Then we went to second Jamrah. Here again we pelted him with seven pebbles and moved to the third Jamrah. Here an Afghan was trying to throw pebbles like a catapult. When he failed to do so, he looked at the *Devil* in wrath. The *Devil* was smiling at his situation. Nevertheless, the Afghan was a good shooter. He pelted the *Devil* targeting accurately. We completed our fight with three of the *Devils* and went to *Harem*. We had not visited *Harem* for a week. We were eager to see Allah's ﷻ House. We moved forward; there was a large crowd of people. Millions of pilgrims were leaving after completing *Hajj* rites.

Eid without Children

Pakistan is our dear homeland. All the honour and prestige is due to this homeland. We are nothing without Pakistan. That is why I always prayed for the safety of Pakistan from internal and external threats after entering the Holy Land.

O Allah ﷻ! Keep my Pakistan safe; destroy her enemies. O Allah ﷻ! Make the Pakistanis act in national interest, ignoring their personal interests.

It is Eid-ul-Azha in Pakistan today. Children have gone to Sargodha with mother and sister Shehnaz. It is the first occasion that we are celebrating Eid without children and other members of the family. Yumna, Huzaifa and Mahnoor are coming to mind. Parents, sisters and brothers and their children are before my eyes. We offered *Fajr* prayer in the tent and prayed for my country, members of the family, friends, colleagues and partners in service of humanity.

It was time for *Ishraq* (midmorning prayer). I offered *Ishraq* prayer and prayed for my dear homeland. Most of fellow pilgrims in the tent were taking rest. They had spent whole night in *Harem*. I was restless and anxious to go to *Harem* as soon as possible. I

wanted to see *Ka'bah* and desired to keep looking at it for the rest of my life. The relation of faith is a strange relation. This relation is unbreakable till the last breath. Strange faces, unknown races, first and the last meeting in life but when salutations are exchanged a relation is built that never ends. It seems that we have been familiar for years. Really, it is a familiarity of centuries. When Ibrahim عليه السلام called Allah ﷻ, and He replied that He would propagate His message to all, then all the souls including mine had said *Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik*. All are present here united because of saying *Labbaik* then. Late at night, I talked to children and other members of family in Sargodha and exchanged Eid-ul-Azha greetings. Yumna, Mahnoor and Huzaifa are behaving in a responsible way. They do not tease their aunt and grandmother. Yumna is the eldest and she is performing her duties very well taking care of younger sister and brother.

Mini Hospital in Mina

Tent number 73 of Maktab 11 is transformed into a mini hospital. There are emergency cases as well. An old woman fell down and sprained her ankle. Her feet were blistered and wounded. I dressed her wounds and gave her medicines. Javaid Sahib is a cooperative person. He is sharing his experiences and revealing the realities of life.

Patients are arriving. Now other patients from here and there are coming too. A lady doctor from Karachi also came... She wanted medicines for sore mouth. I gave her the gel kept for myself. She was pleased and prayed for me. Javaid Sahib from Faisalabad is saying that I have started a business with Allah ﷻ. This business is flourishing moment by moment. *Hajj* is a bonus. He explained well the word "care": the first letter C is for "connection". If you have a connection with someone, you will have good wishes for him. Until and unless the doctor has a harmonious connection with a patient, he cannot treat the patient. "A" is for "Attention"; connection is useless without attention. If you are connected to the patient and give him full attention keeping in mind his self-respect, then treatment becomes easy. Besides connection, attention and respect this circle is incomplete

without Empathy and Enthusiasm. Patient's care involves connection with him, attention towards him, his respect and enthusiasm for him. Allah ﷻ cures because of this care. These four things are not limited to patients rather they are important in personal and professional relations as well.

Medical Care in Tent 73

We take care of patients because it is connections with the patients for Allah's ﷻ sake aiming at no worldly reward but only eternal. Once again, we are in *Mina*. I am spending good time with Ali Akhtar, Sheikh Zahid, Saleem Latif, Muhammad Tahir, Afzal Kashif, Dr. Umar Alvi, younger Haji Usman, Shafiq-ur-Rehman, Zafar Iqbal, Javaid Iqbal and Bilal Dar. Now we all are Hajis. We all are head-shaved. My clinic in *Mina* is going well. Patients are coming and I am doing checkup. Usman's mother was feeling pain. I gave a pain gel for her. Haji was pleased. A haji came drenched in sweat, gasping and with rapid pulse. I made him sit, stretched him and checked him thoroughly. I encouraged him and gave him some medicines. He was satisfied and returned praying for me. Afzal Kashif is continuously complaining that he is suffering from finger contracture. No medicines are proving effective. I gave him medicines after consulting Dr. Umar Alvi. Now Afzal is sleeping well.

Mah Jabeen from Karachi arrived there. She had brought a stock of Medicines with her but all was lost. She was suffering from knee pain because of too much walking. I gave her medicines and asked about its effect and assimilation. I examined her thoroughly. Whether the patient is in Pakistan or in Saudi Arabia, *Mina* or *Arafat*, unless his problem is heard attentively it cannot be solved. Since the beginning of my medical practice, I try to hear the patient satisfactorily for his treatment.

This time metro train proved a good experience. There was some trouble in the end. We had to walk a long way to reach the train. We were afraid of walking for hours. Fellow pilgrims were complaining that it was very difficult to reach the train from *Mina* but we did not face any difficulty from *Arafat* to *Muzdalifah* and

then return from *Muzdalifah* to *Jamarat*. The train carried us to our destination in a few minutes despite of rush. Train is wonderful. Saudi government is to be appreciated that it provided this facility for pilgrims spending billions of dollars. This train carries the pilgrims from *Mina* to *Arafat*, *Muzdalifah* and back in very short time.

When it is time for prayers, prayer call is given in loudspeakers in Maktab 11. After that, people from different tents gather to offer congregational prayer. More than half of the pilgrims are in *Harem* to do *Tawaaf* because *Tawaaf* is an essential component of *Hajj*. We offered *Maghrib* prayer in the tent. Meals were served soon after *Isha* prayer. Fellows were hungry; all ate heartily. Some new fellows joined us in the tent. Gulzar Ahmad and Bilal from Faisalabad have returned from *Tawaaf*. We will do *Tawaaf-e-Ziyarat* tomorrow morning and will pelt the devil. I talked to Yumna, Huzafa, Mahnoor and other members of family. They congratulated Eid. Mahnoor and Yumna asked how I was feeling after head-shave.

Little Pilgrim

Some pilgrims come to perform *Hajj* along with their families. Young pilgrims look very beautiful wearing *Ihram*. Muhammad Tahir from Sahiwal has brought with him his daughter and younger son Muhammad Usman. Little Haji Usman strolls here and there. He serves everyone and all are happy with him. Ladies are in another room and Usman is playing the role of a messenger. In the hour of need, men and women call Usman:

Usman, call your auntie.

Usman, hand over the phone to your uncle.

Usman, do this; do that.

In short, Usman has become a need of men and women. He is called from male camp as well as from female camp. This pilgrim fell ill in *Arafat*. All were worried. I gave him medicines and he felt better. Now he was happy as before and mediating between uncles and aunties.

Using the things without Permission

While travelling or living together, one thing specially should be kept in mind that nothing should be used without asking for owner's permission. During *Hajj*, main problem is shoes that are frequently misplaced. Most of the pilgrims use others' shoes without permission that causes nuisance. If we get permission before use then such trouble can be avoided. We should not use other people's things without permission. You do not have to worry about shoes in *Harem* or *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. If your shoes are misplaced or someone has put them on mistakenly, you can have a pair from the pile of used shoes outside *Harem* and *Masjid-e-Nabavi*.

Excellence of Congregational Prayer

On our way, we offered *Asr* prayer in *Masjid Abdul Krim al-Hindi*. Congregational prayer was over so I had to lead the prayer. Many Arab, Sudanese, Saudi, Bangladeshi and Pakistani brothers joined the prayer. Arabs always offer prayers in congregation. Usually, they come to mosque before *Azan*. In case they are late, they offer congregational prayer. No one questions why there is a second congregation or the Imam is not bearded. Arabs perfectly follow the Hadith that congregational prayer is 27 times better than individual prayer. Sometimes we see that a single man is reciting *Takbeer* for prayer and others join him thus, they get a chance to offer prayer in congregation.

All sort of vehicles with passengers are heading towards *Harem*. We get a place in a coaster with torn and filthy seats. Twenty riyals per head will be charged. The vehicles are moving at snail's pace because thousands of them are heading towards *Harem*. It is not certain when it will reach there. Fellows are restless and anxious to reach *Harem* as soon as possible. An Indian haji was coughing. I gave him medicines and he looked at me appreciatively. I always keep my medicines kit with me. There are four lanes of vehicles on the road. On the way from *Jamarat* to *Harem*, there were containers of juice and water at different points and four or five swift young men were throwing the bottles towards the pilgrims. Those who were throwing the bottles and

those who were catching them, both were amused. Tariq Shah also joined the catchers and brought juice for us that were very tasty... This method of throwing water and juice did not look good. In *Arafat*, such items were distributed with much respect. Perhaps this was not possible in such a large crowd. Today I realized what a snail's pace is. We are in the vehicle since 4 o' clock and now it is about 6 o' clock but we haven't covered more than a few kilometers... Prayer call is given from the mosque of Saudi scholar Abdullah bin Baz. The vehicle stops. I take this opportunity, leave the vehicle, perform ablutions on the footpath and offer prayer.

Vehicles are lined up on the road as far as one can see. We do not know when and how we will reach *Harem*. Millions of men are walking on both sides of the road. Hundreds of them are sitting on footpaths. It is a strange scene. They are weary, tired and drenched in sweat but anxious to reach their destination. These are contented souls. You have to undergo and tolerate all this during the *Hajj*. Many people send their old parents alone and they have to go through many difficulties here. No one helps them. If you want, your parents to perform *Hajj* you should come along with them. *Hajj* will be accepted and you will be granted the reward for serving your parents as well.

Chapter 8

Final Rites of Hajj-e-Baitullah

Tawaaf-e-Ziyarat

What a fascinating scene!

Allah's ﷻ House is before our eyes. This neat and clean House, center of the world, is the dearest and most important place for billions of men and women. Millions of devoted men and women are circling around it. They are praying, supplicating, begging and crying. They are praying in Persian, English, Urdu, Hindku, Chinese, Indonesian, Malaysian, Turkish and in almost all the languages spoken on our globe. Everyone is praying to Almighty Allah ﷻ in the language he knows. Allah ﷻ is listening to each and every prayer. He is watching all of them. Allah ﷻ is being praised; his hymns are being chanted. My Allah's ﷻ beautiful House is before my eyes. The book in your hands is not a typical travelogue. It is not a manual for *Hajj* or a guidebook for Saudi Arabia. It is a supplication from a humble servant of Allah ﷻ. It is a tribute to Allah ﷻ and His prophets. Ibrahim (عليه السلام) had given a call and my soul had replied, that is why this humble and sinful servant was present in Allah's ﷻ House.

I just completed my *Tawaaf* and now I am sitting in *Mataaf* right before *Ka'bah*, penning down these lines. Since we came to this Holy Land, I remained restless and anxious to see Allah's ﷻ House, towards which we direct our face while offering prayers.

O Allah ﷻ! How beautiful is Thy House!

O Allah ﷻ! How sacred is thy House!

When these sacred moments had come, it seemed that all the efforts and countless travels for humanitarian service were approved by Allah ﷻ. When Allah ﷻ invited me to His House and

granted me the opportunity to see His House, it seemed that I received all His blessings... All the desires and wishes are fulfilled except that of visiting Holy Prophet's ﷺ home.

... By the grace of Allah ﷻ we reached *Harem* in time for *Isha* prayer otherwise Saleem Latif would say that I had pelted the *Devil* and he deceived me. In *Isha* prayer, we got a place outside *Harem*. It is a great blessing to offer prayer after Imam of *Ka'bah*. Imam recites *Holy Quran* in such a touching way that silence prevails everywhere. He recites holy verses with a tender heart. After offering prayer, we started *Tawaaf-e-Ziyarat*. Millions of men are gathered in *Harem*. Some are doing *Sa'ee* others are doing *Tawaaf* and the remaining are busy in remembrances and sanctifications. Gradually, all the rites of *Hajj* are being completed.

Mother Hajira and Sa'ee

Sa'ee for *Tawaaf-e-Ziyarat* is yet to be performed. Mother Hajira's Sunnah is yet to be followed. Mother Hajira is running between the mountains of *Safaa* and *Marwah*. She is running in rugged mountains and she returns to see her child after each cycle. Satisfied to see him safe, she runs again to find water for the child. Angels have descended from the heavens. They are witnessing the scene. All the angels believed in the dignity of man since the day they prostrated before Adam in accordance with Allah's ﷻ command. Seeing mother Hajira's running their belief in human dignity became even stronger. Allah ﷻ Himself liked this running so much that He proclaimed it one of His signs in the *Holy Quran*. He made it obligatory to all Muslims visiting His House to do *Sa'ee* in conformity with Hajira's Sunnah otherwise their *Hajj* and *Umrah* will be incomplete and unacceptable.

I started *Sa'ee* in conformity with Mother Hajira. Mother Hajira, how glorious is your *Sa'ee* that Allah ﷻ made it eternal! Millions of devoted and faithful men and women are walking on the path of *Sa'ee* following Mother Hajira. The places where Mother Hajira went running and gasping are indicated by huge green lights. It is commanded to run fast as Mother Hajira did. How glorious she is!

There are seven oceans, seven continents, seven stages of life from mother's womb to grave, seven sections of *Holy Quran*, seven recitation styles, seven days in a week; the digit of seven is sacred. Allah ﷻ ordered seven rounds of *Tawaaf* of His House. Devil is pelted with seven pebbles...and seven rounds of *Sa'ee* between *Safaa* and *Marwah* conforming Mother Hajira.

Hajj is incomplete without these seven rounds. When Mother Hajira did *Sa'ee*, wonder-struck angels had descended from the heavens. Today, again they have descended from *Bait-ul-Ma'moor* to *Baitullah*. Millions of men and women of faith are doing *Tawaaf* of *Baitullah*. Angels are looking at them doing "*Sa'ee*". Angels are bewildered. Allah ﷻ is watching from heavens and being pleased. He smiles watching His men and women and expresses His pride to angels. O Allah ﷻ! How glorious is Thy House! Blessings are showering. Today, again I am proud of my luck. I had offered my daily prayers facing this House all my life. Allah's ﷻ House was always in my thoughts but I had a desire to see it actually. Allah ﷻ is to be praised that He invited me to His House and granted me the opportunity to see His House. Lo! Allah's ﷻ glorious and magnificent House is there. Everyone is fascinated by it. *Tawaaf* is going on. Join me and imagine that you are before Allah's ﷻ House. May Allah ﷻ bless you with the opportunity to see His ﷻ House. When you see Allah's ﷻ House your gaze is fixed there. It seems that walls of the *Holy Ka'bah* are emitting waves, which attract you. Automatically, you are under the influence of its compulsive attraction. Whether you are reciting the *Holy Quran* or offering prayer, your attention is focused on Allah's ﷻ House.

Sa'ee was complete and I was feeling rather tired. Nevertheless, the satisfaction of mind and heart was exceptional. We were free at 10:30 p.m. after doing *Sa'ee* and all were hungry. We bought a chicken roast and ate it with Arab bread. The Arabs do not use too much salt and spices. Olive oil is their favourite. They use olive oil with almost every cooked food. they use olive oil or pickle made in olive oil with bread. That is why heart attack and other heart diseases are insignificant in Arab countries. Arabs are

great eaters; they eat luxuriantly but with lesser spices and use olive oil plentifully. They always drink *Kahva* after eating meals. *Kahva* quickens digestion and frequent use of olive oil safeguards them from heart diseases.

Insult of Ihram

Ihram is a sort of *Kafan*; it is dress of pilgrims and considered sacred. Its cloth is purchased with respect and reverence. It is kept in great care before wearing. Soon after pelting the *Devil* and getting head-shave *Ihram* is put off and normal dress is put on. *Ihram* shrouds are thrown in bathrooms, on roads and garbage points. *Devil* laughs looking at such insult of *Ihram*. He says, "You have just pelted me, tried to defeat me but I took my revenge immediately." Two women started quarrelling. One was saying, "Do not bluff me, I have spent 0.5 million whereas you spent only 0.3 million." Blocked roads, haggling with wagon conductors, rush, suffocation and exhaustion...*Hajj* was completed and many hajis immediately turned impatient. They started complaining. *Devil's* business restarted.

The Lost Bag

It was 12 O' clock when we came out of *Harem*. There were buses and wagons but they were demanding too much fare. Tariq Shah was trying to get us conveyance at a reasonable fare.

There are two gigantic mountains opposite to the *Safa* hill. All these mountains stand here since the times of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Holy Prophet ﷺ used to walk in these mountains inviting people towards Allah ﷻ. The companions were devoted to Holy Prophet ﷺ. Holy Prophet ﷺ used to live in His House situated opposite *Marwah* hill where a library has been built now. It was the sacred and holy house where Holy Prophet ﷺ was born. It was probably the dwelling place of Holy Prophet ﷺ but Saudi government had put up posters in several languages stating that this sight is not confirmed as birthplace of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Any kind of worship is forbidden there.

We got a bus at reasonable fare about midnight. It was a long journey and there were endless queues of vehicles. The wind was cold as it was night. We were tired after Tawaaf and Sa'ee...waiting for bus and long journey exhausted us. Today by pelting the devil, we took revenge. When we alighted from the bus I realized that my bag was left in the bus. It caused concern. The draft of my travelogue was in the bag. "What will happen now?" I had written the events of last four days. "How am I going to rewrite?" Shah Sahib chased the bus but lost his way. He came back after an hour and for the first time he seemed quite furious. He even quarrelled with a fellow pilgrim. He said, "I had to walk four kilometers because you couldn't even guide me in the right direction." We kept on walking and reached our tent at 3:30 a.m. The tent was full; all were deep asleep. I found a place in a corner, slept there and woke up after an hour for *Fajr* prayer.

Medical Services

In the morning, I met my fellow pilgrims. All were looking for me. Patients continued to come for the whole day and night. They were complaining that doctor had left them. Why did he not return soon from Tawaaf and Sa'ee? Saleem's friend came there. Khawaja Wasif from Raza Block, Allama Iqbal Town said to him that he should shorten his beard. Saleem Sahib replied humorously that he may do so but his friends will laugh at him. After *Fajr* prayer, I intended to take a nap but patients started coming. They were waiting for me since last night. Different patients were suffering from different diseases i.e. body pains, cough, eczema, constipation, allergy, and blisters. Some patients asked, whether I shall receive the payment for medicines and checkup in Pakistani or Saudi currency?" Afzal Sahib told them that the fee is to chant Takbeer thrice. Every patient chanted Takbeer three times and left the room...

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَ لِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ

Today is 12th of *Zilhajj*. We have to go to pelt the devil. Roommates from tent number 16 said that I should not go out today. If I went out then patients will face difficulty. Many patients

came till *Zuhr* prayer; I checked them up and gave them medicines and received their prayers in return.

Pelting the Devil Again

Late at night millions of pilgrims arrived to pelt the devil again. Today the devil was being pelted since the morning. He was not defeated despite this heavy pelting. He was still smiling. Pilgrims were hitting the devil with pebbles. *Devil's* workers entered the crowd. Suddenly the crowd was out of control... People started running leaving their belongings behind. They left their umbrellas, shoes, bags, mats, bottles etc. and ran away. Older people were suffering in this jostling. Many of them fell down; pelting stopped and devil's dance resumed. *Devil's* workers did their business. Hundreds of men were injured. Many people returned without pelting the *Devil*. Of course, life is dear to everyone. We had come to Allah's ﷻ House but we wanted to return safely to our homes. Two died and several injured in this mess.

I had to pelt the devil yet; 2:00 p.m. was fixed for that. The city of *Mina* was going to be desolated. Groups of people were departing. People were collecting their belongings since morning. Things were being packed; there was a clamor for departure. Afzal Sahib had done his pelting after *Fajr* prayer. The devil smiled, "you want to go earlier; it is not the time to go. When you will come, again you will be exhausted. You will lack the passion and courage to pelt me." Afzal, Gulzar, Bilal and Akhtar Ali had to go to *Aziziyyah* after pelting. Many people were taking their luggage with them so that, after pelting, they might depart from *Mina* before *Maghrib*. Otherwise they would have to stop there for a day more to pelt the devil third time.

Interesting Styles of Pelting

Although roads are crowded but soon they will be desolate. There was excellent system of open air-conditioning. The day was hot and sunny but inside *Jamarat*, it was cold. There were millions of men inside and the three *Devils* were being pelted. Shoes, pebble bags, umbrellas, bottles, cloths, suitcases, blankets and mats were

scattered on the floor. These were left by those who ran for their life in the stampede. The first *Devil* stood smiling. It looked that he was saying, "Lower you gaze. Do not you remember what I did to you yesterday?"

Millions of people were chanting *Allah-o-Akbar* while pelting. We reached a corner and Asma threw the first pebble that hit at the target accurately and then the remaining six, too. Everyone has his own style of pelting. An Afghan is shooting pelts with a sling. An eighty-year-old mother was sitting in a wheelchair, taking precise aims. Her face turned red like a pomegranate when her pebble hit precisely. Her son offered to throw the remaining pebbles for her but she refused and she threw all the pebbles herself. Indonesian and Malaysian have their own unique style. They are short statured so they throw pebbles taking jumps. Iranian are enthusiastic; they pelt chanting in Persian "Down with the *Devil*, down with the enemies of Islam". A Bengali old man runs like a fast bowler and throws the pebbles in bowling style and when his pebble hits the target he is happy as if he has taken a wicket. In short, everyone has a different style. I pelted all three *Devils*. I prayed to Allah ﷻ that *Devil's* dance might not start again. *Devil* stood smiling. I feared that his apprentices might do something mischievous.

Last Night in Mina

Half of the group members have completed their obligatory pelting; their *Hajj* rites are concluded and they are returning to Aziziyyah receiving congratulations. In the days of *Tashreeq*, at least two-night-stay in *Mina* is obligatory. Khalid Sahib suggested prolonging the stay in *Mina* for a night. It is obligatory to leave *Mina* before *Maghrib* prayer. When we returned the dazzling city of *Mina* was deserted like a graveyard. Majority of groups had departed. This temporary habitation of millions, populated only for three or four days, was almost vacant. It seemed that inhabitants of the city have disappeared. The city seemed to be under some magical spell. Belongings of temporary inhabitants are now scattered on roads, footpaths, in corridors and on both sides of *Maktab*s. There are heaps in litter. Once these roads, corridors and footpaths were crowded with people but now they were vacant.

Each tent was stuffed with 20-25 persons; when a Haji turned side in sleeping he touched other's head or legs. If you came late at night you wouldn't find a place to sleep. Ladies in the adjacent room said, "Today we will sleep comfortably." Shah Sahib said, "Today each pilgrim has a separate bedroom and bathroom."

Cheerfulness is life. Life without cheer, gaiety and movement is dull and drab. *Mina* is desolated now. Cheeriness comes from humans. Inhabitants of hundreds of tents have gone. Bathrooms are free now. Even today, there were long queues at *Fajr* and *Zuhr* prayers. The whole city has deserted in a few moments; it will be populated next year. Those among us, whose souls had said *Labbaik* more than once to Ibrahim's ﷺ call, would come again; alongwith millions of new pilgrims.

Last Day of Hospital in Mina

My mini hospital in *Mina* was successful. As Javaid Sahib said, "You did business with Allah ﷻ and earned enormous profits." Yesterday, pilgrims were complaining that I had left them. The matter was that I had to go for *Tawaaaf-e-Ziyarat*. When I told them the reason for coming late they said that the service you are rendering is similar to *Hajj*. As in Pakistan, here too, pilgrims think that a doctor's job is only to serve them. Today, a few patients are coming for checkup. I had applied crepe bandage to the old mother yesterday. Today she came in good mood and told that she had done *Tawaaaf-e-Ziyarat* by the grace of Allah ﷻ.

In tent number 73, Muhammad Shafiq-ur-Rehman from Sahiwal, Zafar Iqbal from Sialkot, Sheikh Zahid and Muhamad Khalid from Lahore, Tariq Shah, Taufiq-ur-Rehman and Kashif-ur-Rehman are still with us; others have departed. Today we complained to Inam Sahib. He responded positively. He managed for conveyance for those who were ready to depart and ordered meals from Saudi food chain "Al-Bake" for the remaining pilgrims. The food was delicious. We offered *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers in the room and went to sleep. Today most of the tents are vacant. Some Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian pilgrims are present in *Mina* for another night to receive blessings of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ has judged

so that if you are not in hurry then you can stay in *Mina* for three nights in the days of Tashreeq but in that case you have to do an additional duty to pelt the *Devil* once more. Pelting the *Devils* means to be tolerant, to do away with aberrant desires, to defeat carnal soul and strengthen contented soul. Sister Najma is not feeling well so we are worried. We praise Allah ﷻ that all the *Hajj* rites are completed appropriately.

In the Masjid of Prophets

Tariq Shah woke me up at 4:00 a.m. He is an extraordinary person and a man of his word. He keeps roaming until late at night, guiding the fellow pilgrims and hearing their complaints but if you ask him to wake you up two hours later, he shall definitely do so. I got up, offered *Tahajjud* prayer, and praised Allah ﷻ. I prayed for the safety of Pakistan; for Yumna, Huzafa, Mahnoor, members of family, friends and for Islamic world. We went to *Masjid al-Khayf* early in the morning. I reckoned that there would be fewer people than usual and there was not a huge gathering as it was in early days but still thousands of people were sitting in the mosque. I sent Asma to women's section and I found a place in men's section with a good deal of effort. Most of the people were sitting or sleeping. Some were busy in recitations, remembrances and sanctifications. There was a sacred silence and comfort. *Masjid al-Khayf* has been the visiting place of seventy Prophets and they are buried here. That is why this mosque is so imposing and magnificent. Entering the mosque one is lost in its splendor and glory... *Fajr* prayer started. Imam Sahib recited *Holy Quran* in his impressive voice. He recited Surah *Waqi'ah* that sketched the whole scene of doomsday. It turned our hearts tender. He recited in such a beautiful way that verses seemed to be revealing there and then. There was a container outside the Mosque, breakfast was being distributed among the pilgrims. Really, Saudis are matchless in their hospitality.

Mysterious Old Man of Maktab 11

There is a strange Pakistani old man. His activities are quite mysterious. Sometimes he wakes up pilgrims early in the morning,

sometimes he warns people aloud. Occasionally he chants "Al-kareemi, Al-kareemi", Many a time he scolds and now and again, he quarrels in his Arab/Pakistani style. He will be with you and vanish the next moment... When one tries to talk to him the only word he says is "Ya Haji". He does not speak; if you ask a question he remains silent but if he starts talking then only he speaks while others listen to him attentively.

Vacant Bathrooms in Mina

In the last three days in *Mina*, it was not even conceivable that you will see the bathrooms vacant. There used to be long queues of people passing interesting comments...

To avoid such remarks I always tried to make haste. Stand in the queue, do it as quickly as possible and come out. The old men in the queue would smile that this is the way to do such things. A technical advice is that never stand in the queue of older people because of diabetes and enlarged prostate they spend more time.

However, the situation is different today. All the bathrooms are vacant. The place for ablutions is also unoccupied. Although there was long queue in the morning that is why when an old man from Karachi went to perform ablutions, he was amazed. He said, "Why is there a queue since all have gone?" Another old man was brushing his teeth. Seeing this the first old man said, "Do you intend to break your teeth?" Nevertheless, today all the bathrooms were vacant, enter the one you like. Enjoy a bath or perform ablutions; you are free. I took a bath with hot water. I also got the chance to use soap because no one was waiting outside.

Shahi Tukray in Mina

It is a great blessing to spend the last night in *Mina*. Since night, we are getting the best food, tea and fruits in abundance. There is no crowd outside the bathrooms and at the place for ablutions; rooms are vacant. We have a golden opportunity to pray and to beg for pardons. We offered *Fajr* prayer in *Masjid al-Khayf* and got a delicious breakfast. When we were going out to pelt the *Devil*, Shafiq-ur-Rehman offered a slice of bread spreading honey, jam and butter on it; it was very sweet. Shafiq Sahib said that these

were *Shahi Tukray* (A sort of bread pudding) of *Mina*. Spending an extra night in *Mina* is blessing in itself but we are also getting other things as bonus.

Pelting the Devil for the Last Time

We started packing our luggage. Most of the tents were vacant. Despite this, air-conditioners and lights were on in all the tents for whole night. No one thought to switch them off. The bus for *Aziziyah* was going to arrive at 1:00 p.m. It was better to be ready before its arrival. Once again, I got the chance to go to *Masjid al-Khayf*. I had developed a great devotion for the mosque of Prophets since the first day. We started walking from the tent. We saw the caravans marching ahead. Different caravans consisting of people from different nations, of diverse colours were present there. Some were heading towards their destinations in vehicles. Some were heading towards *Harem* but millions of people were marching towards *Jamarat* and *Masjid al-Khayf*. Yesterday *Mina* appeared to be abandon and desolated. Today there were so many people. Lot of people is on their way to *Jamarat* and *Masjid al-Khayf*. *Masjid al-Khayf* was even more crowded than the previous day.

Hall of the *Masjid* was full since long. People were sitting on stairs, footpaths and roads under the scorching sun. They are waiting for prayer time. It is their last prayer in *Masjid al-Khayf*. They wish to gather as much blessings as possible. *Asma* tried to cross the stairs and go inside but of no avail. I thought to sit on the stairs but I could not find a place. Outside the *Masjid*, an African girl had a shop; she had arranged for a shade. Two mats were laying there. I let sit *Asma* on one of them, sat myself on the other and thus we offered our prayer. Today millions of people are present in the Mosque and burial place of Prophets. From now on *Mina* would be deserted for almost a year. That is why all were wishing to offer *Zuhr* prayer in this mosque. Today we will pelt the symbol of *Devil* for third time memorializing Prophet Ibrahim (عليه السلام); and thus try to get rid of all the evil inclinations...

Chapter 9

Abraham, Ismail ﷺ, Hajira and Hajj

To pelt the *Jamarat* is Sunnah of Ibrahim ﷺ. Sa'ee on *Safaa* and *Marwah* is Sunnah of Ibrahim's ﷺ wife Hajira. It was almost as crowded as on the first day. After this day, the *Devil* will be detained for a year. He will suffer from his wounds for the whole year. A woman from the neighboring tent was saying that now the *Devil* would dress his wounds for the whole year. He will suffer from his wounds. He will weep bitterly.

It was last day in *Jamarat* so we were enthusiastic and passionate. A six-foot tall Sudanese was pelting the *Devil* stretching his long arms. It seemed that he would clutch the *Devil* in his hands and will squeeze his neck trying to kill him. A young Arab woman was training her little son and daughter to pelt the *Devil*. The kids were amused while throwing pebbles by taking jumps. When their pebble hit the target, they clap exactly as children are happy after taking a wicket in a cricket match or scoring a goal in football match.

A Bangladeshi old man pelted the *Devil* with seven pebbles but returned in wrath to pelt him more. His son took him away but the old man wanted to throw more stones at Satan. Before pelting the *Devil* my thoughts flashed back to the past.

There are rugged and barren mountains, burning ground and deserted Valleys in *Mina*. Ibrahim ﷺ is walking fast; his feet are wounded. Ibrahim ﷺ, along with Ismail ﷺ, has come in these valleys and mountains to obey Allah ﷻ Almighty. The *Devil* is chasing him. He is trying to tempt and deceive. He is enticing, "Ponder on it; look behind you; you got a child in this older age and you are going to slaughter him." Ibrahim ﷺ told Ismail ﷺ what *Devil* was saying and the son replied, "Father, do not be

seduced; do not listen to his words. He is the Satan. You have to go fast. Put on a strip of cloth on my eyes, and yours." The cursed *Devil* did not retreat. All the three *Devils* tried to lurk Ibrahim ﷺ and Ismail ﷺ. Ibrahim ﷺ kept on moving pelting the *Devils* seven pebbles each. Ibrahim ﷺ laid down Ismail ﷺ to slaughter him. The *Devil* tried again to seduce him. He tried to evoke his paternal affection. Ranks of angels descended from heavens to *Mina*. "O Allah ﷻ! What is going to happen? O Allah ﷻ, Stop Ibrahim ﷺ!" Ibrahim's ﷺ sacrifice was accepted. Allah ﷻ loved his way and sent a ram to be slaughtered instead of Ismail ﷺ. Ibrahim ﷺ passed the test and his name was eternalized. The *Devil* is pelted in the commemoration of Ibrahim's ﷺ sacrifice. Billions of animals are slaughtered every year in the name of Allah ﷻ.

Asma and I moved forward. Today the final *Hajj* rite was to be performed. We were going to pelt the *Devil* for the last time. Now we were perfect *Hajis*. We pelted the *Devil* properly. All three gates were closed to control the crowd but it happened again and several people were injured. We pelted the first two *Devils* and prayed to Allah ﷻ, facing towards *Ka'bah*. Now there was the third one to be pelted. I got furious while reaching there. I felt new power in my muscles. Why had you tried to seduce Ibrahim ﷺ? How will you bear these wounds? Pilgrims pelted the third *Devil* too. Thus, by the grace of Allah ﷻ our *Hajj* was completed. All the *Hajj* rites were performed. There was no trouble except exhaustion. I had treated my fellows and helped them. I showed patience and tolerance all the time.

Hajj is the name of tolerance, patience and service. If you have sufficient resources, then perform *Hajj* because it is obligatory. The greater reward of this *Hajj* goes to Asma because she had been insisting to perform *Hajj* since the past two years. We were invited because of her efforts and prayers. Pilgrims returned to their transitory dwellings leaving *Mina*. Administration has started to fold and pack the tents. All the vehicles on the road are for pilgrims. We offered *Asr* prayer on the way and reached *Aziziyyah* at 5 O' clock. We offered *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers in the nearby *Masjid*.

Issue of Penalty

Some of the fellows had arrived yesterday, some before sunset, some after that. Now the issue is whether they have to offer a sacrifice or not. Baig Sahib, Zafar Sahib and other fellows are arguing with early goers that they are bound to offer a sacrifice, each man will sacrifice a goat otherwise *Hajj* will remain incomplete. They are saying that Inam Sahib is accountable for that. Baig Sahib replied that everyone performs one's own *Hajj*. You were staying in *Mina* after *Maghrib* so you should have pelted the *Devil* next day before leaving *Mina*. You had not done this therefore, you must slaughter a goat for compensation. This issue remained point of discussion till the way to Jeddah. Ejaz Sahib got a judicial verdict, which stated that we left the tents before *Maghrib* so the sacrifice was not necessary.

Mini Clinic in Room # 304, Aziziyyah

Our clinic in *Mina* was rolled up with the tent village. I collected the remaining medicines. As soon as we arrived in Aziziyyah, patients started to come. They were complaining that their legs have become hard after too much walking. The pilgrims are suffering from different diseases such as foot blisters, hard and stuffed leg muscles, indigestion, eczema, cough, flu, chest infection, gastritis and body-ache. They are getting medicines after checkup. Patients kept coming till late night. I had to order more medicines from Lahore... I checked the last patient and went to sleep.

Pakistani Hospital in Room # 304, Aziziyyah

After *Fajr* prayer, patient pilgrims started to come to the clinic. They had to suffer the hot and harsh weather so they were having several health problems. Influnza, cough, flu and chest infections are common complaints. I had to procure more medicines.

As usual, Tariq Shah woke me up at 4:00 a.m. I had to wait because there was only one washroom for sixteen men, although the situation was not similar to that of *Mina* or *Arafat*. I performed ablutions and went to Masjid. The mosque is full of pilgrims and Turks. Here all the Masjids are airy, neat, and clean. It gives

satisfaction offering prayer and spending some time in the mosque. I recited *Holy Quran* and offered *Ishraq* prayer. I prayed for my dear homeland and for the health and well-being of members of my family and my friends. After that, I went to the mountains of *Aziziyyah*.

Streets and Mountains of Makkah

It gives much pleasure to walk on the roads and mountains of Makkah. I keep on walking. My memories flash back to the past. These are the places where Holy Prophet ﷺ and his holy companions would walk. I am stretching my imagination that these are the stones on, which the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Holy Companions used to sit. They would rest there on these stones. Streets of *Aziziyyah* are still full of pilgrims. There are some vehicles moving around in which sofas, pillows, blankets and other necessary items are being loaded. Pilgrims have gone and there are piles of empty bottles, juice cans and other paraphernalia. *Tariq Shah* told me that all the garbage would be cleaned in two or three days.

Patients kept visiting the clinic till *Zuhr* prayer. All the fellows are happy that they performed *Hajj* rites appropriately. Some fellows, who entered *Mina* after sunset, are worrying about penalty sacrifice. Because if you stay in *Mina* till *Maghrib* on the second day and you leave *Mina* without pelting the *Devil* then you are bound to slaughter a goat as penalty.

Before prayer, fellow pilgrims from tent number 73; *Gulzar Ahmad*, *Javaid Sahib* and *Kashif-ur-Rehman* came and discussed the time spent in *Mina*. *Javaid* said that *Hajj* is a symbol of power, influence and strength of Muslims. It shows unity, equality, fraternity and harmony. The issue of "penalty" remained the point of discussion. Although *Saleem Sahib* is worried about that but he is not ready for penalty.

In *Aziziyyah*, the number of patients has increased. *Asma* is not feeling well. Tomorrow, *Tariq Shah's* son *Hafiz Hassan* will arrive from *Jeddah*; I have called him for medicines. It is very difficult to purchase medicines in Saudi Arabia and their prices are

high. It gives pleasure to serve and treat the pilgrims. Allah ﷻ made me able to perform the *Hajj* appropriately due to this service. I praise Allah ﷻ.

Al-Tareeq Ya Haaj

May Allah ﷻ invite you to *Hajj*! As you enter Jeddah terminal you will hear "Al-Tareeq Ya Haaj!" You will hear this voice everywhere: on the road, in *Mina*, in *Arafat*, in the streets, in *Harem*, in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, beside the holy shrine of Holy Prophet ﷺ, in *Janat-ul-Baqee'* and in *Riyad-ul-Jannah*. Repeatedly you will hear "Al-Tareeq Ya Hajj", "Al-Tareeq Ya Hajjah"; sometimes it will be said politely, sometimes coarsely, sometimes loudly, sometimes with love. It will come to the point that you no longer will pay any attention to it. The literal meaning of this phrase is that "O Haji, leave the way, do not stand here". If you are standing in the way or a wheelchair is approaching, whether in *Harem* or *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and you hear "Al-Tareeq Ya Haaj", you should immediately leave the way otherwise you might be injured. So always remember not to stand in passageway otherwise, the voices of "Al-Tareeq Ya Haaj" will haunt you even in Pakistan.

Lady Police Inspector in Harem

We entered *Harem*, saw *Ka'bah* and praised Allah ﷻ who invited us to His House. *Harem* captivates your mind when you look at it. We stood there for a while and then police officers and security guards started calling: "Al-Tareeq Ya Haaj" i.e. "Pilgrims, you are standing in the way; move fast." Unwillingly, we had to move back. We were sitting aside when a Lady police officer, wearing a veil, came there. She said to Asma and sister Najma that they were sitting in Men's section. She advised them to go to women section. She was speaking Arabic but Pakistani, Iranian, Indonesian, Malaysian and Bangladeshi in short women from every country could understand what she was saying. She was guiding and helping the women in *Harem*. Some Malaysian women paid no heed to her words. She seemed to be an expert in such affairs. She left these women there and attended to others. She was gesturing with her hands to convey her directions to the women who did not

comprehend her words. After managing all other women, she turned to Malaysian women and ordered them to leave the place and they followed her at once. In 5-10 minutes, she partitioned men and women in their respective reserved areas. Sheikh Sahib said that she was the Lady police inspector for that area of *Harem*. Everyone has to obey her. † salute her for her efficiency.

Farewell to Aziziyyah

It was time to leave Aziziyyah. We had arrived there on 17th October... After *Zuhr*, we packed our luggage. Some fellows had departed earlier. We offered *Asr* prayer in Aziziyyah and went to *Harem*... Thousands of people were doing *Tawnaaf* and thousands were busy in remembrances and supplications. It was time for *Maghrib* prayer. Imam Sahib's recitation softened everyone's heart. When Imam Sahib uttered "Āmeen", it seemed as if angels in *Bait-ul-Ma'moor* are also saying "Āmeen". In *Harem*, time between *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers passed quickly. Lady Police Inspector was clapping and her calls of "Ya Haaja" reminded us that it was time for *Isha* prayer. She again started her duties in that area and separated women and men. We offered *Isha* prayer in *Harem*. *Harem* has its own glory. Offering prayer at other places earns the reward for only one prayer but in *Harem*, it is rewarded equal to a hundred thousand prayers. People are doing *Tawnaaf* and *Sa'ee*. Millions of devoted men and women are revolving excitedly around *Ka'bah*, uttering hymns for Allah ﷻ and running between *Safaa* and *Marwah*, remembering Mother Hajira.

Harem, Allah's ﷻ House is such a unique and central place in the world where you can see men from every country, colour, caste and continent. You can see black, white, and pale; African, Asian, Malaysian, Indonesian, Iranian, Russian, Tajiks, Turkishs, Egyptian, Syrian, Indian, Pakistani, Somali, Sudanese, American, British, Australian, Chinese, Japanese and Russian, all of them are from different colours and races but they share the same creed. Their center is *Ka'bah*. All look toward Allah; all belong to one and the same faith in Allah ﷻ and Holy Prophet ﷺ.

We departed from Aziziyyah and headed towards a new residence, Rehab al-Rauda. This hotel is 600 meter away from *Harem*. There were many hotels on this way but they are demolished now. More will be demolished for the extension in the area of *Harem*. Every Saudi king tries to render greatest possible service to *Harem* and *Masjid-e-Nabavi* in his regime so that *Hajj* and *Umrah* are made easier for pilgrims and they can perform this religious duty without any difficulty.

We stayed in hotel's room number 903. It is a seventeen-storey hotel. Rehab al-Rauda Hotel is situated at Al-Hijrah road opposite to Masjid Al-Hijrah. The road was packed with pilgrims who were looking for their hotels and rooms. We were feeling hungry. Sheikh Sahib went down and fetched some food from a Pakistani Hotel. Two other fellows joined us. We ate to our stomach's fill and went to sleep. Here the food is blessed; food for two men is sufficient for four.

Harem, Baitullah and Prayer

Since we landed on this Holy Land, we got up before dawn to offer *Tahajjud* prayer. We are fortunate that *Harem* is nearby. We are blessed to have the opportunity to offer *Fajr* prayer in *Harem*. We get up at 4:00 a.m. and leave our hotel.

On the first morning I had the impression that we would easily find a place inside *Harem* but as we went out we saw a huge crowd of people. Millions of people were heading towards *Harem* at that time. All were walking fast in order to enter the *Harem*. Sadiq told us that we should come out at 2:30 a.m. then we could find a place inside *Harem* or *Mataaf*, near *Ka'bah*. When we went nearer, we saw that people have arranged lines on the road outside *Harem* or their hotels. With much difficulty, we entered the area of *Harem*. The swift police officers were strict; they were moving the people from the way saying "Haji, clear the way". Some people started to offer prayer on the way but police officers moved them as they were and thus cleared the way.

I offered *Nawafil* of *Tahajjud* and praised Allah ﷻ who invited us to His House for *Hajj* and blessed us to be present there

for so much time. Offering *Fajr* prayer in *Harem* is a blessing that cannot be imagined at home... Imam Sahib recites *Holy Quran* in such a way, as if it is being revealed at that time. Imagine that Allah's ﷻ House is before your eyes, above is *Bait-ul-Ma'moor* and Allah ﷻ is observing these millions of men and women. When Imam of *Ka'bah* recites, everything becomes silent and every heart turns tender. After coming here, we realized that to recite *Holy Quran* while fully comprehending its meaning is necessary and important.

In the morning, you have to struggle to get *Zamzam* water because everyone tries to get more and more water to be used during the day. I left to have breakfast with Sheikh Sahib. On return, still there was a crowd of people. On our way, we met the old man Sadiq from Chiniot. He said, "Here is such a crowd of people; they are everywhere. We came here at 2:30 a.m. and thought that there will be fewer people. Millions of men were inside *Harem* and thousands were doing *Tawaaf*." Sadiq has come for *Hajj* under Government *Hajj* Scheme. He and his friend told us that they were satisfied with the facilities provided for *Hajj* by the Government of Pakistan. The same thing was told by some other people. I was pleased to hear that pilgrims were satisfied with the facilities provided by the Government of Pakistan.

Medical Service in Harem

My clinic was successful in *Aziziyyah*, *Mina*, *Arafat* and *Muzdalifah*. I served the pilgrims as much as I could. I gave away medicines to hundreds of pilgrims and they blessed me with their prayers in return. In *Rehab al-Rauda*, people became aware of our arrival and stay in room number 903. Gulzar Ahmad arrived from *Hilton Towers* to get medicines for his daughter. Abdul Sattar of *Abbotabad* came to get medicines for intestinal pain and gas. In *Harem*, a pilgrim from *Islamabad* was complaining backache; I gave him medicines. Shah Sahib's son Hafiz Hassan has arrived with more medicines. He had to face some difficulty. In *Jeddah*, Saudi Customs officials stopped him. They said that *Hajj* was over so there was no need of medicines. They detained him for three hours

and took his passport too. Then they took pity, returned the passport and medicines and let him go.

Al-Hijrah Road and Al-Khaleel Road

We went out for *Zuhr* prayer from Rehab al-Rauda. Lift works like a passenger train; it stops at each level therefore it takes some time to reach first floor. We ran fast to reach *Harem*. I crossed the Pigeon Square where thousands of pigeons could be seen... Many hotels have been demolished around this square. I offered prayer in front of Hilton Towers. Gulzar Ahmad took me to his room. Hilton Towers is a multi-storey building. The rooms are airy and spacious. Most importantly, it is the only hotel situated a few meters away from *Harem*.

Al-Hijrah and Al-Khalil roads are packed with people. Countless people are moving at a snail's pace. Again, the place is crowded at the time of *Asr* prayer so I have to offer prayer near Pigeon Square. I enter *Harem* through Abdul Aziz gate. People are everywhere, doing *Tawaaf* and *Sa'ee*. Now new comers for *Umrah* can also be seen besides the pilgrims.

People are waiting for *Maghrib* prayer. Thousands of men and women are walking around to find a proper space for a prayer-mat. After *Asr* prayer, I tried to do *Tawaaf*. I reached *Mataaf* but it was so crowded that I could not gather courage to go on. I returned through Abdul Aziz gate.

I am writing these lines sitting in front of Allah's ﷻ House. Millions of men and women are going around it in a state of devotion and excitement. They are walking briskly despite all the weariness; they will complete seven rounds. Some are doing farewell *Tawaaf*, others are doing their first *Tawaaf*. Some are doing *Tawaaf* for their parents. Allah's ﷻ House is before my eyes. It is such an inspirational and soul-nourishing scene that one wishes to remain there forever. For a Muslim and true follower of Holy Prophet ﷺ, Allah's ﷻ House is the centre of life.

In *Harem*, one does not feel the passage of time. It was time for *Isha* prayer. I offered *Isha* prayer in *Harem*. Today it was special blessing of Allah ﷻ that I offered all the prayers with congregation

in *Harem*. Our fellows thought that the number of people will decrease after *Hajj* but the situation was rather different.

It seems as if all the people have returned to perform *Hajj* again. A crowd of people can be seen from Rehab al-Rauda Hotel to *Harem*. *Mataaf* is also overcrowded. You have to come for prayer one hour before the time otherwise you will find no place. Soon after arrival, we performed *Umrah* and *Tawaaf-e-Ziyarat*; at that time, it was not so crowded. Today we were exhausted before we could reach *Rukn-e-Yamani* so we returned. It took us an hour to reach the Hotel.

In Saudi Arabia, the medicines are expensive. Patients started coming in Rehab al-Rauda, too. Our roommates Ateeq-ur-Rehman and Zohab returned with their families; Zafar Iqbal and Sabir Baig arrived in room number 903.

Finding the Bag

After *Tawaaf-e-Ziyarat* on our way to *Harem* from *Mina*, my handbag containing the manuscript of my travelogue was left in taxi. It caused worry. I told Shah Sahib. There are thousands of taxis; things forgotten in them are lost. It was impossible to find out the taxi-driver yet I prayed to Allah ﷻ for a solution. I talked to Inam Sahib's brother Zia-ur-Rehman who is resident of Makkah. He phoned and the Arab taxi driver was contacted. He told us that the bag was in his possession. Next day the bag was safely delivered in Aziziyyah.

Hajj, Harem and Hajira

It is a blessing of being close to *Harem* that one is awakened around 4:00 a.m. People remain up for the whole night. They wish to remain in *Harem* all the time. Here everyone is a devotee of *Harem*. Those who live near *Harem* try to spend more and more time inside *Harem*.

As usual, people have gathered there to be blessed. People have started to line-up in front of Rehab al-Rauda in advance. Everyone is in haste. It gives unique pleasure to offer prayer in *Harem*. We tried and entered the area of *Harem*. Two Bangladeshi

old men were standing near us. I introduced myself. They did not speak Urdu, however, I mentioned Tangi Tablighi Ijtima (preachers' congregation), their eyes sparkled. The discussion about Raiwind and three *Chillah* (40-day Preaching Mission) created an air of intimacy. There is no distinction among men; all are same and equal in Allah's ﷻ court. Arab, Bangladeshi, Turkish, African, Nigerian and Iraqi stand together. Short-statured Malaysian old men looked pretty. Their ages are declining but they are determined. They find their way everywhere. They silently creep into every crowd but they do not bother anyone. In *Fajr* prayer, Imam-e-Ka'bah recites in such a way, that one wishes to prolong the prayer. One wishes that he may keep reciting and others go on listening to him attentively. Imam-e-Ka'bah transfers the meaning of verses he recites through his recitation.

After returning, Sheikh Sahib offered us tasty tea.

What is Hajj?

Hajj can be described, in brief, as under:

Attendance in Allah's ﷻ court,

Wearing shrouds of Kafan,

A supplicant's request to the most generous Allah ﷻ,

First sight at Ka'bah,

Seven rounds around the-Holy Ka'bah,

Offering of 2 Rakaat as Nawafal at Maqam-e-Ibrahim,

Doing Sa'ee conforming mother Hajira,

Drinking of Abe Zam Zam,

Pelting the Devil repeatedly,

To be present before Allah ﷻ being humble and head-shaved,

To sacrifice for Allah ﷻ,

To stay under the open sky in Mina, Arafat and Muzdalifah,

All these elements constitute Hajj. Hajj is total submission to Allah ﷻ. Hajj is to sacrifice your life, time and belongings for

Allah ﷻ and to be present before Allah ﷻ in two shrouds and committing to follow all his commands.

Impact of Hajj

After doing *Hajj*, one is purified from all the misdeeds, mistakes, sins, impurities and other worldly stains. After that if he is not betrayed by *Devil*, leads his life in accordance with Allah's ﷻ Commandments and Sunnah of Holy Prophet ﷺ, as he promised while performing *Hajj* rites, he remains pure forever and succeeds in this world and Hereafter.

Hajj is an expression of Islamic brotherhood, harmony, fraternity, unity and collective power of Muslims. When people from different nations, colours and races, countries and continents, wearing diverse dresses chant *Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik*, all the angels from the heavens descend to hymn Allah's ﷻ praise, which made the man His vicegerent. Allah ﷻ is also pleased seeing the scene and expresses His pride over His men, created as the best stature.

My clinic was in the vicinity of *Harem*. Patients kept visiting all day and night. I examined two old women from Abbot Abad in their room. Most of the pilgrims suffer from cough, flu, influenza, and chest infection. Fifty percent of pilgrims are suffering from cough. Here medicines are very expensive. That is why when they come to know about my clinic, they immediately come to room number 903 for checkups and medicines. Shah Sahib has gone to Jeddah and has not returned yet. All the fellow pilgrims of his group are worried because he always comforts and guides everyone. Once again, people are heading towards *Harem* for *Zuhr* prayer. Huge fans are installed in the yard of *Harem*. These fans blow cool air therefore weather is pleasant inside *Harem* despite a sunny day. We offered *Zuhr* prayer in *Harem* and went to Al-Hijra and Al-Khalil road for a while.

The Beggar, Pigeon and Seven Grains of Barley

The way to *Harem* is occupied by beggars including women, children and elderly people from different countries. They beg in a loud voice saying "O Haji, help us" and most of the pilgrims give

them charity taking pity on them. Beggars from different countries especially from African countries can be seen begging in groups on the roads.

Thousands of pigeons are picking grains all the time in Pigeon Square. Near to these pigeons are sitting Africans, particularly African women who are famous for their eating habits. They sell different food items and eat all the daylong. Seeing their daily food intake one does not need to think about their health and fitness. Purchase the grains of one, two or five riyals and feed it to the pigeons. These guardian pigeons are sacred birds. They fly around *Harem* and are not afraid of men. Many stories are narrated about these pigeons. Shah Sahib told me that you would see some women collecting the grains of pigeons because of the rumour that if any childless woman eats the seven barley or wheat grains from the feed of these pigeons, she will be blessed with offspring.

Here All Are Intimate

Asma and I reached *Harem* before *Asr* prayer. Sabir Baig told us that since every place in *Harem* is sacred so if we go to the upper floor through Bab-e-Fahad, we can worship there peacefully. Really, here the environment is wonderful: peaceful, spiritual, and cool. People are reciting *Holy Quran* in their melodious voices. Some are busy in supererogatory prayers while others are busy in sanctifications. Asma is sitting in women's section, remembering her Allah ﷻ. On one side, are Indonesians, on the other Pakistanis. When I went to perform ablutions, an Indonesian helped me and I helped him in return. We exchanged smiles and greetings. Islam is in actuality the religion of peace. It preaches unity, peace and love. It is the time for *Maghrib* prayer in *Harem*. Men of Allah ﷻ are ranked and awaiting for *Allah-o-Akbar* so that they can pray before Allah ﷻ in His House.

We offered *Maghrib* prayer in *Harem*. Millions of men sitting in Bab-e-Fahd are reciting *Holy Quran* or praising Allah ﷻ and waiting for *Isha* prayers. A Muslim carries out Allah's ﷻ commands one after the other. *Harem* has a sacred environment. It is so illuminating and full of spirituality that one never wants to move

away from here. To offer a congregational prayer with millions of men in *Harem* is definitively a great fortune. In Makkah, every prayer is offered at earlier times: *Zuhr* at 12:05 p.m., *Asr* at 3:25 p.m., *Maghrib* at sunset and *Isha* at 7:25 p.m.

Āmeen of Angels

Of course, millions of men are joining *Isha* prayer. When Imam Sahib says "Āmeen" after Surah *al-Fatihah*, every corner of *Harem* is filled with the echo of "Āmeen". It seems that angels too, say Āmeen with Imam Sahib and other *Namiazis* (prayer-worshippers). Just now, I have seen Allah's ﷻ House. Seeing Allah's ﷻ House refreshes mind and soul and one feels intense pleasure and comfort. One wishes to see Allah's ﷻ House repeatedly. Huge water-tanks, filled with water of life i.e. *Abe Zam Zam*, a gift from mother Hajira, Zamzam, are available at various places inside and outside *Harem*. You can take as much water as you want. Pilgrims are returning that is why every place for Zamzam water is so crowded that one has to wait for hours to take a glass of water. One has to struggle to get Zamzam water but inside *Harem*, you can get it easily. Special staff is appointed to refill the water-tanks. These Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indonesian officials on duty are so quick that they refill the water-tanks before the water is finished. They pick used glasses and put new ones. An elderly pilgrim from Masqat was squeezing his legs; I began to massage his legs. He forbade me but he was pleased, too. When he was comforted, he prayed for me and thanked me.

Allah ﷻ, Ka'bah and His Servant

We were in Allah's ﷻ House early in the morning. Men and women of faith were all around *Holy Ka'bah*. With the prayer call, everything stood still. Everything joined the *Moazzin* of *Holy Ka'bah* in praising Allah's ﷻ greatness and oneness. People who were doing *Tawaaf* ranked themselves for prayer. I was in *Mataaf* in *Harem*, before Allah's ﷻ House, in *Fajr* prayer, listening to Imam's recitation. Imam said *Allah-o-Akbar*, by God, I resolved to offer prayer but first time it happened that I could not lower my gaze. My looks were fixed on *Ka'bah*. My face was already towards *Ka'bah*

but now my looks were focused on it. Imam Sahib's recitation turns the heart so tender that one weeps, cries, and begs pardon for one's sins. So to speak, I kneeled and prostrated but my looks were fixed there. The prayer I offered today is the prayer and genuflection about which Allama Iqbal has said:

یہ ایک سجدہ جسے ٹو گراں سمجھتا ہے
ہزار سجدے سے دیتا ہے آدمی کو نجات!

Prostration before Allah! you presume as irksome, tedious, burden great;

Mind you, this homage sets you free from bonds of men, of might who prate!

My looks did not turn away from *Ka'bah*. I completed my prayer but my looks remained fixed there. I was oblivious of my surroundings because my attention was focused on *Baitullah*. Imam Sahib recited *Ayat-e-Sajdah* and recited at length. Imam-e-Ka'bah recites so impressively that hearts turn tender. If a disbeliever listens to that recitation with open heart, he will accept Islam spontaneously.

Tawaaf before Fajr Prayer

Today we got up at 3:30 and went to *Harem* earlier. Even at that time, millions of servants of Allah ﷻ were going to *Harem*. Everyone was hurrying to get a place inside *Harem*. Today I was determined to do *Tawaaf* and see Allah's ﷻ House for a long time.

I entered *Harem*. As soon as I looked at *Baitullah*, my eyes were full of tears. I started to supplicate and pray. I prayed for my dear homeland Pakistan, for my members of family, friends, colleagues, assistants and for all the fellows in medical service.

Seeing the crowd, I guessed that we could hardly complete *Tawaaf* before prayer. Soon after entering *Harem*, I went to *Rukn-e-Yamani*, gestured a touch towards *Black Stone* and started *Tawaaf*. My gaze was fixed on Allah's ﷻ House throughout the first round. I was praying, supplicating, and feeling proud of my fortune. As a poet says:

شکر ہے تیرا خدایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
تو نے اپنے گھر بلایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا

*O Allah ﷻ, I am grateful to You, I was not worthy of this,
You invited me to Your House, I was not worthy of this.*

Asma moved a bead of rosary and the second round of *Tawaaf* started. I was proud of my fortune; my eyes were focused on Allah's ﷻ House. We were revolving around Allah's ﷻ House. We were again at *Rukn-e-Yamani*. Here one prays to Allah ﷻ. When millions of people raise their hands and gesture a touch pointing to *Black Stone*, the sight is worth seeing, moving and inspirational.

It is morning. Blessings of Allah ﷻ are showering on All of us. The crowd is moving slowly. Devoted men and women are revolving around *Ka'bah* as moths revolve around a candle. Asma told me that it was our fourth round. At *Rukn-e-Yamani*, we recited Quran and prayed for the evolution of faith and success in worldly matters. Here we pleaded guilty and requested for pardon for our sins.

Tawaaf is going on, there is jostling too, but is a joyful experience. We are feeling elevated. *Hajj* means tolerance and patience. It signifies sacrifice for others. Some people make haste, which causes trouble and difficulty for others. Therefore, it is necessary to perform *Tawaaf* calmly. My eyes are continuously doing *Tawaaf* of Allah's ﷻ House from every direction. Although my lips are praying but my heart is focused on *Ka'bah*.

The time for *Fajr* prayer was approaching and the crowd was increasing. Asma wished to get closer to *Multazim* but as we approached nearer some African men and women nudged us away. We thought it better to retreat. Asma turned another bead of rosary saying that it was our last round of *Tawaaf*. It was time to repent over our sins and to pray for our children, family, friends and Pakistan. Though, there was sufficient time for *Fajr* prayer yet people were lining up in advance so that they could offer their prayers nearer to *Ka'bah*. I considered it a golden opportunity and resolved to offer *Tahajjud* but a heavy push of crowd pushed us all.

I resolved several times to offer *Tahajjud* but each time I was thrust aside. Meanwhile, the time for *Fajr* prayer approached.

Doing *Tawaaf* early in the morning was a pleasant experience; I can still feel its impact. I pray to Allah ﷻ to be invited to His House again and again.

First Friday after Hajj

Today is Friday. Millions of Muslims are heading towards *Harem*. It is first Friday after *Hajj*. People have been sitting in *Harem* since morning. Nobody slept after *Fajr* prayer... Friday has a special importance for Muslims. This Friday is the most sacred day of my life. It is 10:00 a.m. but all the roads to *Harem* are crowded. Officials announced that there is no place inside. They are issuing orders to make ranks on the roads and streets. We tried and entered the area of *Harem*. The day is hot but worshipers of Allah ﷻ are coming. Multitudes of people are everywhere. Men, women and children of all ages are coming. Besides the pilgrims, many native people are also heading towards *Harem*. Everyone wishes to get a place inside *Harem*. We are sitting in the spacious yard of *Harem*, waiting for prayer time. At one side, there is a Dagestani brother and to the other is an old man from Bangladesh.

It is a very spiritual and inspiring scene. Millions of people are sitting around *Harem*. Thousands of people have ranked themselves on the roads outside *Harem*. The gates of *Harem* are closed and Friday prayer is about to start. Silence prevails with the first call of Friday prayer. Not an inch of space is vacant in the yard of *Harem*. Second prayer call was given soon after the first call. Imam Sahib delivered Friday sermon. He preached Oneness of Allah ﷻ and teachings of Holy Prophet ﷺ in his sermon. He congratulated the pilgrims for being fortunate enough to be present at the land of Prophets, holy companions and Imams. He said that Allah ﷻ has blessed you to perform *Hajj*. It is obligatory for Muslims to live in conformity with the commands of Allah ﷻ and the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Real success are the success in the hereafter. At the end of sermon, Imam Sahib prayed humbly for the victory of *Mujahideen* and success of Muslims.

In *Friday prayer*, people are sitting everywhere: inside and outside *Harem*, on the roads and streets, in corridors and verandas. Everyone tried to find a place to join the prayer. A funeral prayer was offered after Friday prayer. In *Harem*, after every prayer there is a funeral prayer. The people of Makkah try to offer the funeral prayer of their relatives in *Harem*. It is a matter of utmost luck that on Friday one's funeral prayer is offered in *Harem* by millions of people.

After Friday prayer, Sheikh Sahib brought all the essentials so we could cook our meals in the room. Food from the market was not satisfactory.

Hafiz Ash'ar from Sahiwal is staying with his wife in the adjoining room. They also cook for themselves. Yesterday, they sent us a dish of *Aaloo Qeema* (Potatoes and Minced Meat) that was very tasty. Asma cooked potato and eggs. Eating home-prepared food in Saudi Arabia was a great pleasure because we were eating spicy meals from a Pakistani hotel for two days that caused indigestion and abdominal discomfort. During *Hajj* one meets lot of people coming from all over the world. One feels such intimacy in the first meeting as if you were familiar since ages. One wishes to meet again. In Friday prayer, I gave cough pills to a Bangladeshi old man and Daghestani brother. They took the pills and put them into their mouths at once.

Pashtun's Patriotism

Rehab Al-Rauda Hotel has seventeen floors. Pilgrims from different countries are staying on each floor. During prayer times, there is a crowd of people at elevators. There are only three elevators for several hundred people. Sometimes one has to wait for quite some time to use an elevator. Asma gets disturbed in this situation. The pilgrims waiting for elevator become impatient and they pass remarks about each other. Some pilgrims say that we had pelted the *Devil* and he is taking revenge. Pilgrims get angry at trivial matters and start quarreling.

Asma cooked a delicious dish of potatoes and eggs. Its aroma reached in the surroundings. We distributed the dish in the

two adjoining rooms. A Pashtun lawyer from Charsaddah came to us and requested us to heat some rice for him. We thought that the dish would be enough for dinner but most of it was distributed among those who were divinely nominated for it. We heated the rice for Pashtun friend and gave him our own dish. It gives pleasure to serve and help the pilgrims. I praise Allah ﷻ that He granted me the opportunity to render medical and other services in *Harem*.

Advocate Fazal Majeed Khan from Charsaddah said, "I did a *Tawaaf* just for Pakistan". Pakistan is our country, our motherland, our life, respect and pride. All our honour is due to Pakistan. We are nothing without Pakistan."

Since the time we have arrived here, all of us have prayed for our country but Khan Sahib won our hearts by saying, "I did a *Tawaaf* only for Pakistan." He said to all the members of the group to do one *Tawaaf* for Pakistan. Khan Sahib had visited many countries. He told us that the peace of mind you can get in your country, could never be found anywhere else. Khan Sahib sent grapes and apples for us. His love and concern for Pakistan made me happy. A Pashto proverb goes as:

خپل وطن دا سره وطن

One's own country is as precious as gold.

Rain in Makkah

It is is summer season in Makkah since the time we have arrived here. There is scorching sun outside but inside *Harem*, the environment is pleasant. Powerful air-conditioners are installed in *Harem* at different places that is why it does not feel hot inside, rather it starts to feel cold after a while...

On that day, clouds started thundering after *Asr* prayer. After an hour, the dark clouds covered the sky. Weather became pleasant, romantic and sacred. I kept looking towards the sky. The drops of this blessed rain swept my mind and I started thinking that these are the same clouds and winds that were here in the time of Holy Prophet ﷺ. May be there is a drop from the time of Holy

Prophet ﷺ. Clouds and sky are the same. O Allah ﷻ! I beg for a drop, a single drop of blessed rain. If any cloud that had shadowed over Holy Prophet ﷺ or any wind that had blown in his life could touch my body for a fraction of a second, all my problems will be solved.

It is time for *Maghrib* prayer. The blessed rain is pouring down. I recall Holy Prophet ﷺ and his holy companions. Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه and Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه are walking on the mountains. Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه and Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه are also present there. They are enjoying the pleasant weather. Holy Prophet ﷺ is amused and devoted companions are around him. Holy companions are listening to his words and acting accordingly.

It was heavy rain. All the streets of Makkah were flooded with water. I said to Asma to go out in the rain. These drops are blessed and sacred. These are coming from the heaven that spread shadow over our beloved Holy Prophet ﷺ. The weather became more pleasant due to rain. Everyone became happy. Groups of people are heading towards *Harem*. Housekeepers in *Harem* are performing their duties. We entered through *Baab-e-Fahd* and went up by escalator. We offered *Maghrib* prayer in *Harem* and then sat there waiting for *Isha* prayer.

Many people are sitting in *Harem* waiting for *Isha* prayer and many newcomers are joining them. Blessings of Allah ﷻ are being revealed directly. Peace is being showered. People are busy in remembrances and sanctifications. As the prayer call is given, silence prevails everywhere. All people stand up for prayer. Prayer is offered immediately after the prayer call. To offer *Isha* prayer with Imam-e-Ka'bah is a matter of great fortune. The Imam recites *Holy Quran* and people say *Āmeen* (May it be so) that echoes in *Harem*. It seems that Allah ﷻ has approved all the prayers. Asma had been collecting prayer-mats from *Hajj* for the last two or three years. I did not comprehend why she did that. Sometimes it looked strange and crazy. Actually, we were to be invited. We were invited and thus we had become *Haji*. Now we have to go to the city of Holy Prophet ﷺ. We will see *Green Dome* of Holy Prophet ﷺ.

We will see the *Rauda-tul-Rasool* and will spend a lot of time in *Masjid-e-Nabawi*.

Street Vendors

In the market outside *Harem*, there is always a scene of fair. Shops remain open except prayer times. Vendors display their items on carts, footpaths and roads to attract pilgrims for shopping. Al-Khalil road and Al-Hijrah road are always crowded. Africans, Saudis and Pakistanis sell different things on trolleys and carts. These stalls made me recall Lahore and its fairs. You can get anything from these temporary shops. Shopkeepers call pilgrims towards their shops. As in fairs of our country we hear voices such as "every item for twenty rupees", similar voices can be heard here.

There are food-shops, general stores and medical stores but the medicines are very expensive. That is why instead of going to medical stores pilgrims come to room number 903 and always try to find a Pakistani doctor.

Pakistani and Lahori restaurants are also there. You can get every kind of dish. Today we ate delicious Saudi *Pakor*s. Old aged pilgrims of every country look very attractive and sacred. I shook hands with an old man who warmly welcomed me. He hugged me and gave a cheek-to-cheek kiss. Another old man from Masqat was standing nearby. I hugged him too. Love needs no language. Eyes and body language conveys every feeling and emotion.

Yumna, Huzaifa and Mahnoor

To get up at *Tahajjud* and go to *Harem* is a normal routine here. Some fellows remain all the time in *Harem*. For Muslims no place is more sacred than *Harem*. Today as I looked at *Baitullah*, I could not control my emotions. Days are passing by; today is our 18th day here. Yumna, Huzaifa and Mahnoor are spending their time well without parents. Yumna is the eldest and she is playing her role very well. She reprimands the younger brother and sister when required. She takes care of them but Huzaifa and Mahnoor quarrel with each other. These things of childhood are recalled when one grows. Before going to *Hajj*, I thought how I would live without children. Children need parental help at each step. Thanks

to Allah ﷻ that they are happy. I talk to them daily. In Sargodha, mother and sister Shehnaz are taking care of them. Clinic is also going on. Dr. Nadir Khan is looking after it. Ashfaq and Riaz are managing the matters. Really, *Hajj* is sacrifice. You have to go away from your children and home and have to sacrifice your riches for Allah ﷻ.

At *Tahajjud*, we set out for *Harem*. As compared to previous days, there were fewer people. We entered through *Baab-e-Fahd* and got a place inside. We offered *Fajr* prayer at the second floor. After prayer, we saw *Ka'bah*. With tears in my eyes and a thumping heart, I prayed to Allah ﷻ that I am a humble man; bless me to visit your House repeatedly. A few days are left now. Then we will go to the holy city of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I laid down in the spacious yard of *Harem* for a while. I slept peacefully. In the sleep, I dreamed of *Harem* and *Ka'bah*.

Birthplace of Holy Prophet ﷺ

After offering *Ishraq* prayer, I headed towards *Marwah* hill. There is a library there. The surrounding mountains were cleared for construction purposes and a large area included in *Harem*.

In the area of *Harem* in Makkah, the birthplace of Holy Prophet ﷺ is converted into a public library that is called "Makkah Library". This house is known as the birthplace of Holy Prophet ﷺ. This place and house is significant and sacred because the last Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was born there. It is situated beside the mountains, between *Safaa* and *Marwah* opposite to *Baab-us-Salam*. This house is not in its original form because of so many renovations but the location is authentic. In "*History of Makkah*" and "*History of Madinah*" the author, Muhammad Abdul Mabood has provided the details of the palaces in Makkah during Uthmani Caliphate with reference to governors of Egypt. At that time *Jarol*, *Masfalah*, *Jiyad*, *Qashashiya*, *al-Gaza*, *al-Shamia*, *al-Qirafah*, *al-Sulaymania* and *Shi'b-e-Bani A'mir* were different parts of Makkah. Birthplace of Holy Prophet ﷺ was in *Shi'b-e-Bani A'mir*. It was towards the north of *Gaza*. Birthplace of Holy Prophet ﷺ, birthplace of Ali ﷺ and the houses of *Bani Hashim* were situated in

it. In its eastern part *Bani Abdul Muttalib* were settled before the advent of Islam but nowadays it is occupied by nobles of Makkah. Most of the houses of *Quraish* were in the north of *Harem*.

This place is sacred and because the Last Prophet of Allah ﷺ, Muhammad ﷺ was born here on Monday, 9th of Rabi-ul-Awwal, (20th April 571 AD). This house was owned by Holy Prophet's ﷺ father Abdullah bin Abdul Muttalib. When Abdul Muttalib went blind, he divided all his property among his children. As a result, this house and the surrounding area became the property of Holy Prophet's ﷺ father Abdullah bin Abdul Muttalib and after him; this property was transferred to Holy Prophet ﷺ. When Holy Prophet ﷺ was ready to migrate to Madinah, he gifted this property to his cousin Aqeel bin Abi Talib...Muhammad bin Yousuf, brother of Hajjaj bin Yousuf bought this house from Aqeel bin Abi Talib and included it in his house thus it came to be known as "House of Ibn-i-Yousuf". When Caliph Haroon-ur-Rasheed's mother Khezran went to *Hajj* in 171 AH, she bought this house and built a mosque there.

The author of "*History of Makkah*" Muhammad Abdul Mabood quoted al-Sheikh Rif'at Pasha that "the house in which Holy Prophet ﷺ took birth was 1.5 meter down the road. There was a flight of stairs of stones to enter the house. Entering from the northern gate, there was 12-meter long and 6-meter wide yard. To the right was a gate opening into a small room in which a wooden terrace was built, in this terrace there was a piece of marble, hollowed in the middle. It is said to be the birthplace of Holy Prophet ﷺ." The total area of this place was 80 square meter. Now this building is no more there. This house and place passed from many historical stages to come into the present form.

Dr. Abdul Lateef Abdullah bin Dahaysh wrote in his book "*Private Libraries in Makkah*" that "Majeediah Library was established in 1328 AH. This library was a personal library of Muhammad Majeed bin Saleh bin Fiazullah bin Hassan. Majeed Kurd was a literary figure. He always encouraged academic and literary activities. He was also a bibliophile. After his death, his son further developed this library. In 1370 AH, Shah Abdul Aziz

ordered to build a public library in the house in which Holy Prophet ﷺ was born. The basic purpose was to transform this most sacred place for Muslims into such a place where academicians, researchers and authors would come freely to seek knowledge.

I Wish I were born in Your Times!

It is said that Holy Prophet ﷺ took birth at the place where there is library now. I sat pondering on the stairs of the library. I closed my eyes to imagine that time. I did not want to leave that place. A guide told me, "This is the place where Holy Prophet was born and lived." A few meters away toilets are built. It is said that this was Abu Jehl's residence. My Allah ﷻ exaltes the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ (شرح: ۴)

And We exalted thy name!

Abu Jehl and Abu Lahab are blotted forever. I recalled Hassan Nisar's *Naa't*:

تیرے ہوتے جنم لیا ہوتا
کوئی مجھ سا نہ دوسرا ہوتا

*I wish I were born in your life!
Then none would have been like me!!*

While sitting on these mountains, passing these roads, sitting before *Ka'bah* and bathing in the blessed rain in Makkah, I kept thinking and wishing:

I wish I were born in Holy Prophet's ﷺ life!

I wish I were soil of his path!

I wish I were dust under his feet!

I wish I were a part of his clothes!

I wish I were a thread of his black shawl!

I wish I were a morsel of his food!

I wish I caressed his hands!

I wish I combed his hair!

I wish I kissed the Seal of Prophethood!

I wish I were a part of his bedsheet!

I wish I were a shoelace of his shoes!

I wish I were born in Holy Prophet's ﷺ life!

Then I would be matchless!

I remembered that when I was a child and my mother used to tell me about Holy Prophet ﷺ, the same wishes would come to my mind. I used to ask my mother, "Mother, Why did not I take birth at that time? Can those moments and that time come back?"

Pilgrims visit the library and express their gratitude. Saudi officials distribute CDs and literature in several languages. Authentic Saudi scholars teach people in different languages and in their own style that we should lead our lives according to the commands of Allah ﷻ and practices of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Respect for sacred places is a good thing but our every action must be in accordance with Shari'ah.

We still had to visit many sacred places in Makkah. We had not visited the cave of Thaur and the cave of *Hira*. A fellow pointed towards a distant place and told that there is the way in the mountains from where Holy Prophet ﷺ used to set for the cave of Thaur. Once Holy Prophet ﷺ was walking and a mountain happened to block his way. Holy Prophet ﷺ gestured to the mountain and it moved away. What a glory our beloved Holy Prophet ﷺ had!

Chapter 10

Towards the Cave of Hira

So far, we had spent all our time in Holy Prophet's ﷺ Holy City; Makkah. I was determined to go to the cave of Hira. I wished to see that barren valleys, rocky and rugged grey mountains on which the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to walk to go to the cave of Hira for pondering and contemplation. Holy Prophet ﷺ used to stay in the cave to contemplate for several days. The glory of mountains on the way to Hira is worth seeing. These mountains are so high that one is wonder-struck to see them and thinks how Holy Prophet ﷺ would leave his home near *Harem* to reach the mountaintop after covering such a difficult and long distance.

I was yearning to go to the cave of Hira since the morning. I talked to my fellows; some got ready but others declined after hearing about the ascent. Asma got ready but when she saw the mountains, the height and heat, she was amazed. Hundreds of people looked like moving particles on the mountaintop. After seeing the high mountains of Hira we are sure that our Holy Prophet ﷺ had determination, courage and iron-will. At that time, there was nothing but mountains. The way to the cave of Hira is difficult and arduous. I was passionate and determined to walk on those paths and to reach that place where Holy Prophet ﷺ used to sit. Asma and Dr. Bashir Ahmad are accompanying me. Seeing the height both of them refused to go with me. There is a great razzle-dazzle at the mountain of Hira. There are shops and everything is available. Saudi government has set up an office that provides literature about the mountain of Hira. It states that although Holy Prophet ﷺ used to come there and the first revelation was revealed there but it is illegitimate to climb the mountain considering it a sacred place or to fulfill a vow. Despite of this literature hundreds of devotees are present and expressing

their. There is a straight but high road ahead. Passing from the market, I started walking on this road. The road was ascending so I gasped and my pulse was rapid. I was determined to go ahead although my legs were stiffened and aching. I kept moving slowly. I was out of breath and started sweating. I saw a hotel, stopped there, rested for a while to ease myself, and then resumed the walk. Again the same condition: my pulse rate was 140. My mouth was dry and legs stiffened. I felt a little bit pain and sweating and I could not walk anymore. Tariq Shah was worried. I felt pain in my chest. I was feeling suffocation. We sat there and evaluated our condition. Tariq Shah suggested to return and told Asma that we were coming back. I was unwell; my wish to visit the cave of Hira will remain unfulfilled. I was gloomy and depressed. Tariq Shah consoled me and suggested to come again. In the meanwhile, it was time for *Zuhr* prayer. We decided to offer prayer. My respiration was normalized. There is a small mosque from where the visitors unable to climb up the mountain have a view of the cave of Hira. We offered *Zuhr* prayer in that mosque.

I offered *Salat ul Hajat* (the prayer of need) and prayed to Allah ﷻ for courage to climb up the mountain. Just after ending the prayer, I regained strength. I was refreshed and full of courage as well as energy. My breathing was normal and legs were all right. Now I was not worried about my health. It seemed as if nothing had happened. After ending the prayer, I said to Shah Sahib to go up. Shah Sahib was disturbed hearing this. He said, "We will come here at some other day; now we should return." I told Asma that we are climbing up the mountain. I wanted to go to the cave of Hira therefore we resumed the journey.

Walking on Cobblestones

We are walking on the same stones and paths where Holy Prophet ﷺ used to walk. We are staggering, puffing and

swaying... The elderly and young, men and women are looking for the footprints of Holy Prophet ﷺ. They are searching for those stones where Holy Prophet ﷺ stopped and rested. I am out of breath and the destination is far-off. However, I am compassionate and determined and my spirits are high. I want to reach the cave of Hira to see those stones where Holy Prophet ﷺ rested and where the angel had brought first revelation. The mountains are rugged and uneven. There are stairs to climb up the mountain. This journey of love is going on. We walk taking respites... Men and women of all ages are walking to and fro. Those who are returning have sparkling faces.

We have climbed four hundred stairs. In the beginning, as I said earlier, I started losing heart and the climbing felt tedious but as we offered *Zuhr* prayer in the mosque on the way and prayed to Allah ﷻ for courage and strength, I gained strength and vigor. Allah's ﷻ help makes every task easy. Tariq Shah kept helping me. I told Asma to go to the hotel with Dr. Bashir. Asma was worrying about my health. I decided to go back but now we had covered more than half of the distance.

Pick up the Courage

Maulana Gul Ahmad of Loralai and Abdul Qadir Mardanzai are coming down and they are happy having visited the cave of Hira. They encouraged us that a short distance is left so we should walk at regular pace. We had climbed up 500 stairs and 700 were left. Puffing and gasping but kept climbing. We were anxious to reach the cave of Hira but we kept moving slowly. We watched our steps while walking on the stones. These stones were huge and rugged... I could smell the scent of Holy Prophet's ﷺ footprints in these mountains.

These were the luminous and sacred stones. Jabl-e-Noor is in front of us. Holy Prophet ﷺ used to come there. Jibrail's wings touched these stones. There were no stairs, roads and vehicles when Holy Prophet ﷺ used to come there; everywhere were the mountains. He would come there and would stay for several days. He would contemplate and reflect on Allah's ﷻ Oneness

and the vastness of this universe. This cave was Allah's ﷻ selection. Allah ﷻ selected these mountains and stones for His first revelation. These stones are gigantic like small hills. Holy Prophet ﷺ used to sit on these very stones... When Allah ﷻ decided to reveal Holy Quran on mountains, they swayed and trembled. Then Allah ﷻ revealed Holy Quran on his last Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. These sacred mountains were chosen for this honour. These were the fortunate stones and their glory is eternal. Thousands of pilgrims come there to see them.

Punjabi, Bengali and Kashmiri Old Men with Boxes

There are stops on the way. Punjabi, Bengali and Indian old men live there. They are beggars. They have spades and when they see the pilgrims approaching, they set to work lifting the soil, breaking the stones or cleaning them. They beg in the language of pilgrims. They consider themselves the guardians of these stones and paths and they demand tips and rewards for their services. Visitors shower riyals, rupees, dollars and pounds on them. This is the way of their sustenance in these mountains. They also appreciate and encourage the climbers. You have not covered half the distance and they will tell you that you are near the destination. This encourages the climber. There is a landing station at each hundred stairs. At each landing, you may have water, juice and tea. You can sit there to take a rest.

Jabl-e-Noor, the Cave of Hira and Surah Al-'Alaq

At last, we reached the destination after climbing for one and half-an-hour. We arrived at the sacred place. We were at the top of great Jabl-e-Noor. This mountain keeps gleaming until this day. Soon after reaching the Jabl-e-Noor, a coolness, spirituality and luminosity ran into our nerves and normalized our breaths. The exhausted body felt comforted. The stiffened legs were relieved and all the tiredness and exhaustion vanished. I was at the peak of happiness. It came to my heart that I should pronounce loudly that I have climbed to the top of Jabl-e-Noor, reaching the cave of Hira. I was there in search of Holy Prophet's ﷺ footprints. We entered into the cave. Only a single person at a time can pass

through the opening of the cave... Despite this difficult path and height, many visitors are present there. There are men, women, children, and elderly from different countries. Inside Jabl-e-Noor, there is place about which it is said that Holy Prophet ﷺ used to stay at that place. All the people who have reached there are happy and proud of their fortune. Women have brought Holy Quran with them. They are saying to each other that they will recite Surah Al-Alaq. It is a great blessing to come to the cave of Hira, to suffer the ordeal of climbing on this mountain and to sit there on those stones. Now we were exactly before the cave of Hira. We were sitting on the same mountain on which Holy Prophet ﷺ would sit. He would sit there and reflect on the structure of this universe. Allah ﷻ had not created the universe without purpose. Its creation serves a purpose. Allah ﷻ had selected Jabl-e-Noor and the cave of Hira for his first revelation. Allah ﷻ had decided that his angel will come here and his last book "Holy Quran" will be revealed there. Today we are sitting at that sacred place.

Tariq Shah is saying that minarets of *Harem* are visible from Jabl-e-Noor. In Holy Prophet's ﷺ time, there was nothing but mountains. There were neither roads nor buildings. From the cave of Hira you could see Allah's ﷻ House. While contemplating and reflecting, Allah's ﷻ House was visible to Holy Prophet ﷺ.

In Jabl-e-Noor, between the two slopes of mountain someone (probably a Pakistani) had inscribed:

غار حراء، جبل نور، بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، اقراء

The Cave of Hira

Jabl-e-Noor

In the name of Allah ﷻ, the most gracious and the most merciful, Iqra'

In all the pictures of the *Cave of Hira*, this writing is visible. I praise Allah ﷻ Who blessed me to visit the Cave of Hira. I had no capability to reach there. I lost my heart in the beginning. My Allah ﷻ blessed me the courage and we reached the *Cave of Hira*.

From that, distance people seemed like moving ants... I had taken my shoes off. Holy Prophet ﷺ used to sit in these sacred mountains therefore; I did not want to walk there in shoes. Pilgrims

are entering the cave. They are proud of their destiny. It demands great courage to reach here. Minarets of *Harem* are visible from Jabl-e-Noor. Most important thing is that I am writing these lines sitting in the *Cave of Hira*, amongst sacred stones and sitting on those stones where our beloved Holy Prophet ﷺ used to sit.

First Revelation, Mother Khadijah ﷺ and Warqa bin Naufal

Often Holy Prophet ﷺ would go to the *Cave of Hira*, taking water and barley flour with him. He worshiped there; this worship included praises of Allah ﷻ and contemplation on Allah's ﷻ works. He would remain there until water and barley flour would finish. Then Holy Prophet ﷺ started having true dreams. Whatever he dreamt at night, the same would come true in the day.

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ was forty years old, Jibrail ﷺ brought first revelation to him on 9th of Rabi-ul-Awwal (12th February, 610). The Holy Prophet ﷺ was in the *Cave of Hira*. Jibrail ﷺ said, "Muhammad ﷺ, hear the good news. You are Allah's ﷻ Messenger and I am Jibrail." After this event, the Holy Prophet ﷺ immediately returned home and lay in bed. He asked his wife Khadijah ﷺ to cover him with a blanket. After recovering from the effects, he ﷺ told Khadijah, "I have experienced such events that I fear for my life." Khadijah said, "You need not to be scared. I see that you are kind to your relatives, you speak truth, help the widows, the orphans and the helpless; you are hospitable and sympathetic to the sufferers. Allah ﷻ will never leave you sorrowful."

Now Khadijah needed satisfaction for herself. She took the Holy Prophet ﷺ to her cousin Warqa bin Naufal. At Khadijah's request, the Holy Prophet ﷺ narrated the event of Jibrail's ﷺ arrival and his conversation. He spoke at once, "It is the same personality that had come to Musa ﷺ. I wish I were young to live and help you for the time when your tribe will drive you away." The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked, "Will my people drive me away?" Warqa said, "Yes, in this world whoever preached such things had earned enmity. I wish to live till the migration to serve you." After some days, the Angel came again and taught him Allah's ﷻ Holy

words that are indeed a key to knowledge and all realities. Jibraïl عليه السلام recited these verses:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 اِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝
 اِقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝
 عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ (القلم: ١-٥)

*“Recite in the name of Your Lord Who created
 Created the man from a clinging substance.
 Recite, and Your Lord is the most Generous –
 Who taught by the pen –
 Taught man that which he knew not”*

Some Moments outside the Cave of Hira

Men and women are going inside. They are entering the *Cave* but do not want to return. There is a long queue. I do not want to go inside. I am sitting outside and watching the stones. I am caressing them and trying to imagine the time when the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم used to come there.

People are praising Allah ﷻ in their own ways. They are praising benedictions for the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. They are supplicating Allah’s ﷻ blessings and reciting the Holy Quran. They are observing the stones and walking cautiously. They are happy to come here. Coming here is not easy, only courageous and fortunate comes here. Our Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم was great and determined. He used to cross the deserted and barren mountains to reach here. Now there are buildings and roads around here but at that time, there was nothing but mountains. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم would walk in the rugged mountains to reach the *Cave of Hira*.

I wonder how these elderly men and women have reached *Jabl-e-Noor*. I wish to spend here some hours. If my body happens to touch the footprints of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, it will be a great blessing for me. The relationship between the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and the Muslims is that of love, devotion and passion. That is why they wish to visit the places, where the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم used to

walk. Despite of dangerous height, many visitors are here to see the *Cave of Hira*. There is a long queue of people waiting to enter the *Cave*. Everyone wishes to enter as soon as possible. I spend some time outside this sacred place. These mountains are magnificent and astonishing. Luminosity prevails there. Allah's ﷻ blessings directly reveal there. Gradually, the number of people is increasing. The crowd is jostling. All the people are praising the Holy Prophet ﷺ. All are trying to enter the *Cave*. They wish to see the place for a few moments. They desire to touch the stones where the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to sit. It is an expression of love and devotion. There is a gigantic stone of unimaginable magnificence. It is midday and the sun is hot but the number of visitors is increasing. Men and women of all age's have been coming here since centuries.

A Turkish old woman is sitting on the top of mountain, praying, and supplicating Allah ﷻ. She is praising benedictions for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. A cat passed from there. I coaxed her but she went away. Perhaps this cat was descendant of the cats of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ time. As the evening is approaching, the number of visitors is increasing. People are gathering there... Some are offering supererogatory prayers, others are reciting the Holy Quran. Some are kissing the stones. Others are just looking at the paths. I praise Allah ﷻ Who blessed me to visit this place. I am writing these lines in the shadow of *Jabl-e-Noor*, facing the *Cave of Hira*.

I keep imagining the time when the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to come there and sit to contemplate. Here, Jibrail ﷺ brought Allah's ﷻ message, the first revelation. People are climbing to the mountaintop. I do not know when my turn to enter the *Cave* will come. Nevertheless, the wish for coming here was fulfilled.

I had to wait; the queue was long. Someone has roofed the way to the *Cave of Hira*. Mustansar Hussain Tarar has written a book "*A Night in the Cave of Hira*". In this book, he writes that there lived a Bengali old man, who guided people at night. He would point to the *Cave*. That mysterious old man understood the language of signs. Now he was not there. Perhaps his son is

guiding the visitors. He is advising people to be quick so that all people may get a chance to enter the cave.

Some Moments in the Cave of Hira

Sitting in front of the *Cave of Hira*, in the shadow of *Jabl-e-Noor*, I am feeling content and blissful while writing these lines. I am blessed to walk and sit on the places where the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to walk. I am about to enter the cave, to sit on the place where the Holy Prophet ﷺ would sit. It can be a very inspiring and spiritual experience. One has to struggle to reach here. People lacking courage, often return from halfway. I am impressed by the blessed elderly men and women, returning from the mountaintop, who encouraged us to carry on.

They said, "This opportunity comes rarely; do go to see the *Cave of Hira*." We had not even covered half of the distance when we met a Pashtun who was going down. When he saw us out of breath, he said, "Be courageous, a little distance is left." There is a zigzag flight of 1300 stair-steps and you have to watch your steps. Any negligence could prove fatal. The way was difficult and ascending but I reached there because of my passion and love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

People, not caring for their lives, are offering supererogatory prayers at the roof-stone on the *Cave of Hira*, on the top of *Jabl-e-Noor*. An African young man climbed up on the stone of the *Cave of Hira* and now he is offering prayer on it. He is offering his prayer attentively. He has no fear that a single slip might cause a fatal fall. Women have also arrived here and they are offering supererogatory prayers. They are remembering Allah ﷻ and praising benedictions. This opportunity may not come again...

The *Devil's* dance was about to begin there, too. The damned *Devil* chases everywhere. Here, too, some people are fighting in order to enter first into the *Cave*. Some people do not care for others; they enter the *Cave* and start offering prayers. At this, the outsiders are annoyed and they say we too are devotees. We also have crossed the mountains to reach here. Do not stay long inside. Give opportunity to everyone. It is time for *Asr* prayer. Tariq Sha-

said, "If you want to go inside you must stand in the queue." Tariq Shah is telling the people that real success lies in following the Holy Prophet ﷺ and live a life according to Allah's ﷻ commandments. Following the practices of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is real love of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Adopting the practices of the Holy Prophet ﷺ will make us successful in this world and Hereafter. I am all attentive and respectful. I am at the peak of happiness. I see that the nearby luminous stones are gleaming. I am bare-footed. Lovers are standing in the queue. My turn is about to come but I am observing the stones. I am looking for the footprints of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I am caressing every stone. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that the stones of Makkah would greet him. I am feeling devoted to these stones that greeted Holy Prophet ﷺ. I pray Allah ﷻ to give speaking power to these stones and to take me to that time when Holy Prophet ﷺ used to come there and these stones would greet him. I am proud of my luck while sitting on these stones.

I search for the footprints of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Yet I have to enter the *Cave*. I have to walk on the sacred path in the *Cave* and to spend some moments there where the Holy Prophet ﷺ would sit for contemplation. In the *Cave of Hira*, I again recall Hassan Nisar's *Naa't*:

تیرے ہوتے جنم لیا ہوتا
 کوئی مجھ سا نہ دوسرا ہوتا
 رستہ ہوتا تیرے گزرنے کا
 اور تیرا رستہ دیکھتا ہوتا
 مجھ کو خالق بناتا غار حسن
 اور میرا نام بھی حرا ہوتا

*I wish I were born in your (Muhammad's ﷺ) life
 Then none would have been equal to me
 I wish I were the path that you treaded
 And lay there waiting for you
 Hasan, I wish the Creator had made me a cave
 And I would have been named as Hira.*

The Holy Prophet ﷺ would sit, sleep and rest on these stones. I was about to enter that place. The fellow ahead of me entered the *Cave*. He was taking much time. He thought it an opportunity and started offering supererogatory prayers. I did not say anything to him. I was just standing in the queue and watching the stones lying there in the way of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I imagine that the Holy Prophet ﷺ is walking on that way... I hear the angels speaking. I see that the mountains are swaying under Jibrail's ﷺ wings. Radiance and light is prevailing. The first Revelation is being revealed.

The entrance to the *Cave* is holy and sacred. I am absorbed in the environment. I am thinking about the Holy Prophet ﷺ and searching his footprints. At last, that moment approached and I found opportunity to enter the *Cave*. You have to bow to enter the *Cave*. This place is sacred and venerated. It is the resting place of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I crawled in respectfully, lowering my gaze, squeezing my body consciously so that all my body parts may touch these stones. In the name of Allah ﷻ, I entered the *Cave*, praising benedictions. I was stunned to see the *Cave*. I felt the holiness and radiance. I keenly observed every stone. Every stone appeared to be scented with the Holy Prophet's ﷺ footprints. My whole body was gleaming with happiness. How great is this *Cave*! The Holy Prophet ﷺ rested there. The feeling of helplessness and humbleness was also intensified after coming here. Allah ﷻ blessed His humble, sinful and supplicant servant to visit the *Cave of Hira*, the resting place of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I could not control my emotions. My eyes were full of tears. I had to say many prayers, beg for so many things but forgot everything. There was none but the *Cave of Hira* and me.

I am among the stones. I am registering these moments into my brain. I am caressing the stones with love and respect. I intentionally rub my body with the stones so that I may have a touch of those stones that touched the Holy Prophet's ﷺ body. I paid tribute in the form of benedictions. I offered supererogatory prayer. My looks were fixed on the stones inside the *Cave of Hira*. I quickly offered my prayer. All the time I spent seeing the stones.

There is a cover of two or three big stones. Only one person can scarcely sit or stand in the *Cave*. People outside the *Cave* started calling me to come out. I did not want to go back. I wished to stay for more time. I was not satiated yet but I had to return for others' turn. I gazed again at the stones in the *Cave of Hira*. I touched all the stones. I imagined that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was resting and contemplating. I hear murmuring. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has got up. The Angel ﷺ has arrived and the first revelation is revealed. The Holy Prophet ﷺ comes out of the *Cave* and goes to mother Khadijah. I returned slowly and stayed before the *Cave of Hira* after coming out of it. I wanted to feed the images of stones in my mind. These stones are holy and sacred. They have the footprints of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and some of these stones must have touched the Holy Prophet's ﷺ holy body.

Makkah is surrounded by the mountains but Allah ﷻ bestowed this glory only upon *Jabl-e-Noor*. I am sitting on these stones. I am feeling proud of my luck. This humble, sinful, errant and feeble servant of Allah ﷻ is sitting on those stones where the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to walk sit and rest I am penning down my feelings and experiences. As Akhtar Husain Ja'fri says:

دل حیرتی نگہ نیاز پہ کھول دے
 وہ جو صبح غارِ حرا میں تھی
 وہ جو شام کرب و بلا میں تھی
 اسی صبح و شام کے سلسلے کی روایتوں میں جو لفظ تھے
 وہ نجوم و مہر وہ مشتری
 وہ جو عشق ذات کی پیاس تھی، مرے قلب و جاں میں اتار دے
 مرے حرفِ حرف کو وہ شرف، وہ شمار کہ تری جناب میں
 پڑھ سکوں

Unveil the mystery to my fervent looks, my overwhelmed heart;

Of that morning in the Cave of Hira;

*Of that evening in the battlefield of Karbala;
 All the words that linked that morning and evening into a continuum;
 Reveal into my heart and soul all the thirst of love;
 Of all stars, the sun and the Jupiter;
 Make each letter of mine so dignified and esteemed
 That I may read them to Thee*

Prayer Call and Prayer in the Cave of Hira

In the *Cave of Hira*, Allah ﷻ blessed this humble servant one more honour. It was time for *Asr* Prayer. I gave a prayer call standing on *Jabl-e-Noor* right before the *Cave of Hira*. While reciting *Azan* when I said, "I testify that Muhammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allah (ﷻ)", it seemed that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was coming out of the *Cave*. The first revelation is revealed. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is shivering. He is setting for his home. In *Azan* when I said, "I testify that there is no god but Allah (ﷻ) and Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah (ﷻ)", it seemed to me that all the stones of *Jabl-e-Noor* are testifying that Muhammad ﷺ is the true Prophet ﷺ. Perhaps this *Azan* will save me; it may prove to be a mean of my absolution. After *Azan*, I lead *Asr* prayer on *Jabl-e-Noor* exactly before the *Cave of Hira*. It was Allah's ﷻ great blessing and kindness. Cats were roaming about on *Jabl-e-Noor*. Tariq Shah coaxed a cat and she sat down in his lap. Now we had to return from *Jabl-e-Noor* although we did not want to.

Return from the Cave of Hira

On return, I glanced at the *Cave of Hira*. I thanked Allah ﷻ, the Creator of these mountains, Who made these mountains magnificent and extraordinary valuable and blessed us courage to come here. As compared to climbing, descending is easier. However, descending 1200-1300 stairs still demands some courage. On my way back, I watched my steps because the stairs are not smooth and it is difficult to maintain balance. On my way back, I encouraged the climbers as we were encouraged by others while

going up. I will remember this journey to the *Cave of Hira* for my whole life.

Although I am tired and exhausted but the feeling of satisfaction and fulfillment is exceptional...

It took one and a half hour to climb up but the return was easy. However, we stopped many times and walked slowly. It took us almost an hour to come down. We hired a taxi and went to *Harem*. We offered *Maghrib* prayer in *Harem*. I praised Allah ﷻ who gave us courage and opportunity to reach the *Cave of Hira*. After *Maghrib*, we stayed in *Harem* for the prayer and returned to hotel after offering the prayer. Zafar Iqbal and Shabir Baig told us that patients were visiting since the morning. They were told to come after *Isha* prayer. Soon the patients started coming. I examined them and gave them medicines. Patients kept coming till late night.

Chapter 11

Journey to *Ghaar-e-Thaur*

Jabl-e-Thaur

“We are at *Jabl-e-Thaur*, come out and pay the fare”, said the Arab driver stopping his taxi near the mountain of *Thaur* and pointing towards it. Bilal said to the driver, “Friend, we want to go up, up and up.” He tried to make understand the driver. I too tried to make him understand with the little knowledge about Arabic language I have. The Arab driver took us from one side to the other. He did not know the actual location and got quite confused. “*Ghaar-e-Thaur* ... I do not know”, he said. It was 4:00 a.m. and nobody was around. At last, we saw a man. The driver asked him the way and he guided us. He turned the taxi and within three minutes, we reached our destination. I had seen *Cave of Hira* thoroughly. I saw each stone. I saw the footprints of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and caressed the stones. I touched the stones and felt the scent of the Holy Prophet’s ﷺ footprints. I enriched myself with the dust of that sacred mountain. Moreover, when I went inside the *Cave*, it was as if I was also a part of that dust and nothing else. It was a blissful experience.

Companion of the Cave - Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه

It is another sacred and holy mountain. There is another cave, a *Cave of the Companion*. This *Cave* is magnificent and the *Companion* is glorious. The Holy Quran gave him the title of “*Sahib*” (*Companion*). He is the *Companion of the Cave*, a sincere friend in hour of need. He is the first Caliph, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه, the *Companion* for all times. The Holy Prophet ﷺ took him as a *Companion* in the difficult journey. The rugged, high and barren mountains of *Thaur* are before my eyes. These mountains are fortunate. The Holy Prophet ﷺ came here with his friend.

Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه is the Companion. Muhammad صلوات الله عليه and his friend are inseparable. Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه is mentioned in the Holy Quran. The Holy Quran says:

If ye help him not, still Allah helped him when those who disbelieve drove him forth, the second of two; when they two were in the cave, when he said unto his comrade: Grieve not. Lo! Allah is with us. Then Allah caused His peace of reassurance to descend upon him and supported him with hosts ye cannot see, and made the word of those who disbelieved the nethermost, while Allah's Word it was that became the uppermost. Allah is Mighty, Wise.
(Al-Quran 9:40)

Following the Great Migration

When the night was dark, the Holy Prophet صلوات الله عليه asked Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه to lie on his bed and went to Abu Bakr Siddiq's رضي الله عنه home, passing through the armed enemies encircling his house and reciting the verse:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَاهُمْ
فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ (النمل: ٩)

And We have set a bar before them and a bar behind them, and (thus) have covered them so that they see not.

The luggage was packed and the two great personalities walked through the streets of Makkah for the Cave of Thaur, oppo to the way to Madinah. The strategy was to stay in the Cave of Thaur for three days so that the enemies chasing could not catch them.

These are the same mountains and stones. The stones of the mountains of Hira and Thaur are sacred and splendid. Shafiq-ur-Rehman, Bilal and I set for Ghaar-e-Thaur at 4:00 a.m. Although I was still tired from our visit to the Cave of Hira on the previous day, I could not sleep all the night thinking of Ghaar-e-Thaur. I contacted Bilal and Shafiq-ur-Rehman at 4:00 a.m. Both were ready. Taxi driver took us to the mountain of Thaur. We told him that we were

to go to the *Cave of Thaur*. He could not understand that and said, "You said to go to the mountain of *Thaur* and here it is." The driver tried to make us understand in Arabic. He took us here and there and then asked the way from someone. On the way to *Ghaar-e-Thaur*, we offered *Tahajjud* prayer in a makeshift Masjid. Turkish, Indian and Pakistani people were along with us. From this height, people looked as if they were creeping ants.

Yet it is not twilight and we have covered half the distance. I am looking at the gleaming city of Makkah. I try to imagine the time when the Holy Prophet ﷺ was walking with his *Companion* in the mountains to reach the *Cave of Thaur*. The enemies were blinded... In Makkah, 1423 years ago, there were no roads in the wilderness but the mountains. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was fed up with the cruelties of the people of Makkah so he covered the distance of several kilometers passing from the mountains to reach the *Cave of Thaur*. He decided to stay there for three days. The universe is created for him but his each activity is a guiding path for us. He could have reached Madinah within no time, if Allah ﷻ had wished so but it was meant to teach a lesson to the Muslims. The lesson is that if the enemy has outnumbered you, you must have to chalk out a strategy to gain strength. To save one's life and to deceive the enemy is obligatory in such circumstances. Allah ﷻ helps but we must do something as well.

Importance of Migration to Madinah

Now the question is: the nocturnal journey that was of immeasurable distance and no enemy was trailing, was covered in a blink of eye; however, the journey of migration was dangerous but the Holy Prophet ﷺ was said to adopt all the measures conceivable by any sagacious and brave man. Here too, Allah ﷻ could have sent a *Buraaq* (a winged horse from the Paradise) to take the Holy Prophet ﷺ to Madinah in a blink of eye. Actually, the nocturnal journey was meant to make people aware of the status and prestige of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and to console him upon his sufferings. It was a declaration that Holy Prophet's ﷺ Shari'ah has annulled all the previous Shari'ahs, whereas, the journey of migration was meant to present the excellent character of the Holy

Prophet ﷺ as a leader and preacher. The miracles and signs were also revealed during this journey. Escape from the enemies, web spun by a spider and a nest built by a pigeon at the entrance of the *Cave*, making the skinny goat blessed and healthy in the tent of Umm-e-Ma'bad and sinking down Suraqah bin Ja'sam's steed were marvels of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It was a lesson for *Ummah* that you will have to take all the conceivable human measures to preach your faith and to establish an Islamic state. Miracles are supernatural phenomena and a blessing of Allah ﷻ. For humans Allah's ﷻ principle is that whoever finds the requisite means, will get the corresponding ends. Allah ﷻ also helps if the actions are based on faith.

Journey to Ghaar-e-Thaur

My memories flashed back... Allah's ﷻ command is revealed and migration is made obligatory. The cruelties of infidels of Makkah have crossed all limits. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is asking Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه to return the things trusted to him, to their respective owners. It is a message for the Muslims that whatever the circumstances may be, you must return the things trusted to you. The Holy Prophet ﷺ took Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه with him; preparation was done at night. Enemies were holding meetings. They were planning the seditious traps to kill (we seek refuge in Allah ﷻ) the Holy Prophet ﷺ but Allah ﷻ is the best of planners. Allah ﷻ ordered the Holy Prophet ﷺ to start the journey. Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه is escorting. When the Greatest of all the Prophets ﷺ got tired, Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه carried him on his shoulders. I praise Abu Bakr's رضي الله عنه glory, Allah ﷻ elevates him. There is the mountain of *Thaur* blocking their way. The Holy Prophet ﷺ points his finger toward it and it is split apart giving the way. This mountain is proud of its luck.

The night is still dark but the mountains are visible in the moonlight. One can see lights of the city of Makkah. The young and elderly men and women from different countries are returning after visiting *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. Shafiq-ur-Rehman is striding. Bilal is a young and determined man. He helps and supports me. I am out of

breath. I feel pain in my legs and knees. I am too tired to walk but determined to climb. I will visit *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. I take rest after every twenty steps. Yesterday I visited the cave of Hira that is why my legs were stiffened. Allah ﷻ blessed me with courage and the fellows encouraged me.

At last, I reach the destination. I am delighted to see the cave. I am before the cave where Holy Prophet ﷺ had stayed with his companion.

Ghaar-e-Thaur, Spider, Pigeon and Snake

I see in my imagination that Holy Prophet ﷺ and Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه have reached near *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. Holy Prophet ﷺ is relaxed. There is no sign of worry on his face. Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه is happy being in the company of Holy Prophet ﷺ but somewhat worried and disturbed, too. Allah ﷻ has bestowed him the highest rank. He is happy for having the sacred companionship and unique journey... Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه is not worried for himself but for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He worries that the Holy Prophet ﷺ may be harmed. He is ready to sacrifice his life for the safety of the Holy Prophet ﷺ from the slightest trouble. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is about to enter the *Cave* but Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه requests to let him enter first.

Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه entered the *Cave* to see that any harmful thing may not be there. He cleaned the *Cave* with his own hands. The *Cave* is fortunate that the Holy Prophet ﷺ is going to rest there for three days. Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه cleared the *Cave* and then called the Holy Prophet ﷺ inside. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is sitting inside the *Cave*. Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه is second to none. Allah ﷻ has elevated him to the rank that cannot be gained by anyone else. The Holy Prophet ﷺ wants to sleep. Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه offers his squatted knees as a pillow. Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه is proud of his fortune. The Holy Prophet's صلوات الله head is rested in Abu Bakr's رضي الله عنه lap; it is the greatest blessing indeed. He is serving the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is resting. All the things in the universe wish to serve the Holy Prophet ﷺ but only the blessed one has this opportunity. A spider spun a web on the entrance of the *Cave*. A pigeon laid eggs

in the nest. Infidels reached the opening of the *Cave* trailing the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه. They were arguing with each other. They reached at the conclusion that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was not there because the place was deserted: there was a spider web and a pigeon's nest with eggs. Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه is concerned, not for him but for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has the prime importance; hundreds of thousands of lives can be sacrificed for him. The Holy Prophet ﷺ looked at Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه and said, "Do not grieve, indeed Allah ﷻ is with us." Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه was satisfied after hearing this. He was not worried at all, though he remained alert.

There was a snake in the *Cave*. He had waited for ages. He knew that the Holy Prophet ﷺ would come in this *Cave*. He waited for the Prophet ﷺ to see him. Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه cleaned the *Cave*. He stuffed pieces of cloth in the holes. One hole was left and he placed his heel therein. The snake was hiding in that hole. The snake bit Abu Bakr's رضي الله عنه heel again and again. His face turned red with agony and pain but he bore it. Tears rolled down due to intense pain. Abu Bakr's رضي الله عنه tears fell down on the Holy Prophet's ﷺ cheek. The Holy Prophet ﷺ opened his eyes and saw that Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه was in trouble. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked, "Why did you not tell me?" Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه said, "I did not want to discomfort you."

The Holy Prophet ﷺ was pleased at Abu Bakr's رضي الله عنه devotion, endurance and sacrifice. He put his saliva where the snake had bitten. The effect of venom and pain vanished within moments. Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه was pleased now. When he removed his heel from the hole, the snake crawled out. It saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ and went back into the hole. The Holy Prophet ﷺ and his true *Companion* spent three nights and three days in the *Cave*. They had left Makkah trusting in Allah ﷻ, without any provisions for the journey. Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه and his family helped the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Sacrifices of Abu Bakr's ﷺ Family for Holy Prophet ﷺ

Hazrat Abu Bakr's daughter Asma رضي الله عنها would bring food to *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. Abu Bakr's son Abdullah رضي الله عنه would spend all the day among the infidels to get information and deliver it to the Holy Prophet ﷺ in *Ghaar-e-Thaur* at night. At night, he stayed there and returned to Makkah early in the morning. People would think that he remained in Makkah at night. Abu Bakr's رضي الله عنه slave Amir رضي الله عنه Bin Faheerah would graze the goats in the day and take them to the *Cave* in the evening. The travelers would get milk from the goats and Amir رضي الله عنه would return to Makkah with his flock of goats. In this way, at one side, the infidels of Makkah could not find where the night was spent and on the other side, Abdullah's رضي الله عنه footprints were erased due to passing the herd from that path. Otherwise, the Bedouin could trace them from the faintest clue.

Some Moments in Ghaar-e-Thaur

Panting and gasping we reached the top of *Jabl-e-Thaur*. I was tired but happy. When one reaches the destination after struggle and hard work, one's happiness has no limits. Reaching this sacred and holy place and imagining the great journey of migration was a wonderful experience, I could feel the aroma of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ and Abu Bakr's رضي الله عنه footprints from all the surrounding stones of *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. I imagined that Abdullah bin Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه is coming to guard the Holy Prophet ﷺ at night. Amir رضي الله عنه bin Faheerah's goats are grazing there. Great are the goats that are giving their milk to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I wish I were born in the Holy Prophet's ﷺ life...

There is a long queue outside the cave. People are going into the *Cave*. It cannot accommodate more than two persons at a time. You have to bow to enter the *Cave*. It is a sacred place and it must be respected. It is the sacred *Cave* where the Holy Prophet ﷺ stayed for three days... I am standing in the queue, not hurrying to go inside the *Cave*. I am watching the surrounding mountains. I am delighted seeing these great mountains. These mountains are gleaming and comforting. I touch the stones and search for the footprints of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه. I am

even looking for the hoof-prints of the goats that served the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه.

At last, the much-awaited moment approached. I had been seeking to visit *Ghaar-e-Thaur* since I arrived here. Allah ﷻ fulfilled my desire. I am present exactly at that place where the Holy Prophet ﷺ walked and rested. I touch the stones that were lying in the passage of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه. I smell Holy Prophet's ﷺ aroma and see Abu Bakr's رضي الله عنه tears. Time ceased to flow. I have become a companion of the *Cave*. I stay in the *Cave*. I want to utter a loud shriek; I want to proclaim that I am the Companion of the *Cave*. I felt as if I had become a part of *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. I am lost; I exist no more. I have a stroke of good fortune. I am the part of millions of dust particles that contain footprints of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه.

O people! Behold me; congratulate me because I am in *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. I clean the cave. I imagine that the greatest personality of the world, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has arrived in the *Cave*. I was preoccupied in my thoughts when a voice came, "Please, hurry up." Praising benedictions and salaams to Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه, with a pounding heart, squeezing my body and imagining the times fourteen centuries earlier, I entered the *Cave* respectfully. Entering the *Cave*, I felt a novel spiritual feeling, coolness and comfort. I looked here and there. I tried to guess the stones on which the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه had rested. I tried to find out the hole from which the snake had appeared. I touched the stones and looked around the entire *Cave*. I wished that time should stop; all the visitors should go away, leaving me alone. I alone wanted to see the stones. Every moment was precious. After a few moments, people outside started calling me to move out. I saw the burrow from where the snake appeared to bite Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه. I touched my body with all the stones; caressed each stone. Siddiq from Azad Kashmir is taking photographs in the *Cave* and guiding the visitors.

I cannot describe the feelings going inside *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. I took off my shoes while entering the *Cave*. How blessed and great

are these stones! The Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه rested there. The Holy Prophet ﷺ selected Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه as his *Companion of the Cave* because the Holy Prophet ﷺ knew that Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه was the wisest and most appropriate person for succession. I was unaware of myself after entering the *Cave*. I became a part of the stones of *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. I wanted to stay there forever. People were asking me to come out of the *Cave*. Some were polite, others were rather harsh.

Why do these people want me out of the *Cave*? I am a stone of *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. Who can detach me from *Ghaar-e-Thaur*?

The voices were turning louder. People were becoming angry. Siddiq, the guide inside the *Cave* also asked me to go out. "Why should I go? I am the *Ghaar-e-Thaur*." However, I had to come out. I looked at the stones and came out respectfully touching the stones. Now, the gigantic *Jabl-e-Thaur* is before me. There is a tuck-shop exactly before *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. You can have water, juice or tea from here. There are carpets on the floor. I am writing this chapter of my book sitting before *Ghaar-e-Thaur*.

I imagine that it was a time when there was nothing but mountains here. There was no way and the enemy had reached. Allah ﷻ turned the enemies blind when they approached. The Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه are walking in the mountains. They search for a place where the enemy could not find them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was glorious and had powers; Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه was supporting him. Only Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه could be the *Companion of the Cave* and first Caliph as well. The Holy Prophet ﷺ ordered him to lead the prayer in his life.

Now the sun has risen and the number of visitors has increased. Visitors from different countries are coming in groups. Some are talking others are reciting the Holy Quran. Allah ﷻ had blessed me to come here, to sit in the *Cave of Thaur*. This travelogue is an account of a supplicant's attendance in Allah ﷻ and the Holy Prophet's ﷺ home. It is a description of feelings, I experienced there. People are coming and going. It is time to depart. I wish to stay here, to see *Ghaar-e-Thaur* and to imagine the Holy Prophet's ﷺ time. I

wish to spend my life seeing the Holy Prophet's ﷺ paths, stones and footprints. I want to die looking at these stones. I recall Hassan Nisar's Naa't:

تیرے ہوتے جنم لیا ہوتا
کوئی مجھ سا نہ دوسرا ہوتا

*I wish I were born in your (Muhammad's ﷺ) life,
None else would have been lucky like me.*

People of all nations are gathered there. A Turk came and sat beside me. He is eating biscuits and offering to others as well. The Turks are brave people. Shafiq-ur-Rehman and I coaxed a cat and took it into the lap. May be this cat is offspring of the cats living in Holy Prophet's ﷺ life. May be these cats would have guarded the Cave and growled at the enemies. I thanked Allah ﷻ that he made me visit *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. It is great blessing of Allah ﷻ. Shafiq-ur-Rehman and Bilal are looking towards me. They were silent but I knew what they wanted to say. They wanted to return because the heat was increasing. Bilal offered me tea and waited for me to get up.

Return from Ghaar-e-Thaur

We are in the sun but a cool wind is blowing too. The number of visitors begins to increase with the daylight. There is a long queue outside the Cave...

We were about to return when Shafiq-ur-Rehman told us that there is another cave similar to *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. It is doubted that may be that was the original cave. Here too, somebody has inscribed "*Ghaar-e-Thaur*". As the *Cave of Hira*, the *Cave of Thaur* is not a cave in literal sense. It is a hiding place among some big stones. One has to squeeze the body and crawl in order to enter the second cave. There were fewer people so we got the chance to enter. Here I sensed no particular feeling. There was an aura of spirituality in *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. There was a spiritual sensation. Eyes were fixed on the stones. It seemed that the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہما have just left for Madinah. Seeing each stone, it appeared that the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہما had rested and stayed there. I wished to stay there forever. For a

moment, it seemed that nothing exists except the *Cave* and I: There is neither a guide nor any queue of visitors behind me. Nevertheless, at the next moment, the guide said, "Haji, hurry up, there are lot of visitors; tell me if you want to have a photo." I sketched this place in my mind and heart; I had no concern with other sort of pictures.

دل کے آئینہ میں ہے تصویرِ یار
جب ذرا گردن جھکائی دیکھ لی

*I have a picture of the beloved in the mirror of my heart;
whenever I have a desire to see it, I just lower my head.*

A comparison of both places reveals that first *Cave* is in fact the sacred place where the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ had stayed. Now we started to our journey back. As compared to the stairs of the *Cave of Hira*, the stairs of *Ghaar-e-Thaur* are steep, slanted and uneven. I felt it rather difficult to come down. I sat before *Ghaar-e-Thaur* and tried to imagine how the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ had come there passing through the rugged mountains in the dark night. How the devoted Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ risked his life, wealth and family for the Holy Prophet ﷺ and took care of him. Abu Bakr Siddiq's رضی اللہ عنہ brave daughter Asma رضی اللہ عنہا kept bringing food for her father and the Holy Prophet ﷺ, risking her life. His son Abdullah رضی اللہ عنہ would spend the night in the *Cave* and provide information gathered in the day. His slave Amir رضی اللہ عنہ Bin Faheerah would take his goats to the *Cave* and serve milk to the guests of the *Cave*.

Engrave my Name on these Stones

People from different countries, Africa, Pakistan, India, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Iran, were heading towards *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. On the way, I saw that several people were inscribing their names and the names of their countries on stones so that they might see it if they had a chance to come here again. On a tree, thousands of straps were tied to the branches. After every 20-25 steps of stairs, you have to face Pakistani, Indian or Bangladeshi men carrying spades. Seeing the visitors, these men with spades

and gasping. I saw an old woman who was out of breath but she was climbing up trusting in Allah ﷻ. I immediately offered her my supporting stick. She took it happily. She prayed for me, "Allah ﷻ bless you to perform many pilgrimages."

An Indonesian Old Woman

In the sacred journey of *Ghaar-e-Thaur*, an Indonesian old woman remained our fellow traveller from start to the end. This old woman had set for this long and dangerous journey of *Ghaar-e-Thaur* alone, carrying a bottle of water and a juice-can. It is the highest state of devotion, love, passion and respect. Sometimes she was ahead of us, sometimes behind us. She would take respites after climbing twenty or thirty steps. I offered my supporting stick to her but she said she was fine and thanked me with a smile. Several times, she was out of breath. When gasping and puffing she arrived at *Ghaar-e-Thaur* with us, her happiness was worth seeing.

Ghaar-e-Thaur, Camel and Mandi Dajaj

To visit *Ghaar-e-Thaur* or *Ghaar-e-Hira* you must purchase a stick for five riyals. It facilitates in climbing up and moving down. Near *Ghaar-e-Thaur* there was standing an adorned camel, and men and women were being photographed sitting in *Howdah* so that they could show it to their friends and relatives. While climbing up or down people say salam to each other. People who climb down encourage those who are climbing up. On the way to *Ghaar-e-Thaur*, there are small huts from where you can buy tea, water or juice. You must carry some water or juice with you while climbing up in order to sustain energy. All our way down, Bilal took me by hand and Shafiq-ur-Rehman kept me covered under an umbrella. Muhammad Bilal is young and passionate. He runs his business in Ajman, Dubai. Shafiq-ur-Rehman is an old friend who is well informed and experienced. He tells me novel ways to do *Tawaaf* or to reach the *Black Stone*. The journey to *Ghaar-e-Thaur* with him

became memorial in every aspect. It took thirty minutes to climb down. Taxis were ready. We had not taken breakfast yet. Shafiq-ur-Rehman took us to "Zaydan Mata'm" hotel where we ate delicious Arab dish "Mandi". "Mandi Dajaj" is a special dish of this hotel. They serve rice and roasted chicken in a big tray. You can have salad and ketchup as much as you like. Meals are eaten according to *Sunnah*, without spoons or forks, sitting on the ground. I was very hungry so ate heartily. My legs were stiffened because of walking on the mountains for two days. My body was exhausted but the soul was delighted. We offered *Zuhr* prayer in the Masjid in front of hotel. Asma was anxious so she called me several times. She was relieved when we reached there. After *Asr* prayer I rested for a while and then went to *Harem*.

Some pilgrims have returned to their homes but still a great number of people are here. People come to *Harem* one hour before the prayer time. We offered *Maghrib* prayer in *Harem*. Rafiq-ul-Islam from Khulna, Bangladesh, was sitting beside me. He was suffering from cough. I gave him tablets and he became happy. We exchanged our thoughts about the situation of Pakistan and Bangladesh. In this conversation time passed soon. It was time for *Isha* prayer. I offered *Isha* prayer in *Harem* with thousands of pilgrims.

Medical Services in Rehab Al-Raudha

Medical service is going on in *Harem* and Rehab al-Raudha as well. Ashfaq has sent more medicines. Almost everyone is suffering from flu, influnza and cough. Many are suffering from gastric problems because of eating spicy food. I do not eat much in dinner. I daily talk to Yumna, Huzaifa and Mahnoor. I remember them and always pray for them. There are many hotels at a distance of 800-meter from *Harem*. Tariq Shah told me that most of the hotels were demolished to extend *Harem*. Pakistani food is also available here. The Arabs do not like spicy food but Pakistani hotels cook spicy food. Pilgrims suffer from digestive problems because of this spicy food. There was a flux of patients after *Isha* prayer. I checked them all and gave them medicines. Another doctor from Abbottabad has also come to *Hajj*. I exchanged some thoughts with

him. There were many patients due to our absence for the past two days. New patients ask about fee. I humbly request them only to pray for me. All patients, especially old women pray for me.

Offering Prayers in Harem

Allah ﷻ blessed me with the opportunity to visit *Ghaar-e-Thaur* and *Ghaar-e-Hira*. I had experience of walking in mountains since the earthquake of October 2005. We had reached Kala Dhaka after walking for many hours on the high, black and grey rugged mountains. Besides this, I had also served in Azad Kashmir, Balakot and Swat, crossing the mountains. Still, to climb up the mountains of *Hira* and *Thaur* to visit the *Caves* was a challenging task. I benefited from my experience although the ascent and descent were tough. Despite this, I reached *Ghaar-e-Thaur* and *Ghaar-e-Hira* and got the opportunity to spend some time in both places. I cannot describe the tranquility, peace and spirituality that I experienced in these *Caves*.

I had remained up for two nights and was exhausted but I slept well. I woke up at 5:00 a.m. and went to *Harem*. Groups of people were rushing towards *Harem* to get an opportunity to offer prayer in *Harem*. I ran, too. Prayer mats were spread from *Harem* to hotel. I got place in front of *Harem*. I offered *Fajr* prayer after Imam. Imam-e-Ka'bah recites the Holy Quran in such an extraordinary way that one feels as if Allah ﷻ is directly conversing with His servants. Allah Diya and his wife are special characters of the group. Both quarrel with each other but also care for each other. Allah Diya is on the 9th floor and his wife on the 8th floor. His wife will serve breakfast but reprimand him while serving. It happens between a husband and wife. It indicates reciprocal love. As a man grows old, he adopts childlike habits: mutual quarrels, reprimands and reconciliations. It is true for Allah Diya and his wife. Whenever she comes to me, she advises me to take care of Allah Diya and give him medicines.

In Saudi Arabia, *Zuhr* prayer is offered at an earlier time. People start going to *Harem* at 10 O' clock. We reached *Harem* half-an-hour before prayer time. From Baab-e-Fahd, we went to second

floor by escalators. Baab-e-Fahd is the only place where separate places are reserved for men and women. Here air-conditioning is excellent and the scene of *Ka'bah* is charming. I keep medicines with me in *Harem*, too. If someone is suffering from cough or pain, I offer him medicines after prayer. He happily accepts this unexpected offer and prays for me. I offered *Zuhr* prayer in *Harem*.

Now most of the pilgrims have gone back but still there is a huge gathering of people. I visited the *Holy Ka'bah* after prayer. Whenever I look at the *Ka'bah*, my gaze is fixed there. It seems that it is the first sight. The *Holy Ka'bah* has such attraction and appeals that a believer is left astounded just by looking at it. One wishes to remain there forever.

We returned after *Zuhr* prayer. Asma prepared a dish of potatoes, carrots and capsicums. We ate together. There came a woman from Abottabad in Asma's room, and she too was offered the food. You meet strangers during *Hajj*. There are people from different countries. Just after meeting, a cordial relation is developed quickly as if we have been living together for years. There are deep relations within the group members. Although there are, trivial quarrels as well but these are always followed by reconciliations.

What is the Essence of Hajj?

Hajj is the name of sacrifices.

Hajj is the name of tolerance and patience.

I offered *Maghrib* prayer in *Harem*. It is a great fortune that I am standing before the *Ka'bah*, bowing before Allah ﷻ. It seems that prayer has ended in a moment. My eyes and mind are focused on Allah's ﷻ House so I am unmindful of the prayer rites. In *Harem*, waiting for *Isha* prayer after *Maghrib* prayer is a joyous and spiritual experience. Pilgrims remain busy in remembrances and sanctifications. For *Isha*, I got a place in the yard of *Harem*.

World and Faith

Inside *Harem* is the wealth of faith. Opposite *Harem* is Abdul Aziz hotel, plaza and shopping center from where you can buy

everything. It is a strange junction of world and faith. Worship in *Harem* and enter Abdul Aziz Plaza. Formerly, it was a palace of a Saudi King; later on, it was converted into a Trust building. Now its income in millions of riyals is used for *Harem*. There are thousands of shops and every item of the world is available. There are so many lifts installed in the plaza. We visited two floors. Tariq Shah bought famous Arabic dish of rice and fish. It was delicious.

Our mini clinic in Rehab al-Raudha is running successfully. All night along, patients keep visiting. Most of the pilgrims are suffering from flu, cough, chest infection and joint pains. Too much walking causes pain in body and joints. Spicy and oily food causes digestive problems. I keep medicines with me in *Harem*. An Indonesian old woman was coughing. I gave her cough tablets and she became happy and thanked me. The important reason to stay in Makkah is to offer all the prayers in *Harem* and to do *Tawaaf* of the *Ka'bah*. Right from the first day, I have tried to offer all my prayers in *Harem*. I thank Allah ﷻ that I could offer almost all prayers in *Harem*. While staying in Makkah, to do *Tawaaf* is a great blessing of Allah ﷻ. I also did *Tawaaf*.

Chapter 12

A Tawaaf Just for Pakistan

Asma was worried that we have not performed *Tawaaf* as many times as we should have. We could not perform *Tawaaf* for two days because of visiting *Ghaar-e-Thaur* and *Ghaar-e-Hira*. Allah ﷻ blessed me with courage; I performed ablution and went to *Harem* at 3:30 a.m. I expected that there would be fewer people at that time but as I came out of my hotel, I saw multitudes of people heading towards *Harem*. I entered through *Baab-e-Abdul Aziz*. Seeing *Ka'bah*, I started praying for Yumna, Huzaifa, and Mahnoor, other members of family, friends, colleagues and my supporters in medical service.

Today's *Tawaaf* is only for my dear homeland Pakistan.

It is a gift to my motherland.

It is an expression of gratitude from a patriot and loyal Pakistani.

In Pustho, they say:

خیل وطن د سرو وطن

My country is as precious as gold.

To sacrifice one's life for one's country is the greatest achievement in this world. I completed seven rounds of *Tawaaf* around *Ka'bah* only for my Pakistan.

First Round

After *Rukn-e-Yamani*, there is a green light from where *Tawaaf* is started. When hundreds of hands are raised, gesturing a kiss to the *Black Stone*, the scene is worth seeing. First round started. My looks are fixed at the *Holy Ka'bah*. It is 4 O' clock in the morning. *Mataaf* is full of people. After raising hands towards the

Black Stone, I hymned Allah's ﷻ praises. I hymned benedictions for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, prayed for the safety and security of my country. I wept and cried before Allah ﷻ.

Second Round

Asma turned a bead of rosary and second round started. I prayed for betterment in faith and material well-being and sought Allah's ﷻ refuge. The place is so packed with people that sometimes it is difficult to breathe. O Allah ﷻ, keep my Pakistan safe; destroy her enemies. All the time I kept repeating this prayer.

Third Round

Asma reminded me that it was our third round. I thought about the spiritual act of kissing the *Black Stone*. I looked at short-statured Indonesian and Malaysian ladies raising their hands towards the *Black Stone* and chant *Allah-o-Akbar*. Allah's ﷻ greatness is chanted with such devotion that can impress the angels.

Fourth Round

Asma turned a bead of rosary and the fifth round started. One should cry and pray as much as possible. I prayed many prayers for the safety of my country.

O Allah ﷻ! Keep my Pakistan safe from all the internal and external threats.

Fifth Round

When we were presented with a small rosary, I could not understand its purpose. Its importance was realized during *Tawaaf*. Reaching the green light, Asma told me that it was the start of fifth round. This time I cautiously tried to reach the *Maqam-e-Ibrahim*. Allah ﷻ blessed me with the opportunity to see the stone at which Ibrahim ﷺ stood while building *Ka'bah*. I imagined that Ibrahim ﷺ was standing on the stone. This stone is lucky. Allah ﷻ made it eternal. It has Ibrahim's ﷺ footprints that will be seen by people till the Day of Judgment. I imagine that thousands of years ago Ibrahim ﷺ is raising the mud-walls of *Ka'bah*. Ismail ﷺ is fetching

kneaded clay and Ibrahim عليه السلام is laying bricks. Now, Ibrahim عليه السلام is praying standing on this place for the peace and security of people of Makkah. I felt a spiritually enchanted seeing this place and the stone. Allah ﷻ blessed the Muqam-e-Ibrahim عليه السلام (a stone was used as a help in construction of *Ka'bah* and the same is placed here since then) and it is obligatory for every pilgrim to offer supererogatory prayers there. (the stone bearing the footprints of Hazrat Ibrahim A.S indicating the place where he stood for construction of *Holy Ka'bah*)

Sixth Round

Another bead of rosary turned and sixth round started. My looks were fixed on the *Holy Ka'bah*. I did kissing gesture toward the *Black Stone* and started the round but I still could not move my gaze from *Ka'bah* during the whole round.

Seventh Round

When four rounds of *Tawaaf* are completed, one is satisfied in spite of the entire crowd, that only three are left. In the last round, I humbly prayed to Allah ﷻ for my country.

O Allah ﷻ! Keep Pakistan safe from all the internal and external threats and destroy her enemies.

Medical Service in Harem

I completed *Tawaaf* and offered *Fajr* prayer near Baab-e-Abdul Aziz. After *Fajr* prayer, we offered funeral prayer. Today, for the first time I saw six funerals including a child's funeral. May Allah ﷻ pardon all of them! These were fortunate as their funeral prayers were offered in *Harem*. Millions of people joined the funeral prayer. Sheikh Zahid has been my colleague in humanitarian service for many years. With him, I helped the victims of disasters in many parts of Pakistan. Fortunately, he is our fellow in the journey of *Hajj* and here too, he is assisting me in the mission of medical service of Hajis. He tells everyone to visit room number 903 for treatment. Patients are visiting incessantly since morning.

People from Abottabad and Peshawar, especially old women are coming for treatment. Some are suffering from cough, others

from fever or leg pains. Rawalpindi Customs Deputy Superintendent Kamran is sending patients from Abottabad group. It gives me a sense of satisfaction to serve the pilgrims. Before coming for *Hajj*, I had resolved that I would help the pilgrims in Makkah and Madinah during *Hajj*. I brought a bulk of medicines and medical kit with me. Medicines finished and I received two more lots from Lahore. Allah ﷻ blessed me to carry on medical service in on this Holy Land.

We headed towards *Harem* for *Zuhr* prayer. People set for *Harem* an hour or so before prayer time so that they can find a place inside *Harem*. I entered through Baab-e-Fahd and offered *Zuhr* prayer at the second floor. Three Chinese pilgrims were sitting there. Pak-China friendship is everlasting. Chinese pilgrims greeted us with love and respect. When I told them that I was a Pakistani, they were pleased. They clenched their hands together to indicate that Pak-China friendship is unbreakable. Sheikh Zahid brought all the essentials for cooking. We are cooking food for last three days. Yesterday, Indian pilgrims told me that they bring flour, rice, pulses, ghee, spices, pickle etc. with them to prepare food themselves. In Rehab al-Rauda, there are Indian pilgrims who have brought all the essentials of cooking with them and a cook, too. They were eating together in the mess. Aroma of different dishes scented the whole floor.

80-Year Old Pilgrim from Mali on his 40th Hajj

Many people have arrived for *Hajj* from the Republic of Mali. They can be easily recognized because of their complexion, high-stature and physical features. They wear colourful robes.

An 80-year old pilgrim Bajko Dokori from Mali has earned fame in Makkah and *Harem*. He is doing his 40th *Hajj*. He did his first *Hajj* in 1961. He told us that in 60s and 70s *Hajj* was a difficult task. The pilgrims had to walk on foot. Bajko praised the Saudi Arabians that they have arranged incredible facilities for the comfort of pilgrims. He has 3 wives, 22 sons and 13 daughters. His youngest son was born a week ago. He was informed about his child's birth in *Harem* from his youngest wife.

The Lift - A Joke

We reached *Harem* for *Asr* prayer. People stay in *Harem* during the interval of prayers. They remain busy in reciting the Holy Quran or remembrances. Some pilgrims sleep there or take rest.

I offered *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayer in *Harem*. Pilgrims of many countries have returned to their countries and thousands of pilgrims are leaving daily. That is why there is no crowd like earlier days. In earlier days, we had to go to *Harem* an hour before the prayer time to find a place in *Harem* but now this time has reduced to half-an-hour. Rehab al-Roudha has 17 floors. All the rooms of hotel are booked. Four to five people are staying in each room. There are three lifts in the hotel. If we do not come out earlier for prayer then we have to wait for lifts. After *Isha* prayer, all the pilgrims come back together so there is a struggle to use the lift. Sometimes we have to wait for more than an hour. People waiting for the lift argue with one another. Some people lose temperament. Here, we have to listen to the comments of people waiting for their turn:

- This lift is a joke.
- The lift is houseful.
- It is not a lift but passenger train.
- You have overloaded the lift.
- The lift is playing drama for one an hour. When will it end?
- Alight from the lift otherwise it will go out of order.
- Why do the residents of first floor not use stairs?

Service and Treatment of Indian Pilgrims

Besides us, many pilgrims from India, Bangladesh and other countries are staying in Rehab al-Roudha hotel. Indian pilgrims also have come to know about our medical services. A whole group of Indian pilgrims arrived at 11:00 p.m. I had turned the light off and was about to go to sleep. Many Indian men and women were there. Five patients came into the room. Zafar Iqbal and Sabir Baig

left their beds for patients. Four patients were waiting outside and five women were waiting for their turn in Asma's room. They were suffering from fever, flu, cough, eczema, and body pain. They had gone to Indian dispensary, got medicines but they were not cured. All the pilgrims belong to Mumbai and Madras. They were suffering from cough and chest infection. I examined all of them one after the other. Patients are not satisfied until doctor checks them with a stethoscope or feels their pulse. That is why I had kept with me a stethoscope and apparatus for measuring blood pressure. I examined all the patients attentively and gave them medicines. Old Ladies from Mumbai returned praying for me. At evening, the whole group of pilgrims from Abottabad came to the room. I praise Allah ﷻ who blessed me to serve His guests in His House, *Harem*. Patients kept visiting until 12 at night. I checked them individually and gave them medicines.

Tahajjud Prayer in Harem

As usual, I woke up at 4:00 a.m. If one is determined to wake up at a fixed time then there is no need of any alarm. I had eaten spicy rice that caused diarrhea. One has to be careful in eating and drinking during *Hajj* days otherwise one falls ill and cannot do anything. I headed towards *Harem* with thousands of others. I offered *Tahajjud* prayer in *Harem* and prayed for the safety of my country, family and friends. I begged pardon for my sins and mistakes and prayed to Allah ﷻ to be blessed to come again. I offered *Fajr* prayer in the yard of *Harem*. Patients had started arriving since morning. They get medicines and pray for me. I feel satisfaction and comfort when they pray for me.

International Mini Clinic and Chicken Roast

Now room number 903 is turned into an international mini clinic because patients from other countries are also coming besides Pakistani patients. Sheikh Sahib brought a chicken. It became a problem to cut the chicken into pieces. Tariq Shah gave a solution: we dipped the chicken in hot water then peeled its skin and cut into pieces. Asma and sister Najma cooked it. I offered *Zuhr* prayer in *Harem* and ate lunch. I took a nap and went to *Harem* again. I

prayed to Allah ﷻ for health of patients and of mine. I drank four to five glasses of *Zamzam* water and felt well.

Tawaaf of Ka'bah

Asma said that we must do a *Tawaaf* today. After *Asr* prayer, we walked to *Mataaf* from *Baab-e-Fahd*. It was a hot and sunny day. I was not feeling well but after seeing *Ka'bah* I felt good. I was passionate... Seeing *Ka'bah* a man turns compassionate. It seems that nothing exists except *Baitullah* and you. All the veils are removed and mind is focused on a single point.

In the first round, one sees *Baitullah* and nothing else.

In the second round too, looks are fixed on *Baitullah* and a man praises Allah's ﷻ greatness.

In the third round, a man recalls his prayers and praises Allah ﷻ.

In the fourth round, a man repents over his sins. He thinks that he is full of sins and mischieves but Allah ﷻ is great and forgiving. Allah ﷻ invited his humble servant to His House, as the poet says:

شکر ہے تیرا خدایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
تو نے اپنے گھر بلایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
اپنا دیوانہ بنایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
گرد کعبے کے پھرایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا

*O Allah ﷻ! I praise You, I was not worthy of this;
You invited me to Your House, I was not worthy of this;
You made me Your lover, I was not worthy of this;
You let me walk around Ka'bah, I was not worthy of this.*

In the fifth round, a man is enraptured and thinks of him as a part of *Ka'bah*.

In the sixth round, one is overwhelmed by *Ka'bah*. It seems that one's body is dissolved into *Ka'bah* and nothing exists but Allah ﷻ and the *Holy Ka'bah*.

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اپنا دیوانہ بنایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
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In the sixth round, one is overwhelmed by *Ka'bah*. It seems that one's body is dissolved into *Ka'bah* and nothing exists but Allah ﷻ and the *Holy Ka'bah*.

In the seventh round, His servant is proud of his fortune. He praises Allah ﷻ Who invited him to His House. He prays to Allah ﷻ to be invited here repeatedly.

Praising Allah's ﷻ greatness, dissolving myself into *Ka'bah*, repenting of my sins and begging pardons I completed the seven rounds of *Tawaaf*. It was time for *Maghrib* prayer. I wished to offer prayer before *Ka'bah*. I sat there for a while but guards came and ordered us to leave the place. I offered prayer near *Baab-e-Fahd*. It took me quite some time searching for my bag and shoes. In the meanwhile, it was time for *Isha* prayer. Asma offered *Isha* prayer inside *Harem* whereas I offered my prayer in the yard. I was feeling weary after *Tawaaf* but in *Isha* prayer, Imam Mahir Moakkali recited the Holy Quran in such a moving way that it enkindled the faith. Asma was made to leave the place forcibly by a lady police officer. She was worried and annoyed at this. I consoled her and told her that *Hajj* is the name of tolerance and patience. The guards of *Harem* speak harshly and pilgrims are not used to that harshness but the guards are helpless. If they do not do so, the crowd will be uncontrollable.

Before and After Hajj

Reaching hotel after *Isha* prayer, we had to wait for one and a half hour for lift. Every time it was overloaded and people were impatient. After prayer, thousands of men return to have dinner or to take rest. There are 17 floors in *Rehab al-Rouza* but only three lifts. It takes much time from top floor to bottom. In this way, about one hour is wasted after every prayer. Sheikh Sahib solved this problem; he immediately returned after prayer.

Patients are waiting in the room. The news of our Mini Clinic has spread to other hotels as well. Pilgrims of different countries are coming for treatment. After *Hajj*, Pilgrims' attitude has changed. Before *Hajj*, there is compassion, zeal and zest, devotion and a desire for good but after *Hajj*, all is changed. Twenty-two days have passed and the conditions have been changed after *Hajj*. Pilgrims are not patient and tolerant as they

were before *Hajj*. Now they are showing intolerance and impatience. They want to quarrel over trivial matters.

A View of Ka'bah from the Roof of Harem

I got up at 4:00 a.m. and went to *Harem*. Sheikh Zahid has told me to offer at least one prayer on the roof of *Harem*. A full view of *Harem* and *Ka'bah* can be seen from there. I reached the roof by escalator from *Baab-e-Fahd*. It was a divine scene: cool wind, pleasing weather, remembrances and sanctifications, recitation of the Holy Quran, Allah's ﷻ men bowing before Allah ﷻ, gleaming and sparkling *Harem*, sacred and the *Holy Ka'bah*. Who will not want to see this view? Everyone will want to save and feed this scene in one's mind. Chinese pilgrims can be seen in increased number for last three days. Today, Chinese men and women are standing nearby. They show love and respect when they meet. When they come to know that I am from Pakistan, they clench their hands to show that Pak-China friendship is everlasting and matchless. I saw *Ka'bah* and prayed for my family and friends. I praised Allah ﷻ who invited me to His House. I prayed to Allah ﷻ to invite me again.

I offered *Tahajjud* prayer looking at *Ka'bah*. I cannot describe the celestial and inspiring feelings during *Fajr* prayer. These can only be felt by heart. Imam Sahib was reciting in such a way that it seemed that as if Allah ﷻ was directly conversing with His servants. The Creator of the universe is saying to His men that success and attainment can be achieved only by obeying his commands and practicing the Holy Prophet's ﷺ *Sunnah*. After prayer, I stretched my legs for a while on the roof of *Harem* and enjoyed a good sleep. After *Ishraq* prayer, I was going to Hotel when I met Qari Muhammad Zubair, a colleague of my father Bashir Ahmad. I had not seen Qari Sahib for many years. I had treated Qari's father in Mayo Hospital. Qari Zubair is doing his eighth *Hajj*. He is familiar with the surroundings of *Harem*. After breakfast, I visited whole *Harem* with Qari Sahib.

Hazrat Umm-e-Haani رضي الله عنها, Buraaq and Nocturnal Journey

We entered through Baab-e-Abdul Aziz and saw the grey minarets. It is said that Hazrat Umm-e-Haani's home was situated at this place. My memories flashed back.

The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم was resting in Umm-e-Haani's home; Jibrail عليه السلام came and asked permission to get in. Jibrail عليه السلام took the Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم heart out, and washed it with *Zamzam* and placed it back. Jibrail عليه السلام has brought a creature with him. *Buraaq* is tethered in front of Umm-e-Haani's home. A memorial pillar of a different colour and girth is constructed at that place. There is another pillar with a latchstring around it. Pilgrims stop there, caress and kiss these pillars stealthily because the guards do not permit to do so. I imagine that Jibrail عليه السلام has tethered the *Buraaq* to this latchstring. Jibrail عليه السلام asks permission to enter the house. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم mounts on *Buraaq* and sets on a journey culminating on a meeting with Allah ﷻ. Time has stopped; the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم is on nocturnal journey. Jibrail عليه السلام escorts the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. Jibrail عليه السلام stopped at *Sidra-tul-Muntaha*. He said, "My wings will burn if I stepped forward. Please, go forward alone." The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم directly conversed with Allah ﷻ. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم returned after talking to Allah ﷻ, visiting the heavens and seeing many other events / places. The latchstring of Umm-e-Haani's home is still oscillating.

The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم tells the people about his nocturnal journey. The infidels jest at it. They ran to Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه and told him that his Friend صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم is talking about impossible things. They thought that Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه is a wise and sagacious person and he would not believe in such supernatural phenomenon. Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه says that whatever is told by the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم is nothing but truth. From that day, Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه is titled as "Siddiq". Qari Zubair took me to all the gates of *Harem*. In the back of *Harem*, a vast gate Baab-e-Abdullah is under construction. Every king of Saudi Arabia adds something to extend *Harem*. Baab-e-Abdullah is 80% complete. Pilgrims will be more facilitated after the completion of Baab-e-Abdullah.

Little Girl's Grave and Holy Prophet's ﷺ Tears

Qari Zubair said, "Let us go to another place." Disbelievers used to bury their daughters alive at this place in the *Age of Ignorance*. This place is known as "*Al-Maqabrali al-Shakaybah*" and it is situated between Baab-e-Abdullah and Ibrahim عليه السلام Road. It is an empty space that is walled and locked. Inside it, square stones are visible here and there. These stones indicate graves.

My memories flash back.

A father is walking along with his little pretty daughter. The father is carrying a spade.

Daughter is escorting her father happily. She is doing her innocent mischieves. She is talking to her father in simple words. Father is preoccupied in his thoughts. Father is not listening to her. The innocent girl does not realize this; she goes on talking.

Father has taken her to this place. I imagine that beautiful little girl is walking along with her father, holding her father's finger, playing and talking to her father. She is innocent like an angel. She does not know that she is going to her place of execution and burial. My eyes were full of tears.

Father is digging a pit with his spade. His clothes are spoiled with dust. The daughter could not bear her father's clothes being spoiled. She cleans her father's clothes with her little hands. Father is busy in digging. Daughter is dusting his clothes.

On completion of digging, the callous father pushed his daughter into the grave and buried her alive. The child is crying. I hear her cries and my brain is about to explode because of her innocent cries.

A *Companion* after accepting Islam is narrating this event to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is weeping and so are his *Companions*. A strange terror and gloominess was haunting this place. It seemed as if girls were still wailing before Allah ﷻ. However, Islam banned such rites forever. In Makkah, we felt comfort and relief wherever we went. It seems that blessings of Allah ﷻ are being showered on this Holy Land of Prophets ﷺ but

this place caused gloom and murk. I hurried to leave this place. I felt that innocent girls' cries and wailing were still going on:

بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلْتُ (الكوبر: ٩)

For what sin, was I killed?

Old Masjid and Lahori Daal Chaawal

Qari Zubair took me to an old Masjid in front of Baab-e-Fath'. All the buildings around the Masjid have been demolished but whenever they tried to demolish this Masjid, they failed. This Masjid was built in 1355 AH. Today, Qari Zubair is going back otherwise he would have taken me to Taif and other places. Qari Sahib also has visited *Ghaar-e-Thaur* and *Ghaar-e-Hira*. It is a strange coincidence that we are staying in Rehab al-Roudha Hotel situated at Al-Hijrah Road. Actually, it is the same road on which, the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ travelled to Madinah. In those days, there were mountains on both sides. This road leads to *Ghaar-e-Thaur* and *Ghaar-e-Hira*.

Asma cooked delicious *daal*. We bought rice from a Pakistani Hotel and enjoyed Lahori food. I thought to take a rest but patients started coming. Patients from different groups of different countries are coming for treatment. Tariq Shah and I offered *Asr* prayer in front of *Baitullah*.

He Succeeded

Men of faith are offering prayer all around *Baitullah* facing towards Allah's ﷻ House, bowing before Allah ﷻ. Imam Sahib stands for prayer exactly in front of *Ka'bah*. When he finishes prayer and walks out, people yearn to have a sight of him. Even kings do not enjoy such dignity and respect. When Imam Sahib was going out after prayer, an old man from Karachi went before him and said *Assalam-o-Alaikum*. Imam Sahib said *Wa Alaikum-us-Salam*. The old man was extremely happy at this. He said that he has succeeded and he happily joined the *Tawaaf*. Shah Sahib said that though I had a headache and feeling unwell but we must do *Tawaaf*. Who will not want to do a *Tawaaf* in front of *Ka'bah*?

Weather is pleasant since morning. We started *Tawaaf*. After completing four rounds, I thought about Asma. As soon as I thought this, I saw that Asma and sister Najma were doing *Tawaaf*. Allah ﷻ instantly accepts prayers in His House. I have ulcer on my tongue for the last two months. I tried every treatment but in vain. I discarded medicines and started drinking *Zamzam* water. If Allah ﷻ wishes so, my ulcer will be healed with *Zamzam*.

Ishq-i-Haqeeqi between Allah ﷻ and His Men

We have come to the roof of *Harem* by an escalator through *Baab-e-Fahd* for *Maghrib* prayer. The weather is pleasant. There is spirituality and luminosity and Allah's ﷻ House is glowing before us. Thousands of men are doing *Tawaaf* on both floors. There were fewer people earlier but now the roof is crowded with people. Imam Sahib's recitation in *Maghrib* prayer turned everyone's heart tender. All the lights in *Harem* are on and it has become an axis of light. People are waiting for *Isha* prayer. Some are sitting other are laying and resting. There is a *Ishq-i-Haaqeeqi* between Allah ﷻ and his men. At one side, women are busy in recitations, remembrances and sanctifications, men on the other. All are praising Allah ﷻ. Some people are doing *Tawaaf*. Allah's ﷻ luminous and glowing House is pleasing our eyes and heart. Attendance in this House is a matter of great fortune. Allah ﷻ has made *Hajj* obligatory unto those who can afford it. There are many who can afford it but they are not invited. I have seen hundreds of people who have no means but they have performed *Hajj* many times. Tariq Shah has come eight times. Qari Zubair has been coming since 2002. Maulana Inam-ul-Haq has been invited several times. He performs *Hajj* every year. An 80-year old man from Mali has performed *Hajj* forty times. When man comes once, he wishes to come again and again.

Roof of Harem and Baitullah

The call for *Isha* prayer was given in *Harem* and silence prevailed. Prayer is offered soon after the prayer call. I am on the roof of *Harem*, *Baitullah* is in front of me and above is *Bait-ul-Ma'moor*; it seems that angels have joined the prayer... There is a huge gathering on the roof. I got up for ablution and forgot the

place. After prayer, I looked for my bag. It took half-an-hour to find the bag. I thanked Allah ﷻ because the bag contained the accounts of travelogue. Today is Friday. More and more Muslims come to spend Friday night in *Harem*. They worship Allah ﷻ all night. They supplicate and repent on their sins, begging for pardon. A group of Chinese pilgrims is present on the roof. They are taking group photos after prayer.

Kissing the Walls of Ka'bah

Today is the blessed day of Friday. Allah ﷻ created me to see this day. All of my desires, longings and prayers have come true. When I kissed and touched the walls of *Ka'bah*, it seemed as if my body was dissolved. I am among those who have kissed these walls since centuries. It seems that I am vanished or divided into countless pieces. I am enraptured and frenzied touching the walls of *Ka'bah*. I was oblivious. I could not control my emotions and wept. I forgot to beg anything.

O Allah ﷻ! This may never end... May all people go leaving me alone in *Ka'bah*! I wish to be alone in Allah's ﷻ House with my Allah ﷻ. I am crying, sobbing and repenting on my sins, misdeeds, faults and impurities. Allah ﷻ invited this sinful and humble servant to His House and allowed him to circumambulate around His House. Furthermore, He provided me an opportunity to kiss the walls of His House. I am crying; my cheeks and beard is wet with tears. I wish that this scene should never end.

شکر ہے تیرا خدایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
تو نے اپنے گھر بلایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
اپنا دیوانہ بنایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
گرد کعبے کے پھرایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا

*O Allah ﷻ, I praise You, I was not worthy of this;
You invited me to Your House, I was not worthy of this;
You made me Your lover, I was not worthy of this;
You let me walk around Ka'bah, I was not worthy of this.*

I prayed on the first day to get a chance to enter *Ka'bah*. *Hateem* is a part of *Holy Ka'bah*. It is said that offering

supererogatory prayer in *Hateem* is similar to offering of prayer inside *Ka'bah*. We went to *Harem* at 4:15 a.m. I did not intend to do *Tawaaf* but my heart yearned for it. Allah ﷻ helps if you have sincere devotion. I walked towards *Baab-e-Abdul Aziz* and started *Tawaaf*. I had completed only two rounds when people started lining up for prayer. I tried to stand in the line closer to *Ka'bah* but the crowd nudged me back. I found a place two lines behind. I took hands of an Iranian and Afghan so that I might not be jostled farther. People were pushing and trying to trample others. They were impatient, intolerant and undisciplined. These lovers and devotees were hysterical. They want to go forward and do not care for others.

Walls of Ka'bah and Prayer in Hateem

Today Allah ﷻ blessed me to see Imam-e-Ka'bah. He has a glowing face and walks elegantly. Thousands of people crave to see him. I am proud of my fortune that *Ka'bah* is before me and thousands of men of faith are doing *Tawaaf* around it. I see *Ka'bah* and pray. Now I am writing these lines sitting before *Ka'bah* but my looks are fixed on *Ka'bah*. Truly speaking, when I thought to kiss the walls of *Ka'bah*, it automatically attracted me. I caressed the walls of *Ka'bah* feeling some fear. As I thought to kiss it, some supernatural force moved my lips to touch the walls of *Ka'bah*. My lips were attached forcibly to the walls... Imagine that *Ka'bah* is before me; men of faith are weeping, crying and begging pardons around me. Above is *Bait-ul-Ma'moor* and Imam Sahib is reciting the *Holy Quran*. Angels too, are listening attentively and saying *Āmeen* with Imam Sahib. It seems that Allah ﷻ is saying that I have accepted your prayers. O Allah ﷻ! How will this humble servant go into *Ka'bah*? I prayed for it since the first day. I am not a King; I am Your humble servant and a beggar at Your doorstep. My prayer was accepted and I was blessed to go into *Hateem*. *Hateem* is a part of *Baitullah*.

Hazrat Ayesha رضي الله عنها said that she wanted to go into *Ka'bah* and to offer prayer therein. The Holy Prophet ﷺ took her hand and entered her into *Hateem*. He said that whenever you wish to go to *Ka'bah*, enter *Hateem* and offer prayer here: it is part of *Ka'bah*.

When people of Makkah built *Ka'bah*, they left this part unbuilt for want of resources.

Thus, my prayer to go into *Ka'bah* was accepted. People rushed into *Hateem* without any discipline and patience. *Hateem* was full of people within seconds. How will I offer *Nawafil*? There was not enough room. I resolved twice but could not continue. At last, an African proved helpful. His friend was offering *Nawafil* and he was covering him. There was some room, I tried to snuggle in and succeeded. I immediately resolved to offer two *Nawafil*. African covered me too. These two *Nawafil* are the wealth of my life. I will remember it for my whole life. Such prayers are rare in a man's life. The crowd was pushing and jostling but I was directly conversing with Allah ﷻ. I remained in direct contact with Allah ﷻ throughout the two *Nawafil*. My eyes were wet with tears but heart was thumping with joy. Even the thought of such spiritual delight is pleasurable.

Multazim and Keys of Baitullah

After offering *Nawafil* in *Hateem*, I tried to go to *Multazim*. At this place, *Iltizam* (hugging) is Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Here *Ka'bah* is hugged with chest, both hands and cheeks. This area is two-meter wide from the door of *Ka'bah* to the *Black Stone*. The reason to call it *Multazim* is that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ would complete his *Tawaaf*, he would hug this place with his chest, hands and cheeks. It is one of the places, where prayers are certainly accepted. Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet ﷺ would hug at this place and he said that the place between the *Black Stone* and the door is *Multazim*. Whoever prays to Allah ﷻ clinging to this place, his prayers certainly are accepted. I raised my hands in front of *Baitullah*. I traveled into the past. After the conquest of Makkah, when the Holy Prophet ﷺ ordered to bring the keys of *Ka'bah* to take idols out from *Ka'bah*, he was told that Sha'abi family possessed the keys of *Ka'bah*. At this, the Holy Prophet ﷺ called the head of this family, who respectfully presented the keys of *Ka'bah* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ opened the door of *Ka'bah* and smashed all the idols in *Ka'bah*. An idol was huge and high, the Holy Prophet ﷺ carried

Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه on his shoulders and Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه smashed the idol. After that, the *Holy Ka'bah* was washed for worship and *Tawaaf*. The Holy Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله returned the keys to Sha'abi family after washing *Ka'bah*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ told them that the keys of *Ka'bah* will remain in Sha'abi family. He said, "If anybody tried to take back the keys of *Ka'bah* from this family, he will be punished by Allah ﷻ on Doom's Day." From that day onward, this key remains in this family passing from generation to generation. The current gate of *Ka'bah* is made of gold. It is 2.4 meter high and 1.7-meter wide. It is opened on special request. If Saudi rulers want to take any head of state of foreign countries inside *Ka'bah*, they have to request the head of this family to open the gate of *Ka'bah*. After opening the gate of *Ka'bah*, the head of Sha'abi family remains present there and locks the gate again when guest is out. The possessor of the key of *Ka'bah* Sheikh Abdul Qadir Sha'abi has visited Pakistan.

Allah ﷻ, Ka'bah and His Servant

Allah's ﷻ magnificent and glorious House is before me. The basic purpose of this book is to urge readers to visit Allah's ﷻ House, to stay there and receive Allah's ﷻ blessings. By the grace of Allah ﷻ I wrote every word of this book in *Harem* and other Holy Places, most of the times sitting exactly in front of *Ka'bah*. Allah ﷻ blessed my words. My words are cries of my heart. These symbolize my desires and emotions of thankfulness. It was more difficult to get out of *Hateem* than entering into it. Keeping myself safe and secure, I completed the remaining five rounds of *Tawaaf*. I still feel the touch of walls of *Ka'bah*. It will remain warmth of my heart. I could still feel my lips on the walls of *Ka'bah* though two hours have passed. The fragrance of *Ka'bah*, its touch and spirituality will remain with me forever. I will never forget this event.

Friday Prayer in Harem

Today is Friday. Thousands of pilgrims have gone back but it seems that they have returned for *Friday prayer*. Both sides of the road from Ibrahim عليه السلام Road to Al-Hijrah Road are thronged with

people. All are heading towards *Harem*. Patients had started arriving since morning. The Indian pilgrims enquired from others about Pakistani doctor and reached room number 903. I praise Allah ﷻ Who blessed me with the opportunity to help the victims of disaster in my own country and to serve the pilgrims in this Holy Land. I set for *Harem* at 10:30 a.m. so that I might offer *Friday prayer* inside *Harem*. Thousands of others were going to *Harem*. I reached the second floor of *Harem* at 11:00 a.m.

People are everywhere; not an inch of place is vacant. People are lined up from *Harem* to the Pigeon Square. In *Friday Prayer*, Imam Sahib gave an enlivening sermon. He begged pardons for sins and prayed for success in both of the worlds, *Mujahideen's* victory and glory of Islam. I returned to hotel feeling quite hungry. I had to wait at lift for an hour. Asma made a dish of potato and eggs. Saleem Sahib said that here we had to offer prayers one after the other. We had just finished our meals and it was time for *Asr* prayer. We ran to *Harem* and found a place near it. We offered *Asr* prayer at road near Bin Laden Store. Bin Laden Group is famous in Saudi Arabia. It is responsible for *Harem's* security, housekeeping and overall administration. After *Asr* prayer I took rest for an hour at the second floor. I offered *Maghrib* prayer on the open roof of *Harem*. Weather was pleasant on the roof. Cool winds were blowing. Huge loudspeakers are installed. When Imam Sahib recites, it feels as if he is standing on the roof.

From Ilyasi Masjid Abottabad to Makkah

On the roof, I met Khalid Masood from Karachi and Altaf Shah from Talla Gang. Altaf Shah told me about Madinah and marvels of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that inspired and urged me to reach Madinah as soon as possible. Altaf Shah told me about Madinah and Makkah in detail. I also exchanged my thoughts with Khalid Masood. In *Isha* prayer, Imam Sahib's recitation made me weep... Imam of *Ka'bah* recited those verses from the *Holy Quran* in which it is mentioned that we should treat our parents kindly. He wept himself and made others weep too. I remembered my mother and father. I remembered all their sacrifices and efforts that they

did for us. I sincerely prayed to Allah ﷻ to keep me obedient of my parents. I saw *Holy Ka'bah* from the roof and returned to Hotel.

Pilgrim patients are arriving. Patients from Mumbai and Abottabad are searching for Pakistani doctor. I am familiar to the residents of Abottabad. I visited Abot Abad many times during the earthquake of 2005. There I visited Ilyasi Masjid several times. I would stay in Zain Hotel. I would pass through Abott Abad to go to earthquake hit Balakot, Mansehra and other areas. I met the pilgrims of Abott Abad on the Holy Lands. A neighbor of Ilyasi Masjid, Muhammad Iqbal also has come for *Hajj*. He comes with patients, who pray for me. It gives pleasure to serve the patients.

The Old Man and Woman and Prayers

There was an emergency call early in the morning. An old woman was ill. I went to 7th floor for her checkup. I gave her medicines and went to *Harem*. I went in front of *Ka'bah* passing through Baab-e-Fahd. *Ka'bah* and *Harem* have a unique attraction. One is bewildered to see Allah's ﷻ House. Gaze is fixed at *Baitullah*. Except "Allah ﷻ, *Ka'bah* and His Servant" nothing exists.

Tawaaf is going on. There is jostling, devotion, frenzy, restlessness, anxiety and ecstasy. An old man from Punjab is being pushed away. He controlled himself for a while then he uttered a slang word in his Punjabi accent. He forgot that he was doing *Tawaaf*. To err is human. Man's nature does not change. I said to the old man, "Please keep patience, I will take care of you" and he was relieved of anger.

Okay, Fine...

I met an Iranian pilgrim. He was talking in Persian that I could not understand well. I just replied "Okay, fine". He was suffering from leg pain. I massaged him and he became happy and prayed for me. I offered *Tahajjud* prayer in front of *Ka'bah*. I had not finished one round when people started lining up for prayer. First, I thought to complete two rounds but then I felt it better to sit in line because I could not bear the pushes. It was time for *Fajr* prayer. To offer *Fajr* prayer in front of *Ka'bah* is an extraordinary experience. Pilgrims are surrounding *Ka'bah* from all sides. It is the

only place in the world, where Imam is surrounded by *Namazi* from all sides. Imam Sahib recited the verses of supplications. Many pilgrims wept. Imam-e-Ka'bah recites so impressively that verses penetrate into heart, whether one comprehends the meaning or not.

Jump for the Black Stone

After prayer, I prayed for my dear homeland Pakistan, family, friends and relatives. I prayed more for my country. We are living peacefully due to Pakistan. All the respect we have is because of Pakistan.

O Allah ﷻ! Keep Pakistan safe from all the internal and external threats.

O Allah ﷻ! Destroy all the enemies of my country and exalt the Islamic world.

As soon as Imam Sahib said "*Salaam*" to finish the prayer, people jumped like Jonty Rhodes (South African known player who is famous for his high jumps to catch the ball) and ran towards *Ka'bah*, *Black Stone* and *Rukn-e-Yamani*. There was severe jostling and pushing. I thought it better to stay back. I completed seven rounds and felt that I was very close to Allah ﷻ House. I thanked Allah ﷻ. Now a few days are left to depart from there. We will go to Madinah, the Holy Prophet's ﷺ land. The group has decided to visit sacred places in Madinah.

We set out from Misfalah at 7:30 a.m. We passed from Kadai. Tariq Shah told me that here two hundred thousand gallons of water are filled daily. After that, I saw *Ghaar-e-Thaur* from a distance. Thousands of people were climbing up. A few days ago, Allah ﷻ had blessed me to visit *Ghaar-e-Thaur*. I also had the opportunity to visit the *Cave of Hira*.

Chapter 13

JABL-E-RAHMAT

And

JANNAT-E-MUA'LLA

Adam met Eve, after descending from the heavens and passing through a period of separation assembled at this place. All human being, after resurrection, will be gathered in *Maidan-e-Arafat*-area round *Jabl-e-Rahmat*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ delivered his last sermon on *Jabl-e-Rahmat*. Thousands of pilgrims are here. Allah ﷻ blessed me to visit *Jabl-e-Rahmat*, *Ghaar-e-Thaur* and *Ghaar-e-Hira*. The Indonesian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian visitors are in thousands. Men, women and children are climbing up. The field of *Arafat* is empty but *Jabl-e-Rahmat* is thronged. People are climbing up in groups. They are praying. The city of Makkah is clearly visible from the top of *Jabl-e-Rahmat*. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ camel *Qaswa* stood there. Here the Holy Prophet ﷺ delivered his farewell sermon that is considered as *Islam's Magna Carta*.

The Pilgrims are inscribing their names on the cemented dome on *Jabl-e-Rahmat*. Those who have not pens are trying to write their names with fingers because they think it causes blessings. The Government officials are distributing pamphlets that to climb this place, to pray, to inscribe name or promise a vow is against Shariah. However, the pilgrims come and devotedly climb up at this place. The old and young, men and women all are doing this. A few days ago, we had come to *Arafat*. We had stayed there for a night. Now this place seems to be desolate. Disposable plates, glasses, bottles, cups and cans are littered in the ground of *Arafat*. Allah Diya's wife climbed up fondly. She said to Asma, "There is no fear in the way of Allah ﷻ. If you die, you are a martyr. Nothing

is difficult for a courageous person. I do not fear anything. I did not bring Allah Diya with me because he starts gasping."

We went to *Masjid Namirah* from *Jabl-e-Rahmat*. *Masjid Namirah* is the sacred place from which the *Hajj* sermon is delivered. It is a spacious mosque. It is very difficult to reach there. It is opened only during *Hajj* days. We saw it from a distance because entry is not permitted. It is closed after *Hajj*. We passed from the field of *Arafat*. Here we had spent a day and a night and here we had begged pardon for our sins. *Arafat* is situated in mountains and it is place of Prophets. Adam عليه السلام and Eve met at this sacred place after being exiled from paradise. There are mountains on both sides of the road. There is a track for metro train by which we had travelled to *Mina*, *Arafat* and *Muzdalifah*. There is the office of OIC (Organization of Islamic Countries) on this road.

Muzdalifah and Mina after Hajj

The field of *Muzdalifah* is stretched on miles. There is a splendid palace "Qasr Al-Makki" on the mountains. In *Mina*, millions of tents are left as they were. Much of the garbage has been collected. We passed nearby *Mina*, *Muzdalifah* and *Jamarat*. The *Devils* are resting and their apprentices are present all around the world. The *Devil's* dance is going on in the form of impatience, intolerance and injustice practiced by people. The bus is running through high mountains. Buildings, multi-storey hotels and palaces have been built after cutting and cleaning the mountains. Gradually, mountains are vanishing and skyscrapers are protruding. Makkah is the city of peace. Ibrahim عليه السلام had prayed for this city. There is prosperity and wealth in this city. The Rulers of Saudi Arabia always try to do something for the extension and adornment of *Harem*. Here, everything is abundant.

Once again, I see the mountains of *Hira*. People are climbing up. They look as if thousands of white particles are moving on zigzag stairs. We are content to see all this from a distant. It demands courage, passion and devotion to go up. Here, Jibrail عليه السلام had said to Holy Prophet ﷺ to say "Iqra". Allah ﷻ honoured *Jabl-e-Noor* by revealing first revelation there. It is a matter of great

fortune that a few days ago I was blessed with an opportunity to visit this sacred place. I got the chance to enter the *Cave*. I had felt Holy Prophet's ﷺ footprints. I had seen the stones where the Holy Prophet ﷺ had rested and contemplated. Makkah is the city of Prophets ﷺ and birthplace of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We are travelling... We bought two 10-liter sealed bottles of *Zamzam* water to bring to Pakistan. Mrs. Afzal Kashif from Sahiwal presented these bottles to all the pilgrims. May Allah ﷻ reward her with the best of rewards!

Rain in Makkah Again

Imagine that you are in *Harem*: you are on the vast roof of *Harem*, Allah's ﷻ House is before you; there are dark clouds, cold weather and it is drizzling. Thousands of devoted men and women are doing *Tawaaf* around Allah's ﷻ House. It is the most spiritual and inspiring scene.

These clouds and winds are from Holy Prophet's ﷺ age. These winds have a relation to Holy Prophet's ﷺ time. These clouds would rain on these mountains when the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه, Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه, Usman Ghani رضي الله عنه, Ali Murtaza رضي الله عنه and all other devoted companions were there. These clouds, winds and *Harem* are rich with the fragrance of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It seems that the Holy Prophet ﷺ is coming here.

Circles of Devotees

For a true follower of the Holy Prophet ﷺ no other scene is better than *Harem* and raindrops in *Harem*. It is the greatest fortune for him that he is among the millions of devotees who are revolving enraptured around *Harem*. The more the rain descends, the more is the rapture and frenzy of devotees. It is time for *Zuhr* prayer but enthusiastic devotees are busy in *Tawaaf*. Some have completed their rounds and others have just started. Some are gazing at Allah's ﷻ House being unconscious of everything else. I too, have joined these restless and entranced devotees and enjoying the scene of Allah's ﷻ House. It is raining and people are doing *Tawaaf* under the heavens. Angels are doing *Tawaaf* in heavens. The touch of

raindrops feels strange. As the raindrop touches the body, it causes ecstasy. I offered *Zuhr* prayer under the shadow of these clouds.

Jannat-e-Mua'lla, Hazrat Khadijah رضي الله عنها and Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه

After *Asr* prayer, we went to the famous graveyard of Makkah, *Jannat-ul-Mua'lla*. This graveyard is famous since Holy Prophet's ﷺ time and it is situated in the area of Hajoon to the north of *Harem*. It is 700 meters away from *Harem*. Its area is approximately 10,000 square meters. A great number of people of Makkah and visitors are buried there. Some of the greatest *Holy Companions* are also buried in this graveyard: Umm-ul-Moumineen Hazrat Khadijah رضي الله عنها, Hazrat Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه, his mother and Hazrat Asma bint Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنها are prominent among them. Hazrat Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه narrates that whenever the Holy Prophet ﷺ would come to Hazrat Khadijah's رضي الله عنها grave, he would say, "What a good grave it is!" One feels a strange satisfaction, peace of mind, spirituality and holiness after entering this graveyard.

This graveyard is clean and tidy, not like ours. It is divided into different areas and each area is allocated a number. There is a separate place for children's graves. There are a few graves with wire netting around them. These graves give a pleasant smell. The Saudis or authentic Saudi scholars do not permit anyone to stay here for a long time. Under the netting beside a tree, our mother Hazrat Khadijah رضي الله عنها is resting inside a square grave. A Saudi affirmed that it was Mother Khadijah's رضي الله عنها grave. I wanted to stand near Mother Khadijah's رضي الله عنها grave. I wanted to say something to Mother Khadijah's رضي الله عنها. I wanted to pay tribute to the mother as our beloved Prophet ﷺ would pay tribute to Hazrat Khadija's رضي الله عنها. Hazrat Khadijah رضي الله عنها helped the Holy Prophet ﷺ when no one helped him.

I recall the Past

Jibrail عليه السلام brought revelation in *Ghaar-e-Hira*. He said to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, "Read in the name of thy Lord." The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "I am not literate." Jibrail عليه السلام hugged and pressed the Holy Prophet ﷺ and said again to read. The Holy

Prophet becomes worried and goes home. He tells Hazrat Khadijah رضي الله عنها about this event. Hazrat Khadijah رضي الله عنها consoles him. She says, "You are a sympathizer to the poor; you help the needy ones. Allah ﷻ will keep you safe."

Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم son Ibrahim is buried here. Abu Talib, Abdul Muttalib and Abdullah Bin Zubair رضي الله عنه are buried there, too. Women are not permitted to enter the graveyard but hundreds of Turkish, Iranian and Pakistani women are standing outside the graveyard. They are visiting the graveyard from a distance. They were talking about Hazrat Khadijah رضي الله عنها when I passed near them. Pigeons are essential part of *Harem*, Madinah and *Jannat-ul-Baqee'*. Thousands of pigeons are feeding on grains in the graveyard. Here too, people buy grains and feed the pigeons thinking it an act of blessing.

Masjid-e-Jinn

Allah ﷻ has created men and Jinn to worship him. Besides men, Jinn also accepted Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم invitation. *Masjid-e-Jinn* is situated near Hajoon bridge to the south-east of *Jannat-e-Mua'lla*. This mosque is 900 meters away from *Harem*. The history of *Masjid-e-Jinn* is that when the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم met a group of *Jinn*, Abdullah bin Masood رضي الله عنه was with him. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم drew a line and said, "You must confine in this circle." *Masjid-e-Jinn* is built at the place of that circle. It is also called *Masjid-e-Haras*. This name is given because of the fact that sentinels on patrol in Makkah would meet at this place after patrolling. This *Masjid* has been famous since the first half of third Islamic century. This *Masjid* has been renovated several times. The last renovation was carried out in 1421 AH during Shah Fahd's regime. I felt a strange spirituality and magnificence in this *Masjid*. There was an awe-inspiring environment. A whole group of Turks was present outside the *Masjid*. People come here and seeing this historical *Masjid* recall the group of *Jinn*. It is said that *Surah Jinn* was revealed there.

We reached *Harem* after *Maghrib* prayer. The Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم presence can be felt everywhere in *Harem*. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم would walk there. He left for his nocturnal journey from there.

Arab's Patio, Kahwa and Dates

The Holy Prophet ﷺ set for his nocturnal journey from Umm-e-Haani's home. There was a patio in *Harem* that was occupied by the Africans. It is said that Jibrail ﷺ asked permission from the Holy Prophet ﷺ to set for nocturnal journey from this place. *Buraq* was tethered a little away from this place. A group of Africans was sitting there with thermos of Kahwa and dates. They were serving others as well. Naveed, Ejaz and Sabir Baig went near them and dates and *Kahwa* were served to them. I tried to talk with an Arab in Arabic. He told me that the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his *Holy Companions* walked every inch of this place. Today's *Harem* was the whole city of Makkah in the past. You cannot specify a place; here every place is sacred.

Medical Camp for Pilgrims

After *Isha* prayer, I came to Hotel. I was tired so I decided to take a rest. Lift of the hotel did its drama as usual. I could enter my room after one and a half hour and patients from Abottabad, Peshawar, Madras and Mumbai were waiting. Today, Rehab al-Roudha Hotel near *Harem* in Saudi Arabia is transformed into 449-Jahanzaib Block, Allama Iqbal Town. The Indian patients complained that they had been waiting since morning. Four patients were sitting inside and five were waiting outside. Four patients are sitting in Asma's room. I enjoy serving the pilgrims. Tariq Shah also arrived there. He says to patients, "Pray to Allah ﷻ for doctor that he is invited by Allah ﷻ again and again to serve the pilgrims." I checked the patients, gave them medicines, and consoled them. There was an 80-year old woman from Peshawar. I gave her medicines and she prayed for me. I intended to go to sleep but more patients arrived. At midnight, someone knocked at the gate. I was in deep sleep due to weariness but the old man from Mumbai made me awake. He was suffering from severe pain. I examined him and gave him medicines. I tried to sleep again but could not sleep. I felt no regret rather I was happy that pilgrim's problem was solved.

Chapter 14

Let's Go to Madinah

Since the first day, Asma is saying that she will perform an *Umrah* for her late mother. We were discussing to wear *Ihram* from *Masjid-e-Ayeshah* or *Masjid-e-Ji'irana*. Tariq Shah said to go to Madinah. We readily consented to his suggestion. I told Asma and she was much pleased to hear this. Madinah is the city of the Prophet ﷺ, a city of dreams, hopes and blessings. I had been hearing about Madinah and Makkah since my childhood. Makkah and Madinah are complementary to each other. I will go to this sacred city, the city of Prophet ﷺ and the *Holy Companions* رضی اللہ عنہم. I will go there with humility. I remained restless all the night. The old man from Mumbai woke me up early in the morning for his medicines. All the time I thought about Madinah. Asma, we will go to Madinah. In a state of frenzy, I started preparations at 4 O' clock. Tariq Shah's nephew, a graduate from Madinah University, brought a vehicle. We offered prayer at the roof of *Harem*. Allah's ﷻ beautiful House was before my eyes. Offering prayer at the roof of *Harem* has its own pleasure. In the prayer too, I thought about Madinah.

Tariq Shah was waiting with Asadullah in front of Baab-e-Abdul Aziz. We set for Madinah. Madinah is approaching. The Holy Prophet's land, his *Roudha* is approaching. Madinah is 416 kilometers away from Makkah and it will take five or six hours to reach there. Whatever the distance may be, I will go there. I will attend Holy Prophet's ﷺ land and see his *Roudha* (Mausoleum). The distance was decreasing and my anxiety was increasing. We are blessed that we are going to the blessed city of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. May Allah ﷻ bless Tariq Shah and Asadullah! We are heading towards Madinah with their support. We praise benedictions for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We are heading to Madinah. Madinah is approaching...

محمدؐ کا روضہ قریب آ رہا ہے
 بلندی پہ اپنا نصیب آ رہا ہے
 خبر جا کے دے دو فرشتو ان کو
 کہ خادم تمہارا سعید آ رہا ہے

*Muhammad's ﷺ mausoleum is approaching
 My fortune is elevating
 O Angels, submit this message to Muhammad's ﷺ
 That his servant, Saeed, is coming.*

Prophet's ﷺ Roudha is approaching. I had waited to see *Raouza-e-Rasool and Masjid-e-Nabavi* for years. Asadullah is describing the blessings of the holy city of the Prophet ﷺ in the light of *Ahadith*. I wish he should keep on narrating Holy Prophet's ﷺ *Ahadith* tiill we reach Madinah. Allah ﷻ has exalted the Holy Prophet ﷺ forever. His name is exalted. On our way, we found a Pakistani hotel. We ate Pakistani breakfast and enjoyed Lahori tea. I met Zahid Khan from Mansehra. We covered one hundred kilometers more. Asma is praising benedictions for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Eyes are revealing the state of heart. A Muslim has only two homes: Allah's ﷻ House and *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Whoever comes to Allah's ﷻ House, also visits Holy Prophet's ﷺ *Green Dome*. Everyone offers his gratitude and love. Every visitor pays tribute in the form of benedictions, sobs and tears. The distance is decreasing.

Salaam to the Valley of Abwaa

We arrived at the *Valley of Abwaa*. Holy Prophet's ﷺ mother Amina is burried here beside these mountains. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was six years old when he reached the *Valley of Abwaa* with his mother Amina. There Amina fell ill and died, leaving her 6 years old orphan son to be looked after by his grandfather Abdul Muttalib. She was burried at the foot of these mountains. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ father had died earlier, now his mother died too. Holy Prophet's ﷺ uncle and grandfather took great care of him. While passing from the *Valley of Abwaa*, I imagined that scene when Holy Prophet's ﷺ mother died. What would have been the

feelings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ? We moved ahead. We passed through many historical places. Asadullah is driving and doing commentary as well.

Holy Prophet ﷺ in Umm-e-Ma'bad's Tent

We were near the *Valley of Qudaid*. Asadullah told us that the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه had stopped there in Umm-e-Ma'bad's tent during their Journey of Migration. In Ahadith, the *Valley of Qudaid* is mentioned in detail. On reaching near the *Valley of Qudaid*, I remembered the great traveller of migration and Umm-e-Ma'bad's lean and ill goat, which gave abundant milk when touched by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. When Holy Prophet ﷺ reached Umm-e-Ma'bad's tent, she was sitting in the yard. Famine had struck the area in those days therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked for food items (milk, meat, dates etc.) on price. Nevertheless, that pious soul replied that if she had something she would consider it an honour to present it to the Holy Prophet. Meanwhile, the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw a goat that was standing in the corner. The Holy Prophet ﷺ enquired why she was standing there. Umm-e-Ma'bad replied that the goat was weak and ill; it could not walk with the flock that is why it stood there. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked if the goat gave milk. Umm-e-Ma'bad replied in the negative. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked for permission to milk the goat. Umm-e-Ma'bad replied, "I can sacrifice my life for you; you may milk the goat." The Holy Prophet ﷺ tied the legs of the goat and patted it. With the name of Allah ﷻ, he prayed and asked for a pot. The goat stood comfortably and began to cud. The Holy Prophet ﷺ started milking the goat. The goat's udders were full of milk. When the pot was full, Umm-e-Ma'bad was offered the milk first. She drank milk to her heart's fill. Then Holy Prophet ﷺ gave milk to his *Companions* until they were satiated. The Holy Prophet ﷺ drank milk in the end and said:

سَأَقِي الْقَوْمَ آخِرَهُمْ شَرْبًا (الحديث)

Those in the service of others have their turn at the end.

After that, the Holy Prophet ﷺ milked again in the pot, gave it to Umm-e-Ma'bad, and told her to give it to Abu Ma'bad when he returned.

The Bright-Faced ﷺ

After a while, Umm-e-Ma'bad's husband returned with his flock of goats. He was amazed to see milk and he enquired from where that had come. Umm-e-Ma'bad said that a pious man came there and this milk was got by virtue of him. She narrated the event to her husband and he asked about the appearance of that pious man. Umm-e-Ma'bad said that she saw a man who was:

*Handsome, bright-faced,
Of good habits,
Neither lean nor plump,
Broad eyes and dark eyelashes,
Long beautiful neck,
Thick pretty beard,
Thin eyebrows, an outstanding beauty,
Prettier from distance, sweeter from near,
Civility and nobility in conversation,
His words appear as pearls,
Middle statured, neither tall nor short,
Most attractive among his companions,
Of great respect and reverence,*

He ﷺ is surrounded by his Companions. When he ﷺ gives some order to them, they compete with one another to carry out that order,

He is a chieftain and he speaks to the point.

When Abu Ma'bad heard these good traits of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he said, "By God, he is a man from Quraish. I wish to live in his company and to help him. I will do it if I found a way

to do so." Later on, this fortunate couple migrated to Madinah and embraced Islam. What a good fortune!

Anonymous Voice

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ was present in Umm-e-Ma'bad's tent, an anonymous voice from the western part of Makkah started singing Arabic verses. People were hearing the verses but could not see the singer because he was a Jinn who went to the eastern side of Makkah. In this way, the Muslims came to know the direction in which Holy Prophet ﷺ had departed.

جَزَى اللَّهُ رَبُّ النَّاسِ خَيْرَ جَزَائِهِ
رَفِيقَيْنِ خَلَا خَوْمَتِي أُمَّ مَعْبِدِ
فَمَا نَزَلَا بِالْبُرِّ ثُمَّ تَرَوْحَا
فَأَفْلَحَ مَنْ أَمْسَى رَفِيقَ مُحَمَّدِ
(الحديث)

"Allah ﷻ, the Lord of humankind, may reward best the two Companions who rested in Umm-e-Ma'bad's tent. Their coming in and going out of Umm-e-Ma'bad's tent was a sacred and promising act. Successful is he who has become a Companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ."

Suraqah bin Ja'sam: Enemy turned into a Guardian

There are rugged and rocky mountains around the Valley of Qudaid. The land is hard and rocky in the mountains. The Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه are going to Madinah. Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه looks here and there. They reach Bani Madlij where the land is harder around the mountains. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is going contented but Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه keeps a watching eye around. I see in my imagination that Suraqah, wearing a helmet on his head, pointing his spear, is heading fast on his mare. He is about to overtake them. It is the most sacred migration in human history and the greatest migrants, the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه are riding one camel, Amir Bin Faheerah رضي الله عنه and Abdullah رضي الله عنه Bin Uraiqat on the other.

This caravan is going beside the mountains of Bani Madlaj. Suraqah's mare comes nearer. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is relaxed. He prays to Allah ﷻ, "O Allah ﷻ! We seek Your refuge from his evil". As he utters these words, Suraqah's mare is stalled in the ground. It is a miracle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Suraqah gets up and mounts on the mare but the mare is stalled again. Suraqah understands that Allah's ﷻ wrath is about to incur on him. He immediately folds his hands before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and requests for pardon. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, mercy for all worlds, forgives him. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ gaze makes Suraqah fortunate. He turns into a guardian against the enemy. He requests the Holy Prophet ﷺ the help that he (Suraqah) can provide. The Holy Prophet ﷺ orders him to stay there and cover them from enemies.

Kisra's Bracelets, Suraqah and Hazrat Umar Bin al-Khattab رضي الله عنه

When Suraqah returned, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Suraqah, what will be your glory when you wear Kisra's bracelets?" Suraqah was granted security. Now he was a guardian of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He saw that people were searching for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He told them he had searched area but found no trail. Thus, he deceived the enemies.

After the conquest of Makkah when the Holy Prophet ﷺ was staying in *Ji'irannah* after completing the *Battles of Hunain and Tai'f*, Suraqah brought the security paper to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Today is the day of fulfilling promises and rewarding the good deeds; come near to me." The Holy Prophet ﷺ remembers the time of migration and Suraqah's service for him. The Holy Prophet ﷺ makes Suraqah sit close to him and he embraces Islam.

Time's wheel turns. It is Hazrat Umar's رضي الله عنه Caliphate. Qaisar and Kisra have been defeated. Madai'n is conquered. The yard of *Masjid-e-Nabawi* is full of Kisra's ornaments and other spoils of war. The Second Caliph is anxious and disturbed. He is walking around the courtyard. He looks at the spoils of war but does not speak a word. The *Companios* are worried due to his anxiety. All the spoils

that but none dares to ask Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه. At last, Umar رضي الله عنه finds what he is searching for. His eyes are brightened. He runs to Kisra's bracelets which are lying in the corner. He picks up the bracelets and orders to call Suraqah. At the same time he says that whatever the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم has said is truth. Suraqah came running. He fears that Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه calls him. Umar رضي الله عنه is happy today. He made Suraqah sit beside him and on his request, Suraqah wears Kisra's bracelets in his hands. Suraqah recalls stalling of his mare, the Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم granting security and foretelling him to wear Kisra's bracelets. Suraqah weeps and Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه and all other Muslims, too. All of them remembers the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. The Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم prophecy has come true.

The Well of Rauha

This well is present from Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم time but one can pull water from it even now. Seventy Prophets رضي الله عنهم and the Holy Companions رضي الله عنهم drank water from the *Well of Rauha*. Going to *Badr*, I asked the way from an Arab. First, he told us the way then asked to follow him. He reversed his vehicle and took us to the *Well of Rauha*. We are guests in Madinah so we are being respected. The *Well of Rauha* is still working and its water is used despite of passing centuries. The well is in its original form but motors are installed for pumping of water. A boy from Bhalwal was taking water from the well. The water is good. This well is quenching the thirst of millions of people for the centuries. The boy told us that the water of this well is a healer. Its water heals from diseases. His friend was suffering from diabetes. He has been regularly drinking water from this well daily. Now his diabetes is cured and his sugar level is normal. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and the *Holy Companions* drank water from this well while going to and returning from *Badr*. We too drank water from it. Really, the water was tasty and delicious. Asadullah told us that we are approaching *Badr*. The mountains of Madinah are grey, brown, crimson, rocky and sandy. Seeing these mountains one gets a feeling of peace. These mountains are soft whereas the mountains of Makkah are awe-inspiring. Makkah has majesty and Madinah has softness and beauty.

In Badr

There starts the area of *Badr*. The structure of mountains is changed. Some mountains are black and rocky, others are sandy and crimson. Asadullah's friend Atique-ur-Rehman is working as a translator in a Maktab and Da'wah Academy in *Badr*. He told us about the events of *Badr*. He pointed towards a mountain pass telling that the angels descended there to help the Muslims. It is Allah's ﷻ glory that at one side there are sandy mountains and rocky at the other. We moved ahead and reached the graveyard of the *Martyrs of Badr*. Thirteen *Holy Companions* were martyred in the *Battle of Badr*. The names of martyred companions were written on the board outside the graveyard. The youngest martyred companion was Umair bin Abi Waqqas who joined the battle at the age of 16 and fought bravely. I stretched my imagination to the detailed account of events happening in the *Battle field of Badr*.

Battle of Badr – the Day of Discrimination

There are 313 fighters in the army of Muslims under the leadership of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. There are two horses and seventy camels in the army, on which two or three men ride alternately. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, Hazrat Ali ؑ and Hazrat Marsad ؑ bin abi Marsad Ghanvi had one camel on which they rode in turns. The army of infidels consisted of thirteen hundred men initially. It had hundred horses, six hundred armors and many camels. Later on, Banu Zahra disputed and left the army that decreased the army to one thousand men. The Makkahan army left Makkah, passed the *Valley of Usfan, Qudaid, Hajfah* and deployed at the place of *Badr* on a hillock. This hillock is situated at the southern pass of the *Valley of Badr*. Atique-ur-Rehman took us to the hillock and showed the place where the infidel army had deployed. He also showed us the place where Muslim army had deployed. The *Holy Quran* mentions this place as "Near Bank". We saw the actual place of fight. *Masjid al-Areesh* is built near this place.

The Muslims had constructed shaded scaffolding on height for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The entire battlefield was visible from that place. The mountains of *Badr* are still sandy and shiny. These

mountains shine more apparently in the sun. Atique-ur-Rehman told us that during the *Battle of Badr*, the Muslims could not lay their foot firm while walking. Meanwhile the rain started. The sand hardened the ground and it became firm. Now there was no fear of sinking in the sand. The Muslims collected the rainwater in a pond building a sandy embankment. The *Holy Companions* drank water from that pond. The infidel Aswad Makhzumi was proud of his strength. He advanced to drink water from that pond and to destroy it. Hazrat Hamza رضي الله عنه attacked and killed him. I was imagining all of this in my mind.

The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم is crying in prostration. He is begging and praying to Allah ﷻ. He prays, "O Allah ﷻ, if these few men of Thee do not succeeded today then nobody will praise Thy name." The *Holy Companions* are worried. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم is crying but no one dares to ask him to raise head from prostration. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه comes forward and says to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that Allah ﷻ will surely help us. Allah ﷻ heard Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم prayers and approved them. Atique Sahib pointed towards the field below near *Masjid Areesh* where the battle was fought. Allah ﷻ helped the Muslims with angels. Here are the sandy mountains where the angels descended to help the Muslims.

The atmosphere of *Badr* is sacred to me. In this air, I smell the fragrance of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and his devoted *Companions*. Hand to hand fight started. Infidels were arrogant of their might and the Muslims had firm reliance on strength of their faith. The Muslims were attacking and the infidels' throats were cut before their attacks. Allah ﷻ helped the Muslims. The Angels were fighting along with the Muslims. Ma'az رضي الله عنه and Moawiz رضي الله عنه saw Abu Jahl, commander of the infidel army, and killed him. Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه, Hazrat Ameer Hamzah رضي الله عنه and Abdullah رضي الله عنه bin Rawaha killed Utbah, Shayba and Waleed, leading warriors of the infidels respectively. Many chivalrous infidels were slain in this battle, whose corpses were thrown into the wells and buried. Relics of houses still can be seen in *Badr*. These houses constructed of mud and stones were built in the era of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم.

Makkah were killed or arrested. Abdullah bin Masood beheaded Abu Jahl and presented his head to the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying, "Here is the head of Allah's enemy." The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, there is no god save Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ is the greatest Who kept His promise. He helped His servant and solely routed the entire army." The Holy Prophet ﷺ saw Abu Jahl's corpse and said "He was the Pharaoh of this Ummah." The Holy Prophet ﷺ stepped forward and looking at the dead bodies of infidels said:

"You proved as worst to me as relatives of any prophet can be. You belied me while others testified my truth. You drove me off my land and others provided me the shelter. You came to fight with me but others helped me."

We moved ahead. From *Badr* to *Madinah*, you can see the remnants of old houses, colonies and markets on both sides of the road. High walls and roofs of some houses can still be seen. There are many wells but most of them are closed. The architecture of houses at the place of *Badr* and those of, on the way is alike. These houses are built with mud and stones. Probably these houses were built during the Holy Prophet's ﷺ era. *Madinah* is approaching. Be attentive and respectful! Here is *Madinah* for which I yearned for so many years. Minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* are visible now.

جب مسجد نبوی کے مینار نظر آئے
اللہ کی رحمت کے آثار نظر آئے

*When I saw the minarets of Masjid-e-Nabavi,
I saw the signs of Allah's ﷻ blessing.*

First Salaam at Rauda-tul-Rasool ﷺ

Coming near to *Masjid-e-Nabavi* I felt poise, brilliance and illumination. We were travelling since morning so we had been hungry. We ate delicious meals from a Pakistani hotel. Then we

walked to *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, the second most sacred place in Islam after *Ka'bah*. Time stopped and I held my breath. We entered and felt coolness and light. We performed ablutions and offered *Zuhr* prayer. Shah Sahib said it was a good time to go to see the *Green Dome* (*Gunbad-e-Khazra*). We decided to see Holy Prophet's *Holy Tomb* and to pay a tribute there. The *Companions* in life, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه and Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه are buried beside Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم grave. Illuminations are pouring down. Visitors and pilgrims are standing in a queue. All these are lovers and devotees of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. They have come here to see *Roudha-e-Rasool* صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. Asma went to the women's area to offer *Salam*. The queue is moving forward and my rapture and nervousness increases.

Tariq Shah keeps visiting these places so he is familiar with the ways. He led us through the way where there were fewer people. We are in Madinah, in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. It is time to see the holy tomb. I could not control myself and sobbed. I availed of the fortunate chance to see Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم tomb and nettings of *Green Dome*. The security guard standing near the *Holy Tomb* said, "Hurry up, say salaam and go ahead." Please, let me stay here to capture this scene in my eyes. O Allah ﷻ! Stop the time; I am to see the *Holy Tomb* of Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. Please, do not ask me to move from here. All people want to stay here. They are lovers and devotees.

No matter how much weak and sinful a Muslim may be but love for the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم is natural and inbedded in him. He can tolerate anything but no blasphemy against the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. I remembered Ghazi Ilm Din, a true lover of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. A man was blasphemous to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. Ghazi Ilm-ul-Din was not literate. When he knew this, he took a knife and killed Raj Pal in the public. This lover of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم mounted the gallows for the honour of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. The Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم lovers have arrived here and they want to stay here. They want to enkindle their eyes seeing Holy Prophet's tomb. I also saw the tombs of Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه and Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه. I offered salaam here and moved ahead so

that others may come forward to see the place. We offered *Asr* and *Maghrib* in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Now it was time for *Isha* prayer.

Medical Service in Masjid-e-Nabavi

In *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, I met two patients from Bikaner and Jaudh Pur, India. One was suffering from cough; I gave him medicines for cough. To the other I gave medicines for pain in joints. A Pakistani was coughing badly; I provided him medicines. Thus, our clinic was shifted from Makkah to Madinah. I am writing these lines sitting inside *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. *Masjid-e-Nabavi* is so beautiful, spacious, glorious, magnificent and sacred that one is bewildered to see it. This charming *Mosque* attracts you towards it and absorbs you in it. Coming here, one becomes unmindful of oneself. Shah Sahib showed me the place in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* where Imam Malik would deliver his lectures on Hadith. He lived in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. While teaching Hadith, he would point to *Raudatul-Rasool* ﷺ and said "The Holy Prophet ﷺ said this" and then he would narrate the Hadith. Imam Malik had deep love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He loved Madinah and *Masjid-e-Nabavi* so deeply that he would not go anywhere else from *Masjid-e-Nabavi* thinking that he might not die outside of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. After *Isha* prayer, Muhammad Irshad from Lahore arrived. He took us to his residence in his car. On the way, he showed us the illuminating mountains of *Uhad*. I saw the mountains where the *Battle of Uhad* was fought. Hazrat Ameer Hamzah رضي الله عنه and other *Holy Companions* were martyred in this Battle. I took dinner with Irshad Sahib and spent night there. I was tired so I slept well.

Morning in Madinah

I am in Madinah, the city of exalted and glorious Holy Prophet ﷺ. I spent my night at Irshad Sahib's residence. The whole night I dreamt minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. I woke up at 4:00 a.m. Irshad Suleman came and we went to *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. *Masjid-e-Nabavi* has become illuminated. Spirituality and radiance is everywhere. It is early in the morning and lovers of Allah ﷻ and the Holy Prophet ﷺ are arriving to praise benedictions and salam. There are thousands of them. *Masjid-e-Nabavi* is full of them.

All the gates are crowded with men and women. There is separate arrangement for women in the two corners of the Masjid. *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and *Gunbad-e-Khazra* are magnificent and glorious. Once you look at them, your gaze will be fixed there. You will see hundreds of similar minarets, light, luminosity, beauty, coolness, spirituality and soul-inspiring scenes everywhere. Tariq Shah told us that air-conditioning plant for the mosque is installed 5 or 6 kilometers away. It is an excellent system. There are electric canopies in the yard, which are converted into roof at noon. When these canopies are folded, they look like minarets of a mosque. What a glory the city of Holy Prophet ﷺ has! I offered *Fajr* prayer and recited the *Holy Quran*. I did not want to leave *Masjid-e-Nabavi*.

Let us say Salam!

After *Ishraq* prayer, I stood in a queue to say *Salaam*. Thousands of lovers are present. All are moving ahead slowly and respectfully. They praise benedictions and *salaams* and come to *Rauda-tul-Rasool* with great love and affection. It is the most sacred place in the world. Allah's ﷺ beloved Prophet ﷺ rests there. I get closer to the *Tomb* and see Holy Prophet's name inscribed there. Be respectful! It is the most sacred and reverent place in the world. I said my *salaam* of respect with tears. May Allah ﷺ shower countless blessings on Holy Prophet ﷺ!

O dear Holy Prophet ﷺ! Your Ummah is having a hard time. It is troubled. As the poet says:

کبھی وہ بھی دن تھے ملائکہ جو میرے سامنے تھے سرنگوں
وہ میرا عروج کمال تھا، یہ زوال کتنا عجیب ہے

There were the days when the angels bowed before me.

That was acme of my elevation but how strange is my fall!

The Holy Prophet's ﷺ Ummah is caught in troubles, difficulties and worries. May Allah ﷺ have mercy on Holy Prophet's ﷺ Ummah! Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ are also resting beside the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I offered my *salaam* to them too. I was reassured after offering *salaam* at *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ. One feels lighthearted; it seems that a heavy burden is

alleviated. You will realize this after coming here. I have come for the first time; those who come here frequently will have a better experience. Coming here, one feels oneself in heavens. As the poet says:

کبھی عرش پر، کبھی فرش پر، کبھی اُن کے در کبھی در بدر
 غم عاشق تیرا شکریہ، میں کہاں کہاں سے گزر گیا

*Sometimes in heavens, sometimes on earth;
 Now at friend's doorstep, then vagrant,
 O grief of love! I am thankful to you,
 You made me pass through places never never thought of.*

Chapter 15

Mountains of Uhad

Holy Prophet ﷺ declared Uhad as the mountains of paradise. People take the soil of these mountains to their homes. I am seeing the black mountains of Uhad through the window of my room. Holy Prophet ﷺ appointed a group of Companions on a hillock of this mountain, giving instructions not to move. I see the battlefield where Hazrat Ameer Hamzah ؓ was martyred. Holy Prophet ﷺ used to go to the mountains of Uhad on every Wednesday. He loved this mountain. Once, Holy Prophet ﷺ was standing on the mountain of Uhad with Abu Bakr Siddique, Hazrat Umar and Hazrat Usman ؓ. The mountain of Uhad quaked; Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Uhad, stop! Do not you know that a Prophet, a Siddiq and two martyrs are standing on you?" The battle of Uhad teaches a lesson to Muslims that leader's obedience is a must whatever the circumstances may be. The mountain of Uhad is before my eyes and I remember *Sayyid-ul-Shuhada* Ameer Hamzah. Ameer Hamzah's grave is there with other martyrs' of Uhad.

I asked Asma to get ready for *Harem*. Before coming to *Hajj*, I thought that only *Ka'bah* is called *Harem* but after arriving here I came to know that *Masjid-e-Nabavi* is also *Harem* and sacred. Asma and I walked towards *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. We saw the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. We reached *Harem*. What a glory *Masjid-e-Nabavi* has! Asma went to women's corner. *Masjid-e-Nabavi* is full of people although the prayer will be held half an hour later. More people are arriving. I hear people walking in this sacred atmosphere. They are busy in remembrances, sanctifications and recitation of *Holy Quran*. They are offering salaam to Holy Prophet ﷺ. Entering *Masjid-e-Nabavi* gives a sense of coolness, peace of mind, slumber and happiness. Spirituality prevails upon body and soul. It seems that all the winds, animals, birds, and stones rather every creature

is praising benedictions for Holy Prophet ﷺ. The atmosphere is filled with the chanting of benedictions and salaams. Allah ﷻ sent Holy Prophet ﷺ as mercy for all worlds and exalted his name above all forever.

“Thy name is exalted!”

The first priority of visitors to *Masjid-e-Nabavi* is to offer benedictions and salaams to Holy Prophet ﷺ and to offer supererogatory prayer in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. *Riyadh-al-Jannah* is a patch of paradise and a gift from Holy Prophet ﷺ for his Ummah. To offer supererogatory prayer in *Riyadh-al-Jannah* is similar to offering prayer in paradise. As in Allah’s ﷻ House one has to struggle to reach the *Black Stone*, there is jostling and people do not care for discipline, same is the case here as well. People trample others to get a place in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*; women are no exception. Asma told me that in women’s area there are instructions in Urdu, Hindi, Pashto, Persian and Bengali to keep silence, maintain discipline and to respect *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. However, noise is never subsided. There is always nudging and jostling in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. We offered *Zuhr* prayer. Mr. Irshad took me to the library of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. It is a well-maintained library on the second floor. It contains thousands of books in Arabic, Urdu, English and other languages about Islam, fiqh, history and other subjects. The environment in library is peaceful and spiritual. People read books peacefully and comfortably.

Wearing the Kafan Again

Tariq Shah has arrived. Now we will go to Makkah. We will wear *Ihram*. Once again, we will be shrouded in *Kafan* as *Ihram* is also a sort of *Kafan*. *Ihram* consists of two shrouds like *Kafan*. Before wearing *Kafan*, we cleanse the body and perfume it. In *Ihram*, we do not use perfume because there is no chance of return after wearing *Kafan* but there is possibility in case of *Ihram*.

We hired a taxi and set for Makkah. Departing from *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, I said that we would return soon. We will stay in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and will offer *salaam*. We will search for the footprints of Holy Prophet ﷺ and Holy Companions رضي الله عنهم. We will see the patio

of 'Men of Suffah'. Dr. Ahsan told me that to offer *Umrah* from Madinah is better. This *Umrah* is superior because Holy Prophet ﷺ and Holy Companions رضي الله عنهم performed *Umrah* wearing *Ihram* from this Meeqaat. Asma wished to perform *Umrah* for her mother. Asma's mother was really a pious, trustworthy, sagacious, sympathetic and cooperative woman. She was very punctual in prayers. Problem was that from where to wear the *Ihram*: *Masjid-e-Ayesha*, *Masjid-e-Ji'iranaah* or *Zavi al-Hayafah*. Days were passing and Asma was getting anxious.

If there is sincerity and devotion, Allah ﷻ makes things easier. Taxi stopped at the Well of Ali in Meeqaat. Hundreds of people were wearing *Ihram*. There are saloons and washrooms to change clothes. Holy Prophet ﷺ wore *Ihram* from there. We wore *Ihram* conforming to the Sunnah of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Wearing *Ihram* this time changed the state of mind. It felt that a heavy burdon was removed from my body. The body felt light after liberating from sins and impurities. From the well of Ali to *Harem*, I felt so light as if I was flying in the air. It seemed that my soul was contented after wearing *Ihram*. I felt a great satisfaction and peace of mind. I was extremely happy. Such a delight and happiness was not felt while wearing *Ihram* for the first time. I felt utmost delighted conforming the Sunnah of Holy Prophet ﷺ. This impression lasted all the way. Holy Prophet's fragrance and footprints are present here too. We wore *Ihram* and offered two *Nawafal*. It was time for *Asr* prayer so we offered prayer. *Zilhulayfah* is the place near Madinah from where Holy Prophet ﷺ and his devoted Holy Companions had worn *Ihram* for *Umrah*. Offering two *Nawafal* in the mosque gave me peace of mind and comfort. We are heading to Makkah. Taxi driver is busy on mobile phone. He is continuously speaking. Some drivers keep themselves busy with chewing gums but this driver is speaking for hours. Tariq Shah reminds us to chant *Talbiyah* loudly.

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ، لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ،
 إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ،

"Here I am at Your service, O Allah! Here I am, Here I am. No partner do You have. Here I am, truly, the praise and the favor is Yours, and the dominion. You have no partner"

Umrah is a reminder that we are present before Allah ﷻ. Nothing exists but Allah ﷻ. All praises are for Allah ﷻ and He alone is worshiped.

I can still feel the pleasure of wearing *Ihram* from Meeqat. This intrinsic joy is indescribable. Wearing *Ihram* from the *Well of Ali* caused utmost joy and pleasure. We are going from Madinah to Makkah. It is a distance of 416 kilometers. There are mountains on the way. The sun is just about to set in. The setting sun in Makkah is visible above the mountains. It is a pleasant scene. Horizon has turned crimson. The sun is setting slowly and gradually behind the mountains. It is very attractive scene. Holy Prophet ﷺ too, would have seen the setting sun here, therefore; I am watching the scene and being pleased. We reached *Harem* about the time of *Isha* prayer. We offered prayer in *Harem*. We remained away from *Harem* for two days otherwise we had started feeling that we were natives of *Harem*.

Tawaaf and Sa'ee for Umrah

After prayer, wearing *Ihram* we started the seven rounds of *Tawaaf*. As I have said earlier, there is a strange wisdom and philosophy of seven rounds. The digit of 7 is very important and sacred. If we look around the universe, we will find the digit of 7 everywhere. We took seven rounds of running conforming to mother Hajira's *Sa'ee*.

She is running between the hills of *Safaa* and *Marwah* in search of water. She keeps running. She is anxious and restless for her child. A mother is always anxious for her child; she is uneasy and she weeps and cries. A mother can remain hungry but she cannot bear the hunger of her child. Mother Hajira's child is hungry and thirsty. He thumps and tosses his heels on the pointed stones. Allah ﷻ liked mother Hajira's *Sa'ee*. Jibra'il arrives to help the mother. Mother's *Sa'ee* is successful. Jibra'il hits the ground with his wings where Ismail ﷺ had rubbed his heels and thus the spring of

Zamzam was originated. We are doing *Sa'ee* following mother Hajira. We are running in conformity with mother Hajira's *Sa'ee*. *Hajj* is really the name of tolerance, patience, struggle and stamina; all these elements are present in mother Hajira's *Sa'ee*. *Hajj* is a tribute to Hajira from Allah ﷻ and pilgrims.

I performed *Umrah* and got head-shaved. May Allah ﷻ bless us repeatedly to perform *Hajj* and *Umrah*! The restlessness and anxiety was over. Along with Asma, I prayed for her late mother and attributed *Umrah* to her. Now we felt hungry. We ate meals from Zamzam Tower. Fellows in Rehab al-Roudha congratulated us. Sister Najma offered us sweet dish of *Kheer*. We were exhausted so after a while we were in deep sleep.

We are about to Leave Harem

The day to bid farewell to *Harem* is approaching. We will go from Allah's ﷻ *Harem* to Holy Prophet's *Harem*. I got up at 4:00 a.m. and went to *Harem*. I offered *Tahajjud* prayer on the roof of *Harem* while *Baitullah* was before my eyes. I looked at *Ka'bah* repeatedly. We had not seen *Ka'bah* for two days because we were in Madinah. I saw Allah's ﷻ House to my heart's fill. Weather was quite pleasant on the roof of *Harem*. There was some humidity in the atmosphere but cool winds started blowing. During *Fajr* prayer too, *Baitullah* remained before my eyes. I had been offering prayers for my whole life directing my face towards it and now it was before my eyes. In the morning, Imam Sahib's recitation is very charismatic. Even the stones could turn soft hearing this recitation.

Allah ﷻ has said, "On the day of Calamity, the mountains will become as carded wool". Today, mountains in Makkah are crushed with human skills. The crushed mountains are blowing as carded wool. Plazas and buildings are taking place of mountains. Allah's ﷻ true proclamation has turned into a reality.

We had breakfast at a Pakistani hotel. Patients started arriving after two days break. Mueen-ud-Din from Mumbai arrived early in the morning. He said, "Your medicines is best. All are convinced of your medicines. Allah ﷻ cured all of the patients. We are going to Madinah. Take care of us there too." I said, "I will be

present for your service and treatment, if Allah ﷻ willed so." I am following Holy Prophet's ﷺ command that to serve is to worship... May Allah ﷻ keep me blessed with this passion of service forever!

Struggle and Competition for Tawaaf

A few days are left to depart from *Harem*. In the last days, everyone wishes to spend more of his time walking around *Harem*. People do *Tawaaf* six or seven times a day. Today, coming for *Zuhr* prayer I realized that most of the people have gone back but *Harem* is still full of devotees. I offered *Zuhr* prayer in front of *Ka'bah* after entering through *Baab-e-Abdul Aziz*. *Baitullah* remained before my eyes during the prayer. Allah's ﷻ House is still before my eyes. It was a sunny day but thousands of devotees were revolving around *Ka'bah* not caring about heat and sun. There are voices of departing and arriving pilgrims. Some are going after doing *Tawaaf* and others are coming for *Tawaaf*. I did not intend to do *Tawaaf* after prayer. The sun was blazing. Nevertheless, it happened so that when I thought to return, *Ka'bah* itself attracted me. This House is focal point for the Muslims in every aspect. One is captivated by it at the first sight. Muslims are captivated by it all their lives. After looking at it once, one is so attached and devoted to it that one never feels satisfaction without seeing it again. I started *Tawaaf*. Two Indian old men were talking:

"I have done four *Tawaaf* since the morning. Do the same if you have stamina."

"I have started my first *Tawaaf*. I will complete two *Tawaaf* seeking Allah's ﷻ help."

An Evil Necessity

Mobile phones have affected every aspect of human life. It had its worse effect on children's education. Students are not attentive to their studies. It has become sole interest of young generation. Mobile phone has almost become a body part for this generation. They do have a mobile phone no matter whether they know when where why and for how long should they use the mobile phone what they are doing. In *Harem* too, people remain

busy in talking on mobile phone without caring for interruption caused by the mobile phone calls in prayers / recitation of the *Holy Quran* by the pilgrims. During prayer intervals and in *Tawaaaf* everywhere mobiles keep on beeping and people remain busy in conversation. Nobody realizes that it is disrespectful in *Harem*. During *Tawaaaf*, people continuously talk on mobile phone or send SMS instead of doing prayers. Zafar Iqbal has rightly said that previously Arabs had rosaries in their hands, now they have mobile phones. Concentration and humility in prayers and *Tawaaaf* is subsided due to mobile phones. Some people remained busy with mobile phone during the *Hajj* rites. I observed that some people remained busy in talking on mobile phone through all the rounds of *Tawaaaf*!!

I was in fourth round of *Tawaaaf* when a cloud covered the sky. Sun vanished and weather became pleasant. People were amazed at Allah's ﷻ benevolence. I was praying to Allah ﷻ for my country, children, family and friends. There were fewer people. An Iranian was arguing with his wife about the rounds of *Tawaaaf*. The wife was saying that it was sixth round but he was insisting that it was seventh. At last, they agreed to take one more round. I had completed seven rounds of *Tawaaaf*. People were busy in conversations on mobile phones. They do not take care about one another. I saw a Malaysian talking with his family. When *Baitullah* is before you and you are doing *Tawaaaf*, you must concentrate on Allah's ﷻ House but here everything is going on. People remain busy in worldly talks and SMS. I offered prayer at *Maqam-e-Abraheem* after completing seven rounds of *Tawaaaf* and returned to Rehab al-Rauda. Asma prepared a delicious dish of Aloo Keema (minced meat with potatoes). I got home-prepared meal in Makkah and ate heartily.

Allah ﷻ, Ka'bah and Man

I had just finished the meals when Tariq Shah arrived. He asked us to hurry up for prayers. I recalled Saleem Latif's words about 'consecutive prayers'. We ran for *Asr* prayer but could find a place outside *Harem*. After prayer, I rested in *Harem* for one hour. I enjoyed the sleep. Meanwhile it was time for *Maghrib* prayer.

One quality of this book is that it is mostly written sitting in *Harem* of *Ka'bah* or Holy Prophet's ﷺ *Harem*. At present too, I am sitting in *Harem*. Allah's ﷻ House is before me. I am writing these lines while *Baitullah* is before my eyes. A beggar of Allah's ﷻ House is present at Allah's ﷻ door. He is looking at Allah's ﷻ *Ka'bah*. A few days are left. My heart yearns for another *Tawaaf*. I will do a *Tawaaf* after prayer but currently I am looking at *Ka'bah*. Allah's ﷻ luminous House is before my eyes. My gaze is fixed on it. My soul and mind want to absorb it or to be absorbed in it.

Pilgrims' Styles and an Entranced Bangladeshi Old Man

During *Tawaaf*, one can go through strange experiences. Iranian groups chant prayers louder than others. They chant prayers in Persian and Arabic in their unique style. Men and women walk in groups and raise slogans of "Down with the *Devil* and down with the enemies of Islam". Indonesians and Malaysians too, walk in groups. They are of short stature and enter everywhere. They do not bother anyone. They do not complain if pushed away. Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pilgrims behave alike. They know how to make their way through the crowd. They push others and are pushed by others. They complain and quarrel too. Wherever they find a chance, they try to advance not caring for others. Chinese groups walk slowly. They chant prayers and benedictions together and loud. Be aware of people from Sudan, Somalia, Mali and Nigeria. Leave their way because whether men or women, they know to make their way. People from Bosnia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are kind. Afghani Pathan are wrathful; they are enraged if cannot find the way. Turkish men and women are the most disciplined, organized and respectful. They are pushed and nudged but they give a smile and move forward. Turkish men and women walk in couples or larger groups. Arab pilgrims especially Saudi, Egyptian, Libyan, Palestinian and Lebanese do *Tawaaf* gracefully. They are always respectful. They say prayers silently. They do not tease or push others. If someone shoves them, they content to a wrathful look.

Seventy Tawaaf of Khana Ka'bah

Today, I did two *Tawaafs* of *Ka'bah*. The crowd has diminished but still I could not muster up courage to go near the *Black Stone*, *Multazim* and wall of *Holy Ka'bah*. Gradually, pilgrims are returning to their homelands or *Madinah*. The call for *Isha* prayer has been given in *Harem*. Allah's ﷻ House remained before my eyes during *Isha* prayer. Imam-e-Ka'bah recited *Surah Al-Mominoon* in an inspirational way. He recited the verses that tell the characteristics of successful Muslims. *Baitullah* remained before my eyes during the whole prayer. Allah's ﷻ House is before me while writing these lines. Today most of my time was spent in *Harem*. All the five prayers were offered in *Harem*. I took seven rounds twice but it is not a matter of distinction. Several old men do this seven times a day. I returned to the hotel after the prayer. There is the usual crowd at elevator. People are showing intolerance in order to go first. This drama will go on for next hour. People do not care for others and want to board the elevator first. Five or six men enter the elevator and do not stop for others. All this drama will end in a few days. We will go to *Madinah*. We will bid farewell to *Harem* promising to come again. We will go praying for our return here. However, we do not know when we will be invited again.

Cheerfulness at Makkah Clinic

Before going to sleep, the cheerfulness of our clinic was restituted. Patients from *Mumbai*, *Madras*, *Lahore* and *Sahiwal* started visiting the clinic. An Indian old man came with his wife. They had gone to *Hajj* Committee of India. They got medicines but it did not cure them. I gave them medicines after checkup and they asked about the fee. I extemporarily said, "Prayers". They became happy. They departed praying for me. At night, friends had a gathering. *Naveed*, *Kashif-ur-Rehman*, *Hafiz Asha'r*, *Tariq Shah*, *Zafar Iqbal*, *Sabir Baig* and *Sheikh Zahid* recounted their experiences. *Kashif-ur-Rehman* is a young man. He is fat but he stood first in doing *Tawaaf*. He had done 49 *Tawaafs*, *Masha'Allah*. *Naveed* and *Eijaz* have performed *Umrah* wearing *Ihram* from *Ayesha Masjid*. All the pilgrims want to be blessed with more and

more virtues, blessings and mercies by doing *Umrah* and *Tawaaf*. That is why they are taking rounds around Allah's ﷻ House. They do not feel tired of rounds. Their passion and zeal is increasing.

Harem and Tawaaf

I woke up at 3:45 a.m. I asked Asma to wake up and we went to *Harem*. Thousands of people were heading towards *Harem*. Old, young, men, women, patients and disabled in wheelchairs, all wanted to reach *Harem* as soon as possible. I started *Tawaaf* after entering through *Baab-e-Abdul Aziz*. Allah's ﷻ House was standing with all its brilliance, glow and blessings, warming the hearts of millions of Muslims around it. Lucky are those who are present there. They are proud of their luck. Billions of those who are not present there prostrate before Allah ﷻ directing their faces towards *Ka'bah* with the hope that someday they will be invited to Allah's ﷻ House.

Muslims' love with Ka'bah

All the supplicants are present in Allah's ﷻ House. They are looking at Allah's ﷻ House. I started the rounds of *Tawaaf*. Weather is pleasant and romantic. A mild fragrance is prevailing everywhere. The air is filled with prayers, sobs, supplications and cries. The devoted lovers, men and women, are walking around *Ka'bah*. Muslims have a strange romance with *Ka'bah*. The Muslim who has no romance with *Ka'bah*, whose heart is not preoccupied with *Ka'bah*, who has not made *Ka'bah* his beloved and whose heart does not itch for *Ka'bah*, is not a Muslim in the real sense. Romance with Allah ﷻ and His House is natural to Muslims. From cradle to grave, everyday Muslims hear the name of *Ka'bah*, Allah ﷻ, Muhammad ﷺ and the *Green Dome*. Their hearts are occupied with these names.

Asma turned the fourth bead from the rosary and she was pushed. She was annoyed at this but I advised her to keep her patience because *Hajj* is tolerance and patience. We started the fifth round. Air is moist. Cold fragrant wind is pleasant. We hurried, as it was time for prayer. Passing from *Maqam-e-Ibrahim*, I saw the footprints of Father Ibrahim ﷺ. How lucky is the stone that

reserved Father's footprints and became sacred for the Muslims for eternity. Six rounds are completed and the seventh has started. The number of people doing *Tawaaf* has increased. People who are departing from *Ka'bah* are doing *Tawaaf* repeatedly. Some do ten, some do eight and some do seven *Tawaafs* a day. We are weak so we do only one or two *Tawaaf* daily. We offered *Fajr* prayer in the open on vast roof of *Harem*. Imam's doleful recitation in cool breeze and clouded atmosphere created a soul-stirring environment. On return, we ate *Paye* (cooked trotters) from a Pakistani hotel that reminded me of Lahore.

Indian Patients and our Clinic

Patients started visiting the clinic early in the morning. People from Mumbai and Madras have become our admirers. Indian women explicitly say that they have got well with my medicines. Muhammad Khalid from Mumbai visited the clinic. He is living in Kuwait for 28 years. He worked with Pakistanis for fifteen years and appreciated their skills, love for work and dutifulness. He is fond of talking. He narrated his story of life in a few minutes. Patients kept arriving. They got medicines and prayed for me. We are going to Madinah. We will probably meet in paradise again. We are not sure whether we will meet or not in Madinah. I gave my contact number to Moin-ul-Din to call me whenever he needs me. We went to *Harem* at 11 a.m. Now we will spend more and more time in *Harem* because less than two days are left. It is summer and the day is sunny but impulsively I started walking towards *Mataaf*. Thousands of men of faith are busy in *Tawaaf*. They are revolving devotedly. These all are lovers and devotees.

Entranced Bangladeshi Old Man

A Bangladeshi old man is in the state of unconsciousness while revolving. He is speaking and making his way towards Allah's ﷻ House. People give him way. Nobody comes in his way. He is heading forward. He is speaking loudly; secretly talking with Allah ﷻ. His words are unintelligible but all people give him way. His eyes are amazed. There is a corona around his face. His

body is warm. Aura of love is emanating from his limbs. As he enters a crowd, all give him way observing his ecstasy and love. I wanted to meet this old man to know the reason of his oblivion and enrapture, but it was impossible to reach him. He made his way, reached the walls of *Ka'bah* and was lost in the crowd. He was a particle that was lost in *Mataaf*. I searched for him but I could not see him anywhere. This old man was already *Fana fi Allah*; coming there, he was *Fana fi Al-Ka'bah*.

Chapter 16

Seventy Tawaafs of Ka'bah

Muhammad Khalid told us, "I have done thirty-five *Tawaafs*. I thought I had done the most but a young man made me shameful saying that he had done sixty-five *Tawaaf*". Kashif-ur-Rehman's wife has done seventy *Tawaafs*. I, the humble servant of Allah ﷻ, joined those who were doing *Tawaaf*. There is a crowd all around Allah's ﷻ House. It is increasing despite the sun. People are coming. It is also a worship to see Allah's ﷻ House and to look at it respectfully and reverently. I started the seven rounds again. The sun was blazing but as the first round was completed, a cloud covered the sky. The weather became cloudy in the second round. In the third round, there was sun again but lovers' devotion did not subside. In love, one does not care for weathers, heat, cold or anything else. Friend's manifestation gives such a pleasure that one wishes to keep looking at it until death. I am doing *Tawaaf* of Allah's ﷻ House. I was in the seventh round when prayer call was given.

Glory of Imam-e-Ka'bah

People lined up all around *Ka'bah*. Imam Sahib arrived with his magnificence and security guards. I loudly said *Assalam-o-Alaikum* to Imam Sahib. He replied *Wa Alaikum-us-Salam*. Today, I also succeeded as the old man from Karachi succeeded a few days ago. In Saudi Arabia, *A'immah*, scholars, *Khateeb*s especially Imam-e-Ka'bah and Imam-e-Masjid Nabavi enjoy significant status. Imam-e-Ka'bah is considered a VVIP (Very Very Important Person). Asadullah told me that most of the Imams of *Ka'bah* are appointed as officers, judges, chief justice, lawyers and other distinctive posts. As chief justice, and Imam-e-Ka'bah too, he was ordered to pass the ruling of a case in favour of government but he did not compromise on his principles and resigned from his post.

In Saudi Arabia, Imam and *Khateeb* are respected everywhere. All the Imams and *Khateeb*s of all mosques get handsome salaries and enjoy all kind of facilities. That is why people are attracted to religion and admission in Madinah University is considered an honour.

It is a matter of great luck that I am writing these lines in *Harem*. Allah's ﷻ House is before me. Just now, Nisar Khan from Maharashtra, India came and stood gazing at me. I asked him what the matter was. He said do what you are doing; I have come here to visit the sacred place, the place where you are sitting. The covered rectangular area before you is the place from where Holy Prophet ﷺ departed on his nocturnal journey with Jibrail. I came to this place unintendedly. The police officer made me sit here. O Allah ﷻ, it is a matter of great fortune. I imagine the event of Ascent. Here *Buraaq* is tethered to a hook. Holy Prophet ﷺ is resting in Umm-e-Haani's home. Jibrail came and asked permission...

Nisar Khan from India is gazing at this place respectfully because that is probably the place from where Holy Prophet ﷺ had gone on his nocturnal journey riding on the *Buraaq*. I ate lunch with Tariq Shah and Sheikh Zahid in room number 903 of the hotel. We went to *Harem* immediately after lunch. I will offer some more prayers in *Harem*. Then we have to go to Madinah.

Pigeons of Pigeon Square

Pigeon Square is a particular place where thousands of pigeons remain cooing, flying and hopping over the people. The pigeons of *Harem* are not afraid of humans. People say that all these pigeons are the offsprings of the she-pigeon that laid eggs outside the cave of Hira. Men and women sell the packets of grains for one, two or five riyals. Pilgrims from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Indonesia often purchase the grains to feed these pigeons. Near the Pigeon Square, some Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi, African and Indonesian men and women collect the grains of pigeons. I could not understand this. I asked a Pakistani woman. She told me that she was gathering seven barley grains for

her niece who was issueless. She told me that her daughter had eaten these seven barley grains and Allah ﷻ blessed her with a son. People have their own beliefs. The Pigeon Square presents a charming scene on the way to *Harem*. When people pass from there and hundreds of pigeons take a flight, this presents an eye-catching scene. Many people make videos of themselves and this scene.

Different Styles of Addressing People

Peoples of different nations and languages use different words and gestures to address each other. In *Harem*, there are people from every country, colour and race. Their styles of addressing each other present a strange scene. Frequently used word "*Oye, Hello*" in our language is similar in all other languages. One hears the similar voices such as "*Oon*", "*Aan*", "*Ayen*", "*Hi*", "*Paan*", "*Saan*", "*Ashaan*", "*Haan*", "*Taan*", "*Aho*", "*Aeyha*", "*Ao*" etc. When words do not work, people clap with both hands to make someone attentive. Police officers and security guards frequently use their hands and they have learned some words of Urdu, Hindi, Bengali and Chinese languages. They frequently use these words to address different pilgrims. As usual, I took rest after prayer but I could not have a good sleep. A group of Iranian pilgrims made me awake, after that, I could not sleep. Now I am waiting for *Maghrib* prayer. I performed ablutions and started doing *Tawaaf*.

Baitullah, Pathan's Bundle and Old Man's Kafan

One sees strange and fascinating scenes during *Tawaaf*. Those who reach the walls of *Ka'bah* are either lucky or daring ones. They cling to *Multazim* and kiss the *Black Stone*. They rub their clothes, turbans, caps and prayer-mats with the walls of *Ka'bah*. They make these things blessed in this way. An old man has brought his *Kafan*. He is rubbing it with the walls of *Ka'bah*. Khan Sahib has brought a bundle of prayer-mats. Somebody ridiculed that Khan Sahib is carrying cast-off clothes. Khan Sahib said that he would make all the mats blessed by rubbing them with the walls of *Ka'bah*. Khan found himself helpless so he threw his bundle towards the walls of *Ka'bah*. These expressions of love, devotion

and ecstasy are good but one should take care of others in such acts. Do not trample and shove others.

I did *Tawaaaf* until *Maghrib* prayer and offered *Maghrib* prayer exactly before *Ka'bah*. My looks were fixed on *Ka'bah* during the prayer. *Ka'bah* is still before my eyes. I do not want to leave this place. Farewell time is approaching. Time is passing fast. I sat in *Baab-e-Abdul Aziz* after prayer and *Tawaaaf*. Looking at *Ka'bah* is also an act of worship. To look at it, to gaze at it reverently and adorably is in fact a form of worship. It feels that we are receiving something. From *Maghrib* to *Isha* I did nothing except gazing at *Ka'bah*. My eyes were fixed at *Ka'bah* and I was unmindful of the world. I was not mindful of myself and my eyes were stuck to Allah's ﷻ House. Imam-e-*Ka'bah* arrived with escorting security personnel and religious scholars. The call for *Isha* prayer was given. Imam Sahib started reciting *Holy Quran* in prayer. The verses affected my heart. I wished that Imam Sahib would go on reciting for whole night. There was a funeral prayer after *Isha* prayer. Soon after the funeral prayer, people started leaving *Harem*. I went to Pigeon Square from *Harem*. Pigeon Square is a famous place near *Harem*. Pigeons can be seen everywhere around *Harem*.

Chapter 17

A Night in the Harem

Only two days are left of my stay in Makkah. Why, not spend a night in *Harem*. Asma suggested going to *Harem* to spend a night there. We checked out from our hotel at 1:00 a.m. We thought that there would be no crowd at that time but *Harem* is as usual. Men of faith are revolving around Allah's ﷻ House. They are infatuated. They are kissing the walls of *Ka'bah*, crying, weeping, sobbing, sighing and supplicating. We joined the *Tawaaif*. Asma said that Allah's ﷻ House was looking beautiful, attractive, charming and beautiful. We resolved to offer supererogatory prayer in *Hateem*. There is crowd, shoves and vexatiousness but we entered *Hateem*. I secured Asma. We hurriedly offered two *Nawafal*. We kissed the walls of *Ka'bah* and then started *Tawaaif* again. Asma disappeared in the third round. I started the fourth round and found a chance to caress the walls of *Ka'bah*.

Allah ﷻ, Ka'bah and His Servent

When the pilgrim next to me moved away, I occupied that part of wall. First, I caressed it then kissed. I could not control myself. I began to sob, sigh and cry. I was dying of joy. I forgot everything. Except Allah ﷻ, *Ka'bah* and this humble servant everything disappeared. The people behind me were annoyed at my prolonged kissing. I was out of my senses. I did not want to part from the walls of *Ka'bah*. From today, this is my home. My Allah's ﷻ House is mine. O Allah ﷻ, I love this House. I want to die kissing it. Somebody from behind spoke coarsely and distracted my thoughts. I had to leave the place. The night is passing but *Tawaaif* is going on. Devoted men and women are walking around Allah's ﷻ House. It is 2:30 a.m. and I am sitting exactly before *Ka'bah*. I got a second chance to enter *Hateem*. I offered two *Nawafal*. I prayed for Pakistan, my children, family, friends and associates. I

got a chance to kiss the walls of *Ka'bah*, to rub my body against it. I begged pardon for my sins, mistakes and misdeeds. I did *Tawaaf* once again. The night is passing in *Harem*. It is time for *Tahajjud* prayer because call for *Tahajjud* prayer is given at 4:00 a.m. in *Harem*. No scene is better than the manifestation of Allah's ﷻ House. This scene is worth seeing. Asma was found; I had prayed for it. Here, prayers are accepted directly. The weather is pleasant. Cool wind is blowing. There is a mild fragrance in the air. Passionate prayers have created an enchanting environment. We did one more *Tawaaf*. This time, the main advantage of spending night in *Harem* was that Asma too got a chance to enter *Hateem* to offer *Nawafal*. We were near *Multazim* but we drew back due to shoves and churlishness. Just now, the call for *Tahajjud* prayer is given. People are present here all night. They are praying, offering *Nawafal* and doing *Tawaaf*.

Bengali Old Man's Lamentations

A Bengali old man beside me is supplicating touchingly to Allah ﷻ in Bengali language. He is weeping and sobbing. His voice is so melodious that people around him are listening to him continuously. People get moved by listening to his prayers and supplications. Besides humans, birds too, do *Tawaaf* of *Ka'bah* in flocks. Actually, these little birds are swallows. They say that these swallows are the descendants of those swallows that destroyed *Abraha's* army of elephants. They bombarded them with small stones and made them like devoured grass. Allah's ﷻ enemies always face such consequences. O Allah ﷻ! Destroy the enemies of Islam and Pakistan as the owners of elephants were destroyed. *Āmeen!*

Last Day in Harem

I offered *Tahajjud* and *Fajr* prayer in *Harem*. Allah ﷻ blessed me with an opportunity to spend a whole night in *Harem*. I kept doing *Tawaaf* all night. I got a chance to caress and kiss the walls of *Ka'bah*. Pilgrims from most of the countries have returned to their homes, others have gone to *Madinah*. That is why the number of people in *Ka'bah* has decreased. However, *Tawaaf* is going on every

second and it will continue till eternity. When Imam-e-Ka'bah leads prayer, his voice echoes all around in *Harem*. He is a native speaker, authentic scholar, aware of the details, particular circumstances and context of each verse so when he recites the verses of Quran it seems that these verses are revealing just now. It is even better if one understands otherwise one is preoccupied in just the melody of his voice and becomes unaware of the world. Nothing remains there except Allah ﷻ, *Ka'bah* and a humble servant.

I was feeling very sleepy. Soon after returning, I took my breakfast and went to sleep. We went to *Harem* for *Zuhr* prayer... Men and women were doing *Tawaaf* in sun and heat. We were to leave *Harem* after a few hours. When beloved is beside You, do not think of separation. Separation from the beloved is heart breaking. One remains restless until one meets again. Now I will be separated from *Harem*. O Allah ﷻ! Bless me to come here again.

I offered *Zuhr* prayer before *Ka'bah*. Allah's ﷻ House remained before my eyes during the prayer. My mind was preoccupied with *Baitullah*. We are preparing to go to *Madinah*. We will spend a few days in *Madinah*. We will be the guests of Holy Prophet ﷺ. We will receive the blessing of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Allah's ﷻ servants are busy in *Tawaaf* in this sun and heat. They are revolving not caring about heat. Those who have completed their seven rounds are offering *Nawafal* at *Maqam-e-Ibrahim*. Many people joined *Tawaaf* after the prayer. After the prayer, all the friends gathered in room number 903 of *Rehab al-Roudha*. Indian pilgrims also arrived to get medicines and bid us farewell. Today we are going to *Madinah*. We do not know whether we will meet in *Madinah* or not.

Travelling to Ta'if

Since our arrival here, it was always a part of our program to visit *Ta'if*. We will visit the streets of *Ta'if*. We will go to the place where hooligans of *Ta'if* had thrown stones at Holy Prophet ﷺ. *Jibrail* had brought Allah's ﷻ command that if Holy Prophet ﷺ wished so, the mountains will be turned upon the city of *Ta'if*. However, Holy Prophet ﷺ is mercy for all worlds. He is soaked

in blood. His feet are bleeding but he says, "Nay, the next generation of the people of Ta'if will certainly accept the faith." Due to Holy Prophet's ﷺ prayer, the people of Ta'if are affluent today. There is greenery, fruits, wealth, peace and comfort. People are pious, have good fortunes and above all they are Muslims. They are men of faith. Today I recall the slave who had presented a bunch of grapes to Holy Prophet ﷺ. They say that that grapes yard is still there. There was a mosque at that place but now only its relics can be seen.

Tariq Shah, Shehzad Jadoon from Abbottabad and I set for Ta'if. A taxi-driver agreed to take us there after some haggling. We passed from *Arafat* and *Muzdalifah*. Shah Sahib showed me *Masjid-e-Namirah* from a distance. Every year *Hajj* sermon is delivered from this mosque. I smelt the fragrance of Ta'if. The mountains of Ta'if approached. We thought that we shall be in Ta'if soon. However, man cannot actualize everything he wishes. We had to return after reaching near Ta'if but I recalled the whole event. Holy Prophet ﷺ has arrived to preach the faith to the people of Ta'if, to proclaim the faith that there is no god but Allah ﷻ. The chieftains of Ta'if are gathered there. They ridicule and jest at Holy Prophet's ﷺ speech. They ask hooligans to throw stones at him. His feet are injured. Blood clots on his feet. Holy Prophet ﷺ feels exhausted and searches for a shaded place. He reaches a grapes yard.

What is Ta'if? A Visit of Masjid-e-Addas

The owner of the orchard sent a bunch of grapes through his Christian slave Addas for Holy Prophet ﷺ. Holy Prophet ﷺ recited "Bismillah" before eating the grapes. At this Addas gazed at Holy Prophet's ﷺ face and said, "By God, people of this city do not speak such words". Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him, "From which city are you and what your religion is?" Addas said that he was a native of Nineveh and Christian by religion. Holy Prophet said, "That is the city of a pious man Younas bin Mati". Addas asked, "How do you know that?" Holy Prophet said, "He is my brother and he was a Prophet like me". Hearing this, Addas bowed before him and kissed his head and hands. Addas embraced Islam. Later

on, *Masjid-e-Addas* was built at the place where Holy Prophet ﷺ took refuge. Some relics of this mosque still exist there. Muhammad Hussain Heykal writes:

"What is Ta'if? Truly speaking, Masjid-e-Addas is Ta'if. Several famous chieftains failed; Utba, Shaybah and Waleed were killed in the battle of Badr. Addas succeeded and became Sayyidna Addas. I paid tribute to Addas, reaching the mountains of Ta'if."

There is commotion in the heavens. Angels are wonder-struck. They are waiting for Allah's ﷻ orders. Jibrail brought Allah's ﷻ order. Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, and the history of mankind has nothing to match these words. Holy Prophet ﷺ, mercy for all worlds, said, "I hope that Allah ﷻ will produce a generation from these people who worship none but Allah". At this occasion, the Holy Prophet ﷺ offered two *Nawafal* and prayed to Allah ﷻ in the following words:

"O Allah ﷻ, I supplicate before You being weak and helpless as compared to others. You are the Most Merciful. You are sympathizer of the poor. You are my Lord. To whom will You entrust me: to that rival who behaves unpleasantly with me or to the enemy who dominates me? If You are not wrathful upon me then I fear none. Your mercy is enough for me. I seek Your refuge from Your wrath and anger. Your illumination brightens all that is dark and improves all affairs of religion and world. I only seek Your approval and consent. I cannot find any power and strength except Your help."

Friday Night in Harem

I offered *Asr* prayer in *Harem*. Shahzad Jadoon brought tasty tea. I rested for a while and started *Tawaaf* after *Maghrib* prayer. Today is Friday night in *Harem*. Native people have arrived there with their families from far off places. Inside and outside *Harem*, there is a crowd of people like that of *Hajj* days. Shah Sahib told us that Thursday and Friday are two weekly holidays in Saudi Arabia. That is why several native people, with food items, come here with

their families. They spend night in *Harem* offering Friday prayer in their homes. We are in *Harem* for a few more hours. Seeing *Harem* I think about my second visit here. God knows when I will be invited again and when the separation will end. *Tawaaf* is in full bloom. Native people are doing *Tawaaf* with their young children. They are performing *Umrah*. Kids look lovely and sacred wearing *Ihram*. An African old woman is carrying an infant child on her back. Her second child is continuously weeping and insisting on to carry him, too. Third and fourth round were completed while hearing the child's cries. Several more people joined *Tawaaf* in the fifth round. Time for *Isha* prayer is about to approach. Young boys run fast in order to do more and more *Tawaafs*. Some have completed fifty *Tawaafs*, others sixty. Atique-ur-Rehman has done seventy *Tawaafs*. Shah Sahib objected and advised them to respect *Harem*. The seventh round was completed with call for *Isha* prayer. I offered two *Nawafal*. Imam Sahib arrived for *Isha* prayer.

Imam Sahib's prayer-mat is in front of Rukn-e-Yamani. Today I watched the *Moazzin* of *Ka'bah* calling for prayer. He was reciting prayer call in a room beside *Baab-e-Abdul Aziz*. I offered my last *Isha* prayer in *Harem*. My gaze kept turning towards *Ka'bah* during the whole prayer. I focused on *Ka'bah*. I am sitting in *Harem* now. *Ka'bah* is in front of me. My looks are fixed on it and I am writing these lines.

Environment is rather festive outside *Harem* and people are sitting in groups in *Harem* with their families and friends. Some are eating dates and taking *Kahwa*. Some are eating meals fetched either from home or from *Al-bake* and *KFC*. All are happy coming there. They will recite *Holy Quran* after eating meals. They will be busy in supererogatory prayers or *Tawaaf*. Arabs set long dining cloths in different places of *Harem* after every prayer. They offer *Kahwa*, dates and sweets. Shah Sahib fetched us some dates and *Kahwa* from a dining circle.

Hajj Schemes of Different Countries

Different countries have different *Hajj* schemes. Indonesia is the biggest Islamic country. Many people from there come to *Hajj*

but I was amazed to hear that if you want to perform *Hajj* under Government Scheme then your turn will come ten years after submitting the application. They have to wait for six years in case of private schemes. To perform *Hajj* in youth they register their names for *Hajj* at the time of birth so their turn comes at the age of 30-35 years. I was amazed to hear this. We are lucky that we submit application under private or public scheme whenever we wish and we perform *Hajj* in the same year. Even in that case, *Hajj* is performed after invitation from Allah ﷻ. Invitation comes if there is sincerity, devotion and struggle for it.

Lift Show is going on...

Lift Show is going on for the last one hour. It is going up and down. People push others away in order to board first. Today many groups are going back from hotel. The groups from Mumbai and Madras are leaving now. People are passing remarks although the lift is not loaded as such. They say: "He does not believe that the lift is full... He wants to try himself... He boarded and assured himself... He does not trust us... The lift is over-loaded due to him... The people of first floor should go by stairs... People from mess floor make the situation worse... They are not showing patience."

Kissing the Black Stone

At last, I succeeded today. It took four hours; I was pushed and shoved. My limbs were aching. It seemed that I would be trampled to death. I had decided that no matter what may come I will return after kissing the *Black Stone*. Somebody said not to go ahead. I said that I would kiss the *Black Stone* even at the cost of my life. How shall I return to my village without having kissed it? If I returned without kissing it, they will taunt me that I am a coward. A seventy-year thin and weak Indian old man was recounting his story of success to his wife. His wife said to do a *Tawaaf* before the place is thronged. He said that he didn't mind the crowd as he had succeeded in four hour's struggle. Every Muslim wishes to kiss the *Black Stone* when he comes to perform *Hajj*. Naveed Aslam also had kissed the *Black Stone*. Kashif-ur-Rehman too succeeded. Attique-

ur-Rehman risked his life and entered his head inside. He did kiss the *Black Stone* but an African pulled his neck out. There was a chance that his neck would have been injured.

I tried to go near the *Black Stone* twice or thrice during *Tawaaf* but I could not succeed because of crowd. People come in groups to kiss the *Black Stone*. They cling to each other and come here when there are fewer people. However, *Tawaaf* goes on all the time. People stand in queue to kiss the *Black Stone* but despite this there is ferocious jostling and shoving. It becomes difficult to breathe in suffocation. One is pressed in the crowd. In this situation, you are lucky enough if you get a chance to kiss the *Hajr-e-Aswad*. The *Black Stone* attracts you. It seems that something is pulling you towards itself. The walls of *Ka'bah* attract, too. Whenever I caressed the walls of *Ka'bah*, it seemed that these walls are tugging the whole body. One feels strange vibrations in one's body.

The Night of Separation

At last, that moment approached. It was last night in *Harem*, the night of separation, sorrow, gloom and sadness. Time of meeting with the beloved was too short. My heart was weeping. I was disturbed, restless and sorrowful. Why does not time come to a halt? Why has this night approached? After all time had stopped for Hazrat Bilal رضي الله عنه. Morning did not dawn until Hazrat Bilal رضي الله عنه had given prayer call. Why are my sighs ineffective? In *Harem*, prayers are approved instantly. What has happened this time? Why is there this night of separation?

It is time for separation from *Ka'bah*, focus of my eyes and a peace of my heart. I am grieved hence weeping bitterly. I want to cry, to utter loud shrieks. I want to ask everybody why this night of separation has approached. Why am I being moved away from here? Why is this compulsion? I will not go anywhere. I want to live here. I am a particle. I came here to be absorbed in *Ka'bah*. I waited for years, then I was invited here. I remained restless for years. I became well during these short moments of meeting with my beloved. Why has time passed so fast? Why has this night of

separation and sorrow approached? Behold! Look at *Baitullah* to the fill of heart. Attach these moments to your mind and heart...

My soul will remain there. Who can separate my soul from Allah's ﷻ House? The doleful recitation of Imam-e-Ka'bah, voice of *Moazzin* of *Harem*, angels' *Āmeen* with Imam, the moments of *Tawaaif* around Allah's ﷻ House, adoration for Allah's ﷻ House, kisses and caresses, I will remember all these forever. I will remember *Tawaaif* around *Ka'bah* until the Day of Resurrection. I have to go home but first I will go to *Madinah*. I have to go to Holy Prophet's ﷺ land and *Harem*. However, the night of separation is passing. How short are the moments of meeting! I recalled my arrival here and my rounds of *Tawaaif*. I was captivated at the first sight of *Ka'bah*. Allah's ﷻ House penetrated into my body and soul. Allah's ﷻ House remained before my eyes from *Tahajjud* to *Isha* during all the days and nights. To visit this House of Allah ﷻ, to cast a glance at it and to do *Tawaaif* are rewarding acts of worship. Its *Tawaaif* is the greatest worship. It is Friday night. This night is full of blessings and mercies but at the same time, it is the night of separation, too. The night has passed. It is time for farewell *Tawaaif*. It is 3:00 a.m. Asma reminded me to do the farewell *Tawaaif*. The sorrowful night of separation is a message of farewell *Tawaaif*.

Farwell Tawaaif

The sorrowful night of separation passed. It made me sad. My tears, sobs and sighs could not stop this night. Time did not stop its flow... It is time for a farewell *Tawaaif*. It is the last *Tawaaif* of this visit. I took seven rounds of *Tawaaif* around Allah's ﷻ House, *Baitullah*, for the last time. This farewell *Tawaaif* is really saddening. These seven rounds are gloomy and they made me cry bitterly. I want to cry that I am not doing my farewell *Tawaaif*. Why should I do farewell *Tawaaif*? ... Farewell *Tawaaif* is done by those who want to separate themselves from Allah's ﷻ House; who seek permission to return. I am a lover of Allah's ﷻ House. I am absorbed in the love of *Ka'bah*. I am like that Bangladeshi old man who was running towards *Ka'bah* becoming a recluse. He was running and all were giving him way. His body was emanating the fragrance of love. I am a particle that is absorbed in *Baitullah*. My lips, my

cheeks and my body, all glued to the walls of *Ka'bah*... It is not my farewell *Tawaaf*. I will come again. I will keep on coming here. I will keep on walking towards this *House* of Allah ﷻ like the Bangladeshi old man, forgetting the world in ecstasy. No one should block my way to stop me. Asma reminded me again to do farewell *Tawaaf*.

Ka'bah and I

Controlling her emotions, with tears in her eyes and in stammering voice Asma showed strong desire for *Tawaaf*. Time is too short. She stopped the flow of my emotions. I had not come here to do farewell *Tawaaf*. I had come here to show extreme love for *Ka'bah* and to live here. However, the farewell *Tawaaf* was compulsory. Asma said in a husky voice, "Let us go to *Hateem*". There is shoving, jostling, nudges and strife but we will offer *Nawafal* in *Hateem* despite all of this. We entered *Hateem*. A Pathan made a barricade with me. Asma offered her *Nawafal*. I too, offered *Nawafal* and then we moved ahead. While revolving around *Ka'bah*, my sobs and sighs turned into shrieks. I wanted to cry more loudly so that all may fear me and go away leaving me alone. I wanted to be dissolved in the walls of the *Holy Ka'bah*. I touched, caressed and kissed the walls of *Ka'bah*. Tears rolled down my cheeks and were absorbed in the walls of *Ka'bah*. I kissed the walls until I felt light-hearted. Two rounds of *Tawaaf* were completed. We started the third round. I forgot all the prayers and became oblivious.

We are doing the farewell *Tawaaf*. We will go from here after this *Tawaaf*. My heart is weeping. I am crying. I am revolving like a crazy man. Asma said, "It is sixth round. Beg to Allah ﷻ whatever you feel like begging. I am reminding you." I recalled all the prayers for Pakistan, children, family, friends, assistants and colleagues. I prayed for all of them.

O Allah ﷻ! Bless Pakistan with progress; keep her safe from all the internal and external threats; destroy all her powerful enemies; devastate all the despotic armies sending Your swarms of swallows. It is last round of farewell *Tawaaf*; after that, there is separation from *Harem*. I had become familiar to *Harem* in the few

days. There was a deep love and respect for it. *Harem* remained before my eyes, in my thoughts and dreams. The last round is about to finish. I saw Father Ibrahim's ﷺ place. I saw the stone on which Ibrahim's ﷺ footprints are carved. This stone has become sacred forever. I offered two *Nawafal* at this place and Farewell *Tawaaf* was completed. Weeping and crying I finished the farewell *Tawaaf* and composed these lines sitting in front of *Ka'bah*.

Allah Hafiz, Baitullah

The farewell *Tawaaf* made me sad. Now I am sitting in front of *Ka'bah*. I am weeping. I will always remember Allah's ﷻ House. I hope that I will be invited again. I offered *Tahajjud* prayer. I gazed at *Ka'bah* sitting before it. In the meanwhile, *Harem* resonated with the sounds of *Allah-o-Akbar*. Imam-e-*Ka'bah* recites Verses of *Sajdah* in *Fajr* prayer, especially in Friday prayer. He recites the *Holy Quran* again after prostration. He recites the *Holy Quran* in so impressive way that one wishes for a prolonged prayer. Today, my eyes were again fixed on *Ka'bah* during the prayer. There was a funeral prayer after *Fajr* prayer. Time has come to say Allah Hafiz to *Baitullah*. I looked at *Ka'bah* to the fill of my heart. Farewell *Ka'bah!* Allah Hafiz *Baitullah!*

Now our prayers will start again with these words, "My face is towards *Holy Ka'bah*". Allah's ﷻ House will not remain before the eyes. Syed Mehdi from India was beside me. He said, "Look at *Ka'bah* millions of time. Allah ﷻ knows when we will get the chance to see it again." I kept on seeing *Ka'bah* while returning. My beard was wet with tears. A Pathan from Peshawar could not bear the sight of weeping. He asked, "What happened? I said that I was bidding farewell to *Ka'bah*. He, too, started crying. He said, "I will go tomorrow but let us cry together today".

Indian Cook and Our Medicines

We ate breakfast from a Pakistani hotel and went to the hotel room. The pilgrims from Mumbai and Madras are going to Madinah. Their cook had taken medicines from me. He said that he felt better with that medicine.

An old woman was praying for me. She said, "Your medicine heals... constipation has been cured." A Pathan from Peshawar came there. I gave him medicines. Moin-ul-Din from India said, "I will have to take care of them in Madinah." It took us the whole night to pack our luggage to leave for Madinah. The Indian patients departing for Madinah came in a hurry to get medicines because they had done their packing yesterday evening. Now they were waiting for bus but they came to know that there were no vacant hotel rooms in Madinah. They had to stay in Makkah for one more day.

Last Friday in Harem

At 10:00 a.m., we got ready for Friday prayer and started shifting our luggage outside hotel. Today, *Harem* is extremely crowded. A great number of native people are present for Friday prayer. In Friday prayer, Imam Sahib delivered the sermon eloquently. He prayed for the progress of the Muslims and Islam. In his sermon, he said that our success lies in obeying Allah's ﷻ commandments and following Holy Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah. Abdul Rehman, Imam of *Ka'bah*, recited with such pathos that silence prevailed everywhere. The birds were silent, too... Reciting the verses in their actual context, Imam Sahib started weeping. He wept himself and made others weep.

We eat our meals in Zam Zam Tower after the prayer. Now we are ready to go. We will bid farewell to *Harem*. We are about to separate from *Harem*. Allah knows when we will return here. We had done our packing last night. Asma and I headed towards *Harem* to visit *Ka'bah* for the last time and to offer *Asr* prayer in *Harem*.

Last Prayer in Harem

We walked hurriedly to reach *Harem*. We found a place in *Mataaf*. Imam Sahib started the prayer. My eyes were fixed on *Ka'bah* during the prayer. My attention was focused on *Ka'bah* so I was unconscious of the start and end of prayer. My looks did millions of *Tawaaf*. I did not want to leave *Harem*. I wanted to stay there. *Harem* and *Ka'bah* have attraction and charm. I felt proud of

my fortune staying and sitting in *Harem*, looking at *Ka'bah*, visiting the holy places, walking in the streets of *Makkah* and looking for the footprints of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

کبھی عرش پر، کبھی فرش پر، کبھی اُن کے در، کبھی در بدر
غم عاشقی تیرا شکر یہ، میں کہاں کہاں سے گزر گیا

*Sometimes in heavens, sometimes on earth;
Now at friend's doorstep, then vagrant,
O grief of love! I am thankful to you;
You made me pass from places even not of my liking.*

On return after prayer, I looked at the *Holy Ka'bah* from whichever place it was possible. With a sorrowful heart and tears in my eyes, I bade farewell to *Ka'bah*.

Allah Hafiz - Holy Ka'bah

Allah Hafiz - Harem

Allah Hafiz - Peaceful city of Makkah

Allah Hafiz - Balad al-Ameen and Bait al-Ateeq

Part Two

Allah ﷻ Muhammad ﷺ and His Humble Servant

شوق و نیاز و عجز کے سانچے میں ڈھل کے آ
یہ کوچہ حبیب ہے پکوں سے چل کے آ

*Come here moulded in love, compassion and humility;
It is Holy Prophet's ﷺ city, come here showing utmost
respect, humility.*

**Commendatory Verses inscribed on the side-mesh of
the Holy Prophet's Mausoleum**

يَا خَيْرَ مَنْ دُفِنَتْ فِي التُّرْبِ أَعْظَمُهُ
فَطَابَ مِنْ طَيِّبِهِنَّ الْقَاعُ وَالْأَكْمُ
نَفْسِي الْفِدَاءُ لِقَبْرِ أَنْتَ سَاكِنُهُ
فِيهِ الْعَفَافُ وَفِيهِ الْجُودُ وَالْكَرَمُ

*O the best among those, whose bodies are buried in the soil,
And their fragrance scented the woods and mountains.
I sacrifice my life for the grave in which,
the Holy Prophet ﷺ is resting.*

This sacred grave contains mercy, generosity and blessings.

Chapters 18

Heading towards Madinah

The bus left for Madinah. Old fellows Sabir Baig, Eijaz, Naveed Aslam, Muhammad Zahid Sheikh, Sister Najma, Muhammad Khalid and family, Iqbal, Attique-ur-Rehman, Zafar Iqbal and others are accompanying us. The streets, roads and houses of Makkah and *Harem* are left behind. Holy Prophet's ﷺ city, Madinah is approaching. We started chanting benedictions and salaams. It is a distance of 416 kilometers. My heart is beating fast even now. The lovers and devotees of *Ka'bah*, who kept revolving around *Baitullah* all the time, are yearning now to visit the City of Prophet ﷺ. They are anxious and restless. It is time for *Maghrib* prayer. The driver stopped in front of a mosque in the suburbs of Makkah. Other pilgrims' buses were parked there, too. We offered *Maghrib* prayer in congregation. The bus started again. The devoted and passionate lovers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are offering benedictions and salaams. Naveed Aslam made the environment more sacred by playing a *Naat*. Holy Prophet's city is approaching. The streets of Madinah are coming closer. We wished since long to visit Holy Prophet's ﷺ land and to say our Salaam. Many people have passed away waiting for this time.

Asma said that she was hungry and thirsty. After a few minutes, the bus stopped at a checkpoint and young men entered the bus carrying bottles of water and packets of biscuits. In Makkah and Madinah, prayers as well as wishes come true immediately. We moved ahead and we were offered packed food. It was time for *Isha* prayer. We offered *Isha* prayer in a mosque near Al-Safwah Super Store. We ate meals in an Indian hotel. The night is passing. The City of Prophe ﷺ, city of wishes, the most sacred place for the Muslims is approaching. Fellows are becoming passionate as

we come closer to Madinah. The guests of Madinah are served well. They are offering us *Kahwa* and dates.

Muhammad Iqbal's Requests

Muhammad Iqbal from Lahore had a liver-transplant last year. He is preoccupied with Allah ﷻ and Muhammad's ﷺ love. He performed all the *Hajj* rites contrary to doctor's advice. He also did *Tawaaf* and kissed the *Black Stone*. His feelings are arousing. He wants to recount his story to the fellows. He says, "My dear friends; Madinah, the city of hopes and wishes, the City of Prophet ﷺ is approaching. You are lucky and fortunate. All the wishes have come true. We visited *Baitullah* and now we are going to visit the City of Prophet ﷺ.

مدینے کا سفر ہے اور میں نم دیدہ نم دیدہ
جبیں افسردہ افسردہ، قدم لغزیدہ لغزیدہ

It is journey to Madinah and my eyes are full of tears.

With a sorrowful face, I walk staggeringly.

We are about to enter the City of Prophet ﷺ, Holy Prophet's Harem. *Masjid-e-Nabavi* is the second most sacred place for the Muslims. Get ready. Wake up. Open your eyes. Praise benedictions and say salaam. Madinah is near. There is fragrance from Harem. Look there, the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* are visible from here." Iqbal Sahib is speaking passionately. He is a patient but he is not careful. He is suffering from fever because of so much talking but he is feeling comfortable after expressing his feelings. We caught sight of the *Green Dome*. Allah ﷻ be praised, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is exalted. I recalled the verses from Muhammad Ali Zahori's *Naat*.

جب مسجد نبوی کے مینار نظر آئے
اللہ کی رحمت کے آثار نظر آئے
کے کی فضاؤں میں، طیبہ کی ہواؤں میں
ہم نے جدھر دیکھا سرکار نظر آئے

*When I saw the minarets of Masjid-e-Nabavi,
I saw the signs of Allah's ﷻ blessing.
In the airs of Makkah, in the winds of Madinah,
The effects of Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ Sunnah and
preaching are visible everywhere.*

The bus stopped in front of Dar-ul-Hijrah Continental. The journey was long but fellows were happy because this journey was much hoped and desired for. Now we were in the city of our Holy Prophet ﷺ. We were in the city of that Prophet who is *Mercy for all worlds*.

We are separated from Allah's ﷻ House but we have arrived in Holy Prophet's ﷺ city. Separation from Ka'bah was painful but we are relieved after reaching here. We are feeling peaceful and satisfied. It is 2:50 a.m. and we are settled in the rooms after setting our luggage. Room number 506 is allotted to us. In Madinah, Asma's and my roommates were changed. Dr. Bashir Ahmad and his elderly brother Muhammad Ameen are my roommates while Asma's are Mrs. Farooq and Mrs. Javed.

We are in Madinah

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had great love for Madinah. As Hazrat Ibrahim ؑ prayed for Makkah and its inhabitants and declared it a city of peace similarly, the Holy Prophet ﷺ prayed for Madinah and for the prosperity and good fortune of its inhabitants. Abdullah bin Zaid reports:

"The Holy Prophet ﷺ said that Ibrahim ؑ declared Makkah a holy city and he prayed for the prosperity and good fortune of its inhabitants. Similarly, the Holy Prophet ﷺ declared Madinah a holy city and prayed for the prosperity and good fortune of its inhabitants."

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

"Madinah is a sacred city. Whoever started a prohibited act in it or provided shelter to such a person, will be cursed by Allah ﷻ, all the angels and humans until the Doom's Day."

And no obligatory or supererogatory deed of such person will be approved."

The Eastern and western boundaries of *Harem* of Madinah are also outlined in Ahadith ... Mentioning the northern and southern boundaries the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "The boundary of *Harem* is between the mountain of Eer and Thaur." Allah ﷻ selected Madinah for Holy Prophet's ﷺ migration. Abu Musa Asha'ri رضي الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "I dreamt that I migrated from Makkah to a land that was full of palms. I thought that it was Yemen but it is Madinah."

Holy Prophet's ﷺ Arrival in Madinah

Madinah became not just a place of migration for the Holy Prophet ﷺ but also the place of residence and burial. The Holy Prophet ﷺ loved Madinah. Whenever he went out of Madina, he made rapid return to Madinah. In the earlier days of migration, when the Holy Companions were falling sick, the Holy Prophet ﷺ prayed for this city. Hazrat Ayesha رضي الله عنها reported that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "You should love Madinah as you loved Makkah rather more than that. O Allah ﷻ, keep Madinah safe from diseases and make it a peaceful place." Madinah is a sacred city. It has several names such as Madinah Tayyiba, Madinah Munawrah, Madinah-tul-Nabi, Madinah Sharif, Qubba-tul-Islam, Dar-ul-Aman and Dar-ul-Hijrat.

I recall Holy Prophet's ﷺ arrival in Madinah. Madinah is in a state of bliss. The inhabitants of Madinah daily wake up early in the morning and wait for Holy Prophet's ﷺ arrival from dawn till dusk. Many days and nights have passed... Anxiety and restlessness have increased manifold. At last, the sacred moment, which is much waited for, comes. Blessings, mercies and favors are being showered on Madinah.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ arrived at Madinah... One day when friends in Madinah were about to return after waiting, a Jew climbed up a mountain and cried at a loud voice: "Your leader, whom you have been waiting for, has arrived." Friends in Madinah rushed towards Quba to welcome the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Their

love and devotion was worth seeing. They welcomed the Holy Prophet warmly ﷺ. They took the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه to Quba where the Holy Prophet ﷺ rested in Kalsoom bint Hadam's home. Arriving at Quba, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "A mosque will be built at this place, the first mosque in Islam." Look there! The Holy Prophet ﷺ is fetching mud and stones. A mosque is built using leaves and stems of palm trees. Allah ﷻ Almighty mentions in the *Holy Quran* that this mosque is founded on *Taqwa* (piety).

Islam's First Masjid and Masjid-e-Jumm'a

Masjid-e-Quba is the first mosque in Islam. Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ is the mason and the Holy Companions رضي الله عنهم are labourers! The Holy Prophet ﷺ fixed first stone towards *Qiblah* while constructing *Masjid-e-Quba*. Then Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه came and fixed the second stone over the first stone. Then the other Holy Companions رضي الله عنهم built the mosque. The Holy Prophet ﷺ went to Madinah after resting for a few days in Quba. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ reached the village of Bani Salim bin Aouf, it was time for *Friday prayer*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ delivered sermon and led the prayer in the *Masjid of Bani Salim*. One hundred *Companions* joined this prayer. It was the first Friday prayer that was lead by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. For this reason, that mosque was named as *Masjid-e-Jumm'a*. We got a chance to visit this beautiful masjid during our stay in Madinah. After the Friday prayer, the people of Bani Salim came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and requested him to stay with them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, pointing towards his Qaswa the she-camel, said, "Let her free. Allah ﷻ has appointed her. Where ever she sits, that will be my destination." From here, the Holy Prophet ﷺ passed through the streets of Bani Biyaza, Bani Sa'idah, Bani Haris and Bani Adi bin Najjar.

The Full Moon Descended from the Mountains

Qaswa went to Bani Najjar's streets and sat in front of Abu Ayyub Ansari's رضي الله عنه residence. Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari رضي الله عنه became the host to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. On his arrival at Madinah, men,

women and children of Madinah warmly welcomed the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The whole city was resonating with the chants of *Allah-o-Akbar* and 'Holy Prophet has arrived'. Girls and women showed their gratitude playing on tambourines:

The full Moon has risen upon us,

From the Valley of Wadaa',

Gratitude is incumbent upon us,

Until the supplicaters supplicate to Allah ﷻ.

O You (ﷺ), who have been sent to us,

You (ﷺ) have brought Commands for us to obey.

We are the daughters of Bani Najjar.

Muhammad ﷺ is a good neighbor.

Holy Prophet ﷺ became a resident of Madinah and the people were glad at this. They were fortunate. There was a bloom and illumination by virtue of Holy Prophet's arrival. Islam's torch began to kindle everywhere. It is Saturday. The disturbed and worried the *Holy Companions* رضي الله عنهم come to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ guesses their worry. The *Holy Companions* رضي الله عنهم say, "O Holy Prophet ﷺ! The people of Makkah are lucky ones. They perform *Hajj* every year and perform *Umrah* whenever they wish". The Holy Prophet ﷺ is mercy for all worlds, for enemies and lovers alike. He said, "Do not worry my Companions. Allah ﷻ has made it easy for you. Offer two *Nawafal* in *Masjid-e-Quba* and you will get the reward of *Umrah*. You can perform *Umrah* in Madinah."

Umrah without Ihram

We are in *Masjid-e-Quba*, the first mosque of Islam, the most sacred mosque after *Ka'bah*, *Masjid-e-Nabwi* and *Masjid-e-Aqsa*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to visit this masjid every Saturday. Conforming to Holy Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah, we visited this masjid on Saturday. Thousands of men and women are present there. They are performing *Umrah* without wearing *Ihram*. Their *Umrah*

is approved without *Sa'ee*, head-shave and *Tawaaf*. Afzal Kashif is escorting me. We are looking for the place where the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to deliver sermon. We went to pulpit. There was a long queue of visitors and lovers. We waited in the queue and returned after offering *Nawafal* at the place of pulpit. We reached Madinah at 2:30 a.m., rested for a while and went to *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. *Masjid-e-Nabavi* is well illuminated. People are present to enter the *Mosque*, to visit the *Green Dome* and to say *Salaam* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. There is a flood of light. The *Masjid* is full inside. We went to the roof. Cool wind is blowing. There is a mild fragrance. We are seeing the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and the *Green Dome*.

The call for *Fajr* prayer resonated in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Makkah was awe-inspiring but here is coolness, luminosity and spirituality everywhere. Here people, too, are soft hearted and kind. They take care of each other. We offered *Fajr* prayer. Imam Sahib's recitation from the *Holy Quran* created a delectable atmosphere. After prayer, Tariq Shah said, "Let us go for *Umrah*". The fellows were amazed at this and they asked where to go for *Umrah*. Tariq Shah said, "*Masjid-e-Quba*". He was right. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had said that to offer two *Nawafal* in *Masjid Quba* are equal to the reward of an *Umrah*. We saw a strange scene on the road after the prayer. An Arab was boarding the pilgrims on the vans to *Quba*. He himself paid the charges for all. Really, the people of Madinah are extraordinary. From *Masjid-e-Quba*, we returned to hotel. We rested for a while. It was time for *Zuhr* prayer. Here it is easy. Hotel is nearby. We leave the room five minutes before the prayer and reach *Masjid-e-Nabavi* on time. We got a place inside *Masjid-e-Nabavi* for *Zuhr* prayer. I am penning down these lines sitting inside *Masjid-e-Nabavi*.

Maulana Jalal-ud-Din from Nepal

We started our clinic in Madinah, too. Maulana Jalal-ud-Din came early in the morning. He told me about the conditions of the Nepali Muslims. He said, "We are leading our lives according to Allah's ﷻ injunctions and Holy Prophet's ﷺ practices despite hostile conditions. I am running a religious seminary. My three daughters are religious scholars. Seventy students from Nepal are

getting religious education in Madinah University. Muslim population in Nepal is 10%. Despite being a minority, we are working well." Maulana Sahib was not feeling well. I gave him medicines after checkup. Our group fellow Iqbal also fell ill last night. I treated him, too. Attique-ur-Rehman got injured in haste. I dressed his wounds later at night.

Praise to be Allah ﷻ, my service and treatment to pilgrims that started in Aziziyyah, continued in *Mina*, *Arafat*, *Muzdalifah*, *Harem*, and Rehab al-Ruaza also resumed in Madinah. Here too, people are benefiting. I want to serve maximum people on Holy Prophet's ﷺ land. We went to *Harem* for *Asr* prayer.

Durood wa Salam for the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Masjid-e-Nabavi is so beautiful and grand that one is wonder-struck to see its minarets and the *Green Dome*. All the minarets and corridors are alike. There are more than eighty gates. These gates are named after the *Holy Companions* رضي الله عنهم and kings. From whichever gate you enter, you see the similar scene. They prepare for prayer an hour before the prayer. People start sitting in and outside the Mosque. You have to struggle to visit *Riyadh al-Jannah* and to offer *Nawafal* here. After *Asr* prayer, I impulsively started to walk towards the sacred mausoleum. I was ashamed that I came so late to visit the mausoleum. Why did not I present the gifts of *Durood-o-Salam* earlier? I am feeling shame and repentance for my sins, misdeeds and betrayals. I will supplicate to Holy Prophet ﷺ as Maulana Altaf Hussain Haali says:

اے خاصہ خاصانِ رسل وقتِ دعا ہے
امت پہ تیری آ کے عجب وقت پڑا ہے

*O! The Chosen leader of Messengers, it is time to supplicate
Your Ummah is passing through a crucial and awful period.*

O Holy Prophet ﷺ! We are worried. Ummah is at odds. Muslims of the world are disturbed. The conspiracies of foes are on the increase. There are conflicts among themselves and the enemies are slaying your followers:

کبھی وہ بھی دن تھے ملائکہ جو میرے سامنے تھے سرنگوں
وہ میرا عروجِ کمال تھا، یہ زوال کتنا عجیب ہے

There was the time when the Angels bowed before me.

That was acme of my elevation but my present downfall is very strange.

With the heavy feet, lowered gaze, weeping and sobbing I said my *Salam* to Holy Prophet ﷺ and supplicated him to take pity on Ummah and to pardon them.

Holy Prophet's Pulpit

Today Allah ﷻ blessed me with the opportunity to visit the sacred and holy place where Holy Prophet ﷺ used to lead the prayers. I also saw the pulpit on which Holy Prophet ﷺ used to deliver the sermons. Offering two *Nawafal* here gave great pleasure. Happiness, spirituality and love penetrated into my whole body. Every inch of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* contains the footprints of our beloved Prophet Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ, Abu Bakr Siddiq, Hazrat Umar, Hazrat Usman, Hazrat Ali and other holy companions رضی اللہ عنہم.

I want to supplicate standing in front of Holy Prophet's ﷺ pulpit. I have so many requests. The guards at the mausoleum are politely saying that others, too, are waiting to visit the place. They are not allowing me to stay for long. I had not visited to the fill of my heart. My *Salam* was not completed. They ordered me to move ahead because people behind me were disturbed. I quickly presented my *Salams* and from friends and relatives particularly from Aslam Marwat as he reminded me daily. I conveyed *Salam* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ from Yumna, Huzaifa and Mahnoor. I prayed that my children may also get the chance to visit Allah's ﷻ House and *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. I did not want to leave the mesh of the Mausoleum but I had to do so. I went to *Jannat-ul-Baqee*, which is situated inside the area of *Harem*. Thousands of holy companions, companions of companions, *A'imma*, scholars and pious people are buried in this graveyard.

I offered *Maghrib* prayer in *Harem*. Waiting for *Isha* prayer after *Maghrib* prayer is a spiritual experience. Nobody moves from his place in order to retain the place until *Isha* prayer. All people

remain there for *Isha* prayer. They remain busy in reciting *Holy Quran*, remembrances, sanctifications, benedictions and *salaams*. I offered *Isha* prayer. I thanked Allah ﷻ that I could offer all of the five prayers inside *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. I spent more and more time in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and *Masjid-e-Quba*. I returned to hotel after *Isha* prayer. Anees Baig from Sabzazar (Lahore) who is familiar with Dr. Bashir Ahamd visited our room. We were introduced to each other. Baig Sahib is a sympathetic Pakistani. He made an offer to take us on visits to holy places. We accepted that offer at once. At night, patients kept visiting our clinic. Whoever comes to know arrives to get medicines after checkup. The moments I spent in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* are the treasure of my life. As I look at the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, my heart is in a strange spiritual state:

جب مسجد نبوی کے مینار نظر آئے
اللہ کی رحمت کی آثار نظر آئے

*When I saw the minarets of Masjid-e-Nabavi,
I saw the signs of Allah's ﷻ blessing.*

My heart throbs at the sight of the *Green Dome*. I yearn to reach the sacred mausoleum to say *Salaam*. Visiting the holy mesh of the mausoleum and offering *Salaams* to Holy Prophet, ﷺ provides peace and comfort. I wanted to visit and say *Salaams* at Holy Prophet's mausoleum for many years:

دَرِ نَبِیِّ پَر پڑا رہوں گا، پڑے ہی رہنے سے کام ہوگا
کبھی تو قسمت کھلے گی میری، کبھی تو میرا سلام ہوگا

*I will lie down at Holy Prophet's ﷺ doorstep; I will succeed
only this way.*

*Surely someday, with a stroke of luck my salaam
will be accepted.*

Muslims' Devotion to Holy Prophet ﷺ

Masjid-e-Nabavi is glowing and thousands of devoted men and women of faith are busy in reciting the *Holy Quran*, sanctifications and *Tahajjud*. What could be more romantic, soul-

inspiring and spiritual sight than this? No matter how sinful, indulged in misdeeds, unaware of the religion, disobedient and luxuriant a Muslim happens to be, he cannot tolerate the blasphemy against the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He forgets everything and kills the blasphemer to accept the gallows as Ghazi Ilm-ul-Din did. Coming to Holy Prophet's gate, these devotees and lovers forget everything. They are presenting the gifts of benedictions and *Salaams*. They are expressing their deep love for the streets of Madinah. They walk slowly in the streets of Madinah looking for the footprints of Holy Prophet ﷺ. After entering *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, one wishes to visit Holy Prophet's ﷺ mausoleum for presenting benedictions and *Salaam*. I intended to rest for a while but I impulsively walked towards Holy Prophet's ﷺ mausoleum.

We walked towards *Baab-ul-Salaam* to pay a visit to Holy Prophet's ﷺ mausoleum. A crowd was waiting at *Baab-ul-Siddique*. Police officers were telling them to go to *Baab-ul-Salaam* in order to visit Holy Prophet's ﷺ mausoleum and to remain there if they wanted to go to *Riyadh al-Jannah*. Thousands of pilgrims including Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indonesian and Chinese are sitting there to visit *Riyadh al-Jannah*.

Nawafal in Riyadh al-Jannah

Allah ﷻ has made *Riyadh al-Jannah* a part of paradise. To offer *Nawafal* here is similar to offering *Nawafal* in paradise. Asma had to wait for four hours to offer *Nawafal* in *Riyadh al-Jannah*. She was blissful and utmost happy. She forgot her meals in thoughts of *Riyadh al-Jannah*. Police officers asked us to wait. I waited until *Ishraq*. No matter how long I have to wait, I will get inside. We are waiting to get a chance to go to *Riyadh al-Jannah*. An Indian old man is saying, "Wait here. It is an excellent opportunity. Keep patience. Do offer two *Nawafal*. God knows who will get the chance again. A second old man was saying that he got the first chance at the age of seventy years. The old men were praising the guards. An old man said, "We had pelted the *Devil* on Thursday. He will take revenge. That is why there is intolerance and impatience." Waiting to visit the sacred mausoleum and *Riyadh al-Jannah* has a unique pleasure. It is a never-ending intoxication.

We had waited for years to receive invitation for *Hajj* and visit to Harmain... It is a prolonged wait but we are not restless. We are waiting respectfully. It is a matter of fortune to visit the mosque and to spend some time here. To say *Nawafal* in *Riyadh al-Jannah* is really a fortune so there is no problem in waiting. Allah's ﷻ blessings are showering here. Although there is clamor but environment is illuminating. Allah's ﷻ manifestations are showering down. There is peace descending upon the place. People are in hurry but those inside are not making any haste. There are instructions in English, Urdu, Indonesian, Turkish and Arabic languages to say *Nawafal* hurriedly so that others might get a chance too. However, when one gets inside one wishes to spend more and more time inside. At last, we were allowed to enter. People rushed inside disrespecting the holy place. They rushed forward trampling others. One or two got their cloths torn in this jostling. We got a place inside *Riyadh al-Jannah*. Be respectful, it is a sacred place. There is Holy Prophet's pulpit and his private room. The place between the room and the pulpit is called, *Riyadh al-Jannah*. There is light green carpet on the floor here. The sacred mausoleum and the *Green Dome* are near this place. The first group completed its visit and we got some place though insufficient. People are saying *Nawafal* with passion, devotion and love. They are crying, sobbing, and presenting the gifts of tears.

Getting the Place

An Indian brother was offering *Nawafal* and praying beside me. I requested him to provide me with some place but he was so absorbed in his supplications and prayers that he did not hear me. Seeing his love, devotion and humility, I stood waiting. At last, he took pity on me and with heavy heart left the place for me. I offered four *Nawafal* in two sets. All the brothers who entered *Riyadh al-Jannah* were the lucky ones. They are proud of their luck. I thanked Allah ﷻ that I got chance to come here. Allah ﷻ invited me to His friend's ﷺ door. We are present at Holy Prophet's ﷺ doorstep. I offered *Nawafal* in *Riyadh al-Jannah*. I succeeded after trying for three days. Praise to be Allah ﷻ that I visited *Riyadh al-Jannah*. I saw Holy Prophet's ﷺ pulpit. I smell Holy Prophet's ﷺ fragrance. I

look for Holy Prophet's ﷺ footprints. Companions of *Suffah* used to sit here. Holy Prophet ﷺ was their host. Mother Ayesha would send for Companions of *Suffah* whatever was available at her home. We went to Holy Prophet's ﷺ mausoleum after saying *Nawafal*. With joyful tears and sighing, I presented my *Salaam* from depths of my heart.

No One Is Like You; You are Matchless:

Once you look at Holy Prophet's ﷺ mausoleum, you can not move your eyes from it. One wishes to keep looking at the meshes of the mausoleum. One wishes that this sacred mausoleum should remain before one's eyes. Here is light, luminosity, blessing, fragrance and sweet scent. Holy Prophet's ﷺ fragrance, calm, spirituality and love are everywhere. One is amazed after visiting the holy mausoleum. One feels humble but glad at one's fortune as well. As a poet says:

تیری رحمت، تیری شفقت سے ہوا مجھ کو نصیب
گنبدِ خضراء کا سایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
بارگاہِ سید کونین میں آ کر نفسِ
سوچتا ہوں، کیسے آیا؟ میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا

*By virtue of your blessing and kindness, I am blessed to sit
In the shadow of the Green Dome, I was not worthy of that.*

Nafees, coming to the Leader of worlds

I wonder how I reached there! I was not worthy of that.

One forgets oneself after coming to Holy Prophet's ﷺ mausoleum. One feels proud of one's fortune. I offered my *Durood-o-Salaam* as versified by the poet:

اے رسولِ امیں، خاتم المرسلین، تجھ سا کوئی نہیں، تجھ سا کوئی نہیں
ہے عقیدہ یہ اپنا بصدق و یقین، تجھ سا کوئی نہیں، تجھ سا کوئی نہیں
بزم کونین پہلے سجائی گئی، پھر تری ذات منظر پہ لائی گئی
سید الاولیاء، سید الآخریں، تجھ سا کوئی نہیں، تجھ سا کوئی نہیں

*O Trustworthy Messenger, Seal of the Prophets,
There is none like you.*

*I have a strong belief that there is none like you,
Firstly, the universe was adorned and*

*Then you were brought on the scene,
Master of the predecessors, master of the successors,
there is none like you.*

Heading towards Jannat-ul-Baqee'

I am sitting in Jannat-ul-Baqee'. The minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and the *Green Dome* are visible. There are thousands of graves but none of them is cemented. There is no carved fancy headstone. These are simple graves made of mud. Each grave has nothing but a simple stone placed over it. There is peace, cleanliness and tranquility in this graveyard. Hundreds of great Holy Companions' ﷺ, Holy Prophet's ﷺ wives, daughters and sons ﷺ, are resting there. In addition, thousands of *tabi'een*, *taba' tabi'een*, pious men, scholars and *A'imma* are buried there. None of the graves has an epitaph or a mark of distinction or a shrine. There are thousands of pigeons here just like *Harem* and *Jannat-ul-Mua'llah*. People are feeding them grains. The pigeons coo, pick the grains and fly among the people. It is a worth seeing phenomenon when hundreds of pigeons fly together amongst people. People are carrying maps to reach the graves of holy companions' ﷺ, holy mothers of believers' ﷺ, and *A'imma*. We were told about a grave that it was the resting place of Holy Prophet's ﷺ son Ibrahim.

A Bangladeshi brother consults map and tells us that nine graves of *Ummahat-ul-moumineen* (holy mothers of believers) but nobody is sure because there are no epitaphs on the graves. At different points in *Jannat-ul-Baqee'*, Saudi and other religious scholars are asking the visitors in English, Urdu, Arabic, Pashto, Bangla and other languages to say salaam and do not commit any act prohibited in Shariah. They answer questions asked by pilgrims. They listen to the harsh questions patiently and explain their viewpoint in the light of Quran and Hadith. Some people are satisfied others are not. This is a very vast graveyard. There are many pathways. There are countless rows of graves. People are making noise. There are loud voices. People ask about the graves of

holy companions and pay gratitude standing respectfully beside their graves. Guards and scholars do not allow praying over the graves. They do not allow anyone to stand near the graves for a long while.

At the Shrine of Hazrat Usman bin Affan رضي الله عنه

I was most curious and desirous to visit Hazrat Usman's grave in *Jannat-ul-Baqee*. I wanted to offer my *Salaam* to him. I succeeded at last. A Bangladeshi brother had a map; he told me to go to the last signboard. He told me wherever most of the people have gathered, that is Hazrat Usman's رضي الله عنه grave.

The Wheel of History Turns

It is Madinah and *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Third caliph of Muslims Hazrat Usman *Zin-Noorayn* رضي الله عنه is besieged in his home near *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Insurgents are determined to kill him. He has no water for many days. Insurgents enter the house. Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه is reciting *Holy Quran*. Insurgents attack Hazrat Usman *Zin-Noorayn* رضي الله عنه. His wife comes to protect him and gets her fingers cut. His blood spills on *Holy Quran*. *Dar-ul-Madinah* Museum contains that copy of Hazrat Usman's *Holy Quran*, stained with his blood. He is martyred. His body remains unburied for three days. Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه sends Hazrat Imam Hassan رضي الله عنه and Imam Hussain رضي الله عنه. Some other holy companions such as Hazrat Zaid bin Sabit رضي الله عنه and Jabir bin Muta'm رضي الله عنه escorted them. Hazrat Usman's رضي الله عنه widow Naila رضي الله عنها is walking along with funeral procession with a lamp in her hand. However, she blows the lamp off and on to avoid the attention of insurgents. Hazrat Usman's companions are carrying his body to *Jannat-ul-Baqee*. Ten to twelve individuals joined the funeral prayer and Hazrat Jabir bin Muta'm رضي الله عنه lead the prayer. They buried Hazrat Usman's body in the farthest corner of *Jannat-ul-Baqee*, in the darkness of night so that insurgents and *Kharijites* should not find out.

Hazrat Usman's رضي الله عنه grave is simple. He رضي الله عنه is resting inside a small square patch of land. Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه rendered great services to Islam. In Holy Prophet's صلوات الله عليه time, whenever Muslims needed some financial support, he offered his wealth for Islam. At

the occasion of Battle of Tabook, Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه donated 10,000 Dinar (Gold coins weighing 5½ kilogram), 940 camles and 60 horses. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was pleased with Hazrat Usman's رضي الله عنه sacrifice. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم looked at his offerings and said that no sin would harm Usman رضي الله عنه after that good deed. Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "O Allah ﷻ, I am pleased with Usman. You too be pleased with him." Allah ﷻ glorified Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه. Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم two daughters were married to Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه. When the second one died, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If I had one more daughter, I would have married her to Usman ibn Affan". Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه Zin-Noorayn sacrificed his life and saved Madinah from bloodshed.

I felt peace and comfort visiting Hazrat Usman's رضي الله عنه grave. My heart was content. It seemed that Allah's ﷻ blessings were showering there. I sat at some distance from Hazrat Usman's grave and was just about to start writing about *Jannat-ul-Baqee* when police officers ordered me to leave the place.

Service and Treatment in Madinah Munawwrah

We returned to the hotel. Patients were waiting in Dar-ul-Hijrah. I gave them medicines after proper checkup. As in Makkah and *Harem*, in Madinah too, people came to know about Pakistani doctor and his room. Patients visited during prayer intervals or after *Isha* prayer. Dr. Bashir Ahmad's friend Anees Baig who has been living in Saudi Arabia for last twenty years, visited us there. He belongs to Sabzazar, Lahore. I had met him the day before. Today we are going to visit holy places with him. We were returning to Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم time. We were going to visit the stones and streets where Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his holy companions had walked.

In the Shadow of Mountain Uhad

After being defeated in Badr, the infidels were preparing for another battle. They had humiliating defeat in Badr. They were revengeful in the battle of Uhad. Armies were deployed in the battlefield. Using an excellent war strategy, Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم appointed 50 bowmen on the hillock of al-Rumaah (A crimson

hillock to the south of Uhad, 180 meter long and 40 meter wide) so that the enemy couldnot launch surprise attack from a flank. Holy Prophet ﷺ ordered them not to leave the place in any case. The battle started. Muslims defeated the infidels.

I am standing on the hillock of al-Rumaah. I am seeing the bowmen. The battle of Uhad is going on underneath. Infidels are fleeing leaving their belongings behind. Holy companions can sacrifice their lives for Holy Prophet ﷺ but the *Devil* allured them that fight had ended. These bowmen left their place. The *Devil* took advantage of this opportunity and incited all of them to collect the spoils of war. I am imagining all this. The squadron of bowmen is descending the hillock of al-Rumaah. Now the *Devil* is speaking to the infidels. He tells them that bowmen appointed by Holy Prophet ﷺ have left their positions. As the hillock of al-Rumaah was vacant, Khalid bin Waleed (who had not embraced Islam yet) returned with fighters and attacked from behind. There is furious fight. The *Devil* is laughing. I am seeing the scene standing near the mountain of Uhad. Holy companions are fighting with the enemies. They are sacrificing their lives for Islam and Holy Prophet ﷺ. Sayyidina Ameer Hamzah is fighting bravely. Hind is singing verses. Holy companions make a protective belt around Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Hamza is martyred. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is wounded. Holy companions carry Holy Prophet ﷺ to a farther mountain. The mountain of Uhad splits apart to provide him space. Holy Prophet ﷺ is in the shade. The mountain of Uhad waited for centuries for Holy Prophet's ﷺ arrival. This mountain had a stroke of luck.

Anees Baig and I are standing exactly over the place of mountain rift. Holy Prophet ﷺ rested there. Rumour spreads that Holy Prophet ﷺ has been martyred (I seek Allah's ﷻ refuge). When Muslims come to know that Holy Prophet ﷺ is safe, they gather their courage, strength, and attack again. They defeat the infidels. Holy Prophet ﷺ is resting on the mountain...

I took off my shoes reaching this place. I fixed my gaze on this mountain. I saw the fortunate mountains and paths where the Holy Prophet ﷺ had walked and his holy body had touched the

mountains. I could smell Holy Prophet's ﷺ fragrance in these mountains. Sheikh Zahid too climbed up the mountain. Anees Baig is a sincere lover of Holy Prophet ﷺ. He is living in Madinah-tul-Nabi. One is wonder-struck reaching this place. I again recalled Hassan Nisar's Naat:

تیرے ہوتے جنم لیا ہوتا
کوئی مجھ سا نہ دوسرا ہوتا

I wish I were born in Holy Prophet's ﷺ time.

Then I would have been matchless.

My Feelings, My Emotions

I wish I were living in these mountains.

The mountain of Uhad would have been my home.

I would have respectfully welcomed the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

I would have cleansed the Holy Prophet's ﷺ wounds.

I would have dusted the Holy Prophet's ﷺ feet and filled this dust in my eyes.

I would kiss the Holy Prophet's ﷺ feet.

I would dress the Holy Prophet's ﷺ wounds.

I am a doctor; I wish I were present at that time.

I would attend the Holy Prophet ﷺ alone.

I would sacrifice all my belongings for the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

I would not let the Holy Prophet's ﷺ blood fall on the ground.

I would have rested the Holy Prophet's ﷺ head in my lap.

I wish I were born in the Holy Prophet's ﷺ time.

We descended the mountain of al-Rumaah and went to the battlefield. The bodies of Sayyid-ul-Shuhada ؓ and other 72 martyrs are lying on the ground... Hind is furious seeing Ameer Hamzah's corpse. She cuts open his chest and chews his liver. Holy Prophet ﷺ weeps looking his uncle's wounded corpse. The 72 martyrs are

buried in a huge grave... Hazrat Hamzah رضي الله عنه is buried in a separate grave. Relics of these graves are still visible. I said my Salaam to Ameer Hamzah رضي الله عنه and other martyrs of the Battle of Uhad. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم loved the mountain of Uhad. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned this mountain in many *Ahadith*. Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Uhad will be a gate among the gates of paradise." Moreover, he said, "Uhad is the mountain that loves me and I love it."

As we went out of Uhad, weather became cloudier. Clouds covered the sky. Anees Baig said, "You are a lucky person. Such weather comes once in a year." When we reached the place of *Ghazwa-e-Khandaq* and Sala' mountain, it was time for *Zuhr* prayer. We offered *Zuhr* prayer in Masjid-e-Khandaq. It started raining as we came out of the mosque. The dark clouds of Madinah rained heavily.

Ghazwa-e-Khndaq

The story of *Ghazwa-e-Khandaq* (Battle of Trench) is narrated in detail on the board outside. The mountain of Sala' is in front of us. Sala' is a black mountain. It is one kilometer long. It is situated 500 meters south-of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. *Ghazwa-e-Khandaq* was fought near this mountain in year 5 AH. Seven mosques are built on this mountain at different places of camps. Masjid-al-Fateh is built on the place where Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم camped. Below is the Masjid-e-Salman Farsi. Masjid-al-Fateh is in its original condition. It has been extended a little bit. Masjid-e-Salman Farsi رضي الله عنه is very old so it is closed. A spacious mosque is built in place of Masjid-e-Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه. Masjid-e-Umar Farooq رضي الله عنه is also included in the new Masjid. Seeing the mountain of Sala', I recalled the past.

The Jews have united all the tribes of Arab and prepared an army of 10,000 infidels that is ready to attack the Muslims of Madinah. Muslims gather under Holy Prophet's leadership. Holy Companions were consulted. Hazrat Salman Farsi رضي الله عنه suggested digging a trench around Madinah. Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and Holy Companions started digging the trench. There were groups of ten

persons each. Every group dug 20-meter trench. Holy Prophet ﷺ too is digging the trench with his Companions.

Holy Prophet's ﷺ Three Strikes - Three Empires

Holy Prophet's ﷺ group is assigned to dig a 20-meter patch of the trench. They encountered a rock while digging. The Holy Prophet ﷺ struck it. One third of the rock was crushed. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "I have been granted keys of Syria. By Allah ﷻ, I am seeing the palaces of Syria." The Holy Prophet ﷺ struck again and the two-third of the rock was crushed. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "I have been granted the keys of Persia. By Allah ﷻ, I am seeing the white palaces of *Madayin*." The Holy Prophet ﷺ struck the third time and the remaining part of the rock was crushed. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "*Allah-o-Akbar!* I have been granted the keys of Yemen. By Allah ﷻ, I am seeing the gates of San'a." History proved that all these prophecies of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ made while digging the trench turned true soon. The empires of Yemen, Syria and Persia were conquered by the Muslims. The trench was ready. This trench started from *Masjid-e-Mustarah* and ended near *Masjid-e-Fateh*, passing the mountain of Zahab. It was 2.5 kilometers long, 4 meters wide and 3 meters deep. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had tied a stone on his belly while digging. When the digging was completed, Hazrat Jabir bin Abdullah رضي الله عنه slaughtered a ram and invited the Holy Prophet ﷺ with two *Companions*. It was a little ram and only four men could feed on it. However, the Holy Prophet ﷺ went with all of the *Companions* رضي الله عنهم. Hazrat Jabir رضي الله عنه got worried. The Holy Prophet ﷺ started distributing the food. Everyone including the Holy Prophet ﷺ ate but still there was some food left in the pot. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said to present it to others. The meal was touched by Holy Prophet's ﷺ holy hand and became so blessed that food for a few men was eaten by all.

Muslims' defensive strategy worked very well. The infidels besieged the Muslims for twenty days. They tried to cross the trench but failed. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ prayers were accepted. A storm came. The angels cut the cords of infidels' tents. The infidels'

horses collided with each other. Their hearts feared the Muslims. Angels shouted *Allah-o-Akbar* and the infidels fled.

Heavy Rain in Madinah

It started raining heavily when we departed from Sala'. The raindrops were charming. The roads and streets of Madinah were full with rainwater. Anees Baig said, "It rarely rains in Madinah. As such, blessings keep showering in Madinah all the time but when it rains, people come out of their homes."

Now the wind is cold. It is drizzling. Soon after the raining, the number of vehicles on the roads has increased. Water is pooled in the streets. All the people especially the young and children have come out of homes to enjoy the rain.

Chapter 19

Masjid-e-Qiblatayn and other Famous Mosques

Now we will go to Masjid-e-Qiblatayn. This mosque is situated on Khalid bin Waleed رضي الله عنه Road near the valley of Aqeeq. Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was leading the prayer in this mosque when revelation came to turn the faces towards Masjid-e-Haram (*Ka'bah*). Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and holy companions turned their faces towards *Ka'bah* during the prayer. Anees Baig is expertly driving in the rain. He is glad that it is raining. We reached Masjid-e-Qiblatayn after a while. The aged fellow Muhammad Ameen and Dr. Bashir Ahmad are also with us. Drenched in the rain, we entered the Masjid through the main gate. Ameen Sahib asked us to walk slowly. These same clouds would rain in Holy Prophet's time. The sky, the atmosphere, the clouds and raindrops are same. These raindrops are precious pearls. When these raindrops fall on the body, it feels cool.

The guard at the mosque said that we would have to come after the rain. We said that it was the rain in Holy Prophet's city. Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had walked in these streets. God knows when we will be blessed again to enjoy this rain. The guard said that we were right. He took us inside and told that earlier it faced towards Masjid-e-Aqsa. There was a red prayer-mat over the main entrance gate of the mosque. It means the first direction was opposite to the later direction.

When Allah's ﷻ order came, Muslims turned towards *Ka'bah* during *Zuhr* prayer. After that, they started offering prayers facing towards *Ka'bah*. We offered two *Nawafals* in Masjid-e-Qiblatayn. Then we reached *Masjid-e-Quba*. Soon after entering the mosque through the main gate, I saw the place where Holy Prophet's she-camel had stopped. I went inside and offered two *Nawafal* twice because it is reported that Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

“Whoever offers two Nawafal in Masjid-e-Quba, will be rewarded equal to one Umrah”

It means that we offered two Umrahs in a while. There is a mosque built on Abdul Aziz road named after Hazrat Bilal رضي الله عنه. Above is the mosque, below is the market. This mosque is named after Hazrat Bilal رضي الله عنه, the first *Moazzin* of Islam. It is a spacious Masjid. Anees Baig took us to Masjid-e-Jumm'a too.

Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stayed in Quba after migrating to Madinah. He departed to Madinah on Friday. He offered Friday prayer in the village of Bani Salim, one kilometer away from *Masjid-e-Quba*. Banu Salim built a mosque on that place. This mosque is called Masjid-e-Bani Salim and Masjid-e-Jumm'a. Like other Masjids, this mosque was also extended during the reign of King Fahd. Its minaret is 25 meter high and simultaneously one thousand men can offer prayer there.

While returning from Uhad, Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stayed at the place where Masjid-e-Mustarah is built on Sayyid-ul-Shuhada رضي الله عنهم road. Banu Harisah tribe was living there at that time. The trench dug before Ghzawa-e-Ahzab started from this place. This mosque too was extended during Fahd regime.

Anees Baig and the Markets of Madinah

Today was a good day, because of our visits to holy places. May Allah ﷻ bless the best reward to Anees Baig! We offered *Asr* prayer in *Harem*. After *Asr* prayer, Anees Baig served us delicious food from Al-Bake. We offered *Maghrib* prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabawi* and remained in *Masjid-e-Nabawi* until *Isha* prayer. We returned after *Isha* prayer. Asma and sister Najma had to purchase gifts from the market. I talked to Anees Baig. He said that he would come after *Isha* prayer. We went to the market after *Isha* prayer. With Anees Baig, we roamed in the markets until 12:00 a.m. and purchased gifts. I appreciate his courage. He remained with us a whole day. After prayer, patients visited until late at night. Due to rain in Madinah, people in general and pilgrims in particular are relieved from chest infection and cough. Still my work is going on. I keep medicines with me even in *Masjid-e-Nabawi*.

Emergency in Masjid-e-Nabavi

We were coming for *Asr* prayer when an Indonesian old man fell in the yard of *Harem*. People gathered around him. Everybody was saying different things according to his knowledge. I moved them away and checked the old man. He had a fit of epilepsy. He had fallen badly but somebody had timely acted so his bones were not fractured. I stretched the old man and reinstated his breathing. I undid his shirt buttons so that he could breathe easily. The old man stood up. When the effects of paroxysm were over, he started walking around as nothing had happened. In this way, medical knowledge helped in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* too.

Fajr Prayer in Masjid-e-Nabavi and Salaam

Tariq Shah woke me at 3:00 a.m. He said, "Patients are waiting outside your room. Open the door." I went out and saw that Baig Sahib was plodding around. Baig Sahib told that his wife had been sick since last night; she was feeling dizzy. She had spent a restless night. I checked up his wife and gave her medicines. After that, I went to *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. People keep on moving in and out of *Harem* all the night. I entered through Baab-e-Fahd and saw that there was a large crowd of people although it was early morning. I got a place on the cold floor. I experienced a unique sense of comfort, peace and spirituality. I offered *Fajr* prayer. After that, I went to Baab-ul-Salaam. People are standing in queues. Guards are calling people to show discipline. The devotees and lovers are impatient and restless. They are offering benedictions and Salaam. They are weeping and sobbing but their faces are shining with happiness. I am blessed with a chance to be present in Holy Prophet's ﷺ court. To stand in the queue and moving slowly towards Holy Prophet's ﷺ mausoleum is a faith-strengthening experience. I wish that time should stop and these moments should prolong. I wish that I should be alone here to offer benedictions and Salaam all the time. I wish to keep on looking at the mesh of Holy mausoleum and the *Green Dome*. My turn came. I am near the mesh of Holy Prophet's ﷺ mausoleum. My heart stops beating. I offer my *Durood-o-Salaam* in a loud voice. Walking slowly, I come closer to the Holy mausoleum...

Just now, I am sitting in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, writing these lines. It is time for *Ishraq* prayer. I offer *Ishraq* and return to hotel. The importance of this book is that most of its writing is completed in *Harem*, holy places, *Ka'bah* and *Masjid-e-Nabavi*.

I felt fresh after saying *Durood-o-Salaam*. I was glad. As you go to Holy Prophet's mausoleum, you experience a unique sense of spirituality and illumination. It seems as if the whole area is covered with a blanket of light. Blessings and peace directly descend here. As a poet says:

میرے پاس تک آ کے گی نہ دنیا
 قریب آپ کے اس قدر آ گیا ہوں
 مری زندگی ہو رہی ہے نچھاور
 جو روضے پہ میں لہ بھر آ گیا ہوں

The world cannot distract me, so close to you I am.

A moment on your Mausoleum is better than my whole life.

It was time for *Zuhr* prayer. I got ready and went to the spacious hall of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Half an hour was left to prayer call. People were fondly reciting *Holy Quran*. In the prayer, everyone wishes to have a place near Holy Prophet's mausoleum in order to pay visit to Holy Prophet ﷺ or to say *Nawafal* in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. Dr. Ahsan has advised me to spend more and more time on Holy Prophet's ﷺ mausoleum and in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Just like *Harem*, in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* too, there is a funeral prayer after every prayer. After funeral prayer, everyone wishes to go to *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. After *Zuhr* prayer, I headed outside instead of going hotel.

Masjid Ali bin abi Talib ﷺ

There are three or four other beautiful mosques at a distance of 200-300 meter outside the court of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. First, I saw *Masjid Ali bin abi Talib* ﷺ. *Masjid-e-Ali* is 300 meter in the south-west from *Masjid-e-Ghamamah*. This mosque is built on the place where Holy Prophet ﷺ had offered Eid prayer. After Holy Prophet ﷺ, Hazrat Ali offered Eid prayer there. Now this mosque is closed.

Masjid-e-Abu Bakr Siddique ﷺ

Then we went to Masjid-e-Abu Bakr Siddique. This mosque is closed too. This mosque is 100 meter away from the yard of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, to the south-west. It is said that Holy Prophet ﷺ offered Eid prayer there. Then Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ offered Eid prayer there.

Masjid-e-Ghamamah and Clouds

Masjid-e-Ghamamah is several kilometers away from *Masjid-e-Abu Bakr Siddiq*. It is a huge Masjid. This Masjid is open for prayer. This Masjid is in the south-west to *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ offered his last Eid prayer in Masjid-e-Ghamamah. When Holy Prophet ﷺ offered Eid prayer there, a cloud shadowed over him. That is why this mosque is named as Masjid-e-Ghamamah (Mosque of Cloud). Masjid-e-Ghamamah is spacious and beautiful. It is open for five prayers a day. I offered two *Nawafal* in the hall of this mosque.

Masjid Umar Ibn Khattab رضى الله عنه

Two old men from Punjab and one from Burma joined me out of curiosity. They asked which way was Masjid-e-Umar. We inquired from people around. We were told that it was at the center of an under construction plaza. Masjid-e-Umar is to the south of Masjid-e-Abu Bakr. There is 200-meter distance between the two. It is said that Holy Prophet ﷺ offered Eid prayer there. Later on, Hazrat Umar رضى الله عنه also offered Eid prayer there. I felt sad that this Masjid was also closed. Perhaps this mosque will be demolished for a new building. I was satisfied to visit the mosques named after great companions. I went to *Harem* for *Asr* prayer. I searched for patio of Companions of *Suffah*. I was told that it was near *Baab-e-Jibrail*. After *Asr* prayer, I went to *Baab-e-Jibrail*. People were entering through the gate. The patio was there but it was thronged.

Among Ashaab-e-Suffah

Suffah is that patio in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* where, more than a hundred holy companions were stationed after migrating to Madinah to avoid hardships of the weather. All of them were

indigent and needy. They had neither any relative nor a home. They were Holy Prophet's ﷺ guests. When Holy Prophet ﷺ would receive ablutions or gifts, he would send it to the *Ashaab-e-Suffah*. *Suffah* was their home. They would live there, get food and keep studying there. Among these were those great personalities who always remained present to serve the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Later on, most of them became *Huffaz-i-Qurra*, *Mohaddis*, *Mufti*, *Faqih* and philosophers as they were taught and trained by the Holy Prophet's ﷺ. *Mohaddis-e-Azam* Hazrat Abu Hurairah is most prominent among *Ashaab-e-Suffah*. He had memorized 5374 Ahadith. All this was because of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ good influence. I had been searching for *Suffah Patio* since the last three days. I succeed at the end.

I caught sight of *Suffah Patio* in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. I found the pious, noble and loyal companions at *Suffah*. I felt that I was sitting among *Ashaab-e-Suffah*. I felt as if I was sitting among them and they have accepted me to be with them. Holy Prophet's home is nearby. *Ashaab-e-Suffah* are poor seekers of knowledge. These fortunate companions were loved by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I am here, I too am weak, I too am humbie, I too am thirsty, I am old and I have thirst for knowledge. These loyal and pious companions, these seekers of knowledge, these selfless followers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are his guests. People have occupied every inch of *Suffah Patio*.

One Bowl of Milk and Eighty Ashaab-e-Suffah

I am sitting here and can see Holy Prophet's home. *Ashaab-e-Suffah* are hungry. The Holy Prophet ﷺ brings Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه along to his home. Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه is out of sorts because of hunger. He is too weak to walk. Only one bowl of milk was available at home. Holy Prophet ﷺ says to Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه, "Allah ﷻ is with *Ashaab-e-Suffah*. Invite them; they are guests of Muslims. Neither they have families nor have any wealth." Abu Hurairah calls them all. Holy Prophet ﷺ hands over the bowl of milk to Abu Hurairah and says, "O Abu Hurairah, make everybody drink from this bowl". Abu Hurairah thinks that one bowl of milk is insufficient for all but he starts serving the bowl obeying the

Holy Prophet ﷺ. One after the other, all *Ashaab-e-Suffah* ﷺ drink milk but the bowl is still full of milk. Holy Prophet ﷺ says to Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه "You drink now". He drinks once. The Holy Prophet ﷺ says, "Drink more". He drinks more and feels satisfied. Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه said to Holy Prophet ﷺ, "O Allah's ﷻ Messenger! Allah ﷻ sent you with truth. I cannot drink any more." The Holy Prophet ﷺ took the bowl from Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه, praised Allah ﷻ and drank the remaining milk in the name of Allah ﷻ.

I too, am Hungry and Thirsty

I too am thirsty, hungry; I came here after waiting for years. If I am granted some drops of milk from this bowl, I will be fortunate to quench my thirst. If I drink from this bowl, I will learn all knowledge of the world and I would never feel any desire.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is offering his *Tahajjud* prayer. Hazrat Fatima's رضى الله عنها home is in front of him. This whole place is sacred. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ footprints are all over. I am writing these lines sitting on the *Suffah Patio*. I too belong to *Ashaab-e-Suffah*. I am weak, humble, old, and hungry; and have a strong desire of seeking knowledge. I want to drink milk from *Ashaab-e-Suffah's* bowl. I have supplicated to Holy Prophet ﷺ. There is luminosity, spirituality and comfort. I smell fragrance of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, *Ahl-e-Bayt*, the Righteous Caliphs, *Ashaab-e-Suffah* and devoted Companions. I feel am very fortunate and these words are very sacred. I am blessed with a chance to write these words in this Holy place. The Holy Prophet ﷺ always cared for *Ashaab-e-Suffah*. He would send food to *Ashaab-e-Suffah* even if nothing left in his home. These noble and great men, devoted to Holy Prophet ﷺ, spent their evenings and mornings on this patio seeking knowledge. They were Holy Prophet's guests. I have also joined them. I am also Holy Prophet's guest. I have come to his door. I am hungry and thirsty. I seek knowledge.

O Allah ﷻ! Grant me knowledge, sincerity, passion, sustenance, affection and love for Holy Prophet ﷺ. Every inch of this place is sacred. I want to dissolve in these dust particles. I want

to dissolve in the dust particles on which Holy Prophet ﷺ and his *Holy Companions* walked. It seems that *Ashaab-e-Suffah* has accepted me in their circle. I am ecstatic and desperate in love. I have become immortal by virtue of love for Holy Prophet ﷺ. I feel satiated coming to Holy Prophet ﷺ. I am a contented soul. I can proudly say that I am Holy Prophet's guest and one of *Ashaab-e-Suffah*.

Among *Ashaab-e-Suffah*, I am the least knowledgeable, the most hungry and thirsty and the most desirous to seek knowledge. *Ashaab-e-Suffah* provided me a place in the corner on their patio. I have become fortunate. The noblest and the greatest of the companions are included in *Ashaab-e-Suffah*. There are 179 of them but Abu Hurairah, Abdullah bin Masood, Zaid bin al-Khattab, Salim bin Umair, Abdullah bin Umme Maktoom, Abdullah bin Anees, Abdullah bin Zaid, Talhah bin Amr, Huzaifa bin Aseed and Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه are most prominent. Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه is most well known among all. A few days ago, Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه fell unconscious because of hunger. People thought it to be a fit of epilepsy. They started to caress his neck and pouring water in his mouth. Some said that Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه has gone mad. They are not observing his empty belly. *Ashaab-e-Suffah* are observing fast. There are dates for them. They are being served and me too, because I am one of them. I have joined them. I offered *Maghrib* prayer with *Ashaab-e-Suffah*. *Ashaab-e-Suffah* are breaking fast and I got a share by virtue of them.

I sat on that patio for a long while. I did not want to leave that place. A religious scholar from Banori Town, Karachi came and sat beside me. He told me to supplicate here for increase in knowledge for my children and me. He told me that all *Ashaab-e-Suffah* were prominent but Abdullah bin Masood and Abu Hurairah were the outstanding. The pilgrims are returning. A few days are left for us. Then we will bid farewell to the streets of Madinah, *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, Holy Prophet's ﷺ Musoleum and the *Green Dome*.

Dates of Madinah

The most important thing for pilgrims is that they may take dates of Madinah and Zamzam for their families and friends. We have brought Zamzam water from Makkah. Dates were to be purchased yet. After *Isha*, Naveed Aslam, Dr. Shahid, Eijaz, Zafar Iqbal, Tariq Shah, Zuhab, Mohsin Javiad, Sheikh Zahid and I went to date market. There were dates of every kind from 10 riyal to 100 riyal per kilogram. Dates are available in Makkah too but Madinah is famous for its date-orchards since the past. Holy Prophet ﷺ prayed blessing for the dates of Madinah. Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever will eat seven dates of Madinah in the morning will not be harmed even by poison." Ajwah is considered useful for heart diseases. There are many kinds of dates of various size, colour and taste in Madinah. Among the famous dates of Madinah are Ajwah, Anbar, Safaawa, Shibli, Kurrah, Barhi, Halwah, Rosaana, Rabiah, Bayzi, Qa'qi and Libarni.

The Date market is crowded with pilgrims. Pilgrims from all over the world are visiting the market... The dates are packed. Most of the shops in this market are run by Pathans. I consulted friends and bought dates. Some bought Ajwah, others Qalmi or Mabroom.

Chapter 20

In Paradise

It is midnight; I am in the paradise. I am in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "It is a patch of paradise." I have a stroke of luck. Today I have found everything. My desires and wishes have come true. Whatever Holy Prophet ﷺ says can never be false. Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "The place between my pulpit and my House is a patch of paradise." Today I am sitting here. I am praising Allah ﷻ and saying *Darood-o-Salaam*. Allah ﷻ invited me to His House. Allah ﷻ made me visit Holy Prophet's ﷺ home and *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. What would be greater benefaction than this?

شکر ہے تیرا خدایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا
تو نے اپنے گھر بلایا، میں تو اس قابل نہ تھا

*O Allah ﷻ! I praise You, I was not worthy of this privilege.
You invited me to Your House, I was not worthy of this privilege.*

I repeatedly offered supererogatory prayers in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. The environment here is that of paradise. There is coolness, fragrance, light, spirituality, romance, love, affection, peace and comfort. My pen and the pages of my book are consecrated. I am writing these lines sitting in this paradise. This book is blessed now. Blessed are the words that are written in paradise. My hopes, wishes and efforts are fulfilled today. I am not dreaming. I have offered *Nawafal* in paradise with a beating heart and open eyes. I am writing sitting in paradise. People are wondering at this. They are worried. Some are offering *Nawafal*, some are weeping, some are reciting the Quran? Some are sobbing and sighing but I am busy in writing.

The guards are moving people away. They see me and return silently. They say nothing to this simple-hearted man. May

Allah ﷻ bless them with happiness! I keep on writing. Allah ﷻ blessed me with countless blessings. His blessings are bounteous. His mercies, blessings and rewards are countless but today he did the greatest favor. He invited me to paradise. He blessed me the opportunity to say *Nawafal* in this paradise. He blessed me the opportunity to weep and cry; to present the gifts of tears to Holy Prophet ﷺ. I am so fortunate and lucky. I had waited for this moment for years. At last, Allah ﷻ invited me to His House. He blessed me to see *Ka'bah* and Holy Prophet's ﷺ Mausoleum. Then he invited me to the paradise. He blessed me to sit on that place that is paradise in both the worlds. Allah ﷻ blessed me to supplicate, to weep and to say *Nawafal* here. I am in the paradise; Allah ﷻ is to be praised. I am writing this part of the book sitting in the paradise. As the poet says:

اپنے ارماں پورے کر لے، خوب جی بھر کر یہاں
 اے دل بیتاب! لے تیرا مقام آ ہی گیا
 میری جاں جس پر فدا، کون و مکان جس پر نثار
 سامنے وہ روضہ خیر الانام آ ہی گیا

O restless heart! Get your aspirations materialized completely at this place.

I can sacrifice my life rather the entire universe for the Holy Prophet's Mausoleum.

Scene of Paradise

This is the environment of paradise. There is a flood of light. There are sobs, sighs, supplications and prayers. Allah's ﷻ servants are glad here. Luminosity and slumber is showering here. Angels are delighted to see the pleasing and soothing scene. The *Devil* and his apprentices are dejected. Such a mild, fragrance can emanate only from paradise. Neither did I ever smell such a fragrance nor will I smell it again. This fragrance is specific to paradise. Every inch of *Masjid-e-Nabawi* and *Madinah* is sacred but *Riyadh-al-Jannah* is the most sacred place. Near the pulpit is *Sutoon-e-Hannanah* (the Weeping Pillar). It is reported that when Holy Prophet ﷺ got a pulpit and stepped on it leaving the wooden pillar, this pillar began

weeping. It was about to explode. It was sobbing like a little child. The Holy Prophet ﷺ caressed it and it became silent. *Sutoon-e-Ayeshah* ﷺ is between the Holy Raudah and the pulpit. It is greatly rewarding to offer *Nawafal* here. Another pillar near *Sutoon-e-Ayeshah* ﷺ is named as *Sutoon-e-Taubah* (or *Sutoon-e-Abu Lubabah*). This pillar has a history too.

I imagine that Hazrat Abu Lubabah ﷺ commits a minor mistake. He ties himself to this pillar in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Many days pass. At last, Allah ﷻ proclaims his pardon through revelation. Abu Lubabah ﷺ was about to fall unconscious. He is very pale because of being tied to the pillar for nine days. He insists that Holy Prophet ﷺ himself will release him. Holy Prophet ﷺ comes to him. He unties Abu Lubabah ﷺ. He gave one third of his wealth in charity after release. The second pillar between Holy Prophet's ﷺ room and *Riyadh-al-Jannah* is called *Sutoon-e-Sareer*. It is said that Holy Prophet's bed, made of palm-stems, was placed between this pillar and *Staoon-e-Lubabah*. Holy Prophet ﷺ would rest there and Hazrat Ayesha ﷺ would oil and comb his hair. There is another pillar near Holy Prophet's grave, towards *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. This pillar is called *Sutoon-al-Hars*. Hazrat Ali ﷺ, Hazrat Bilal ﷺ and other Companions performed guard duties there in turns.

Every inch of *Riyadh-al-Jannah* is sacred. The footprints of Holy Prophet ﷺ and Holy Companions ﷺ are visible everywhere. Sitting in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*, I imagine that Arab delegations are meeting the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Ali ﷺ would offer prayer between *Sutoon-e-Wafood* and *Sutoon-e-Taubah*. That is why this place is called "*Musalla-e-Ali* ﷺ" (Ali's prayer place). There is *Sutoon-e-Tahajjud* near Holy Prophet's room. The Holy Prophet ﷺ would offer *Tahajjud* prayer there. Moreover, a pillar inside the room is named as "*Ustawana Jibrail*". Jibrail ﷺ would sit there when he brought revelation. Sitting in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*, I see these holy places and imagine that epoch. I look for the footprints of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Holy Companions ﷺ. I wish I were born in Holy Prophet's ﷺ time. I would have been a guard at *Sutoon-al-Hars*. I would guard the Holy Prophet ﷺ...

I returned from *Riyadh-al-Jannah* late at night. I attended Holy Prophet's ﷺ Mausoleum after coming out of *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. I offered *Durood-o-Salaam*. I offered my gratitude and *Salaam* to Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه and Hazrat Umar Farooq رضي الله عنه. Meanwhile it was morning. I offered *Fajr* prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*.

Streets of Madinah and Sacred Wells

I rested for a while after the prayer. Today's program was to visit different historical places of Madinah. Asadullah stayed there with his car last night. Asad had taken us to visit *Badr*. Tariq Shah, Muhammad Ameen and Muhammad Zuhab are accompanying us. Asad Shah said, "Let us start our journey offering *Nawafal* in *Masjid-e-Quba*." To offer two *Nawafal* in *Quba Masjid* is equal to *Umrah* in reward. We reached *Masjid-e-Quba*. The Masjid was crowded with men and women that morning. Allah's ﷻ servants are everywhere. People are coming in groups to receive the reward of *Umrah*. They are offering *Nawafal* in the Masjid. Asadullah told us that the *Holy Quran* especially mentions the people of Quba that are conscious of piety and cleanliness. The bathrooms of this Masjid are designed in such a way that there is no possibility of spoiling clothes with impure drops of water.

".....A place of worship which was founded upon duty (to Allah) from the first day is more worthy that you should stand (to pray) therein, wherein are men who love to purify themselves. Allah ﷻ loves the purifiers." (Al-Quran, 9:108)

There are graveyards outside the Masjid. Asadullah told us that one graveyard was for disbelievers and the other for the Muslims. The people of Quba were generous and affluent as they are now. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ came there, they warmly welcomed him and sacrificed all their wealth for him. It is the Holy Prophet's ﷺ blessing that the people around Quba are affluent today.

Masjid-e-Diraar

Near *Masjid-e-Quba* was *Masjid-e-Dirar* that was built by hypocrites (Munafiqeen). When the Holy Prophet ﷺ returned from *Ghazwa-e-Tabook* and reached *Zi Awaan*, a place at one-hour

travelling distance from Madinah. The Hypocrites had built this mosque to use it for plotting against the Holy Prophet ﷺ. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ was going for Ghazwa-e-Tabook, the hypocrites told him that they had built a Masjid for patients and disabled. They requested the Holy Prophet ﷺ to visit this Masjid and to lead a prayer there for good influence. Holy Prophet ﷺ said that he was going to Tabook and would consider it on his return. On return, the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent Malik bin Dakhsham and Ma'an bin Adi to burn / demolish Masjid-e-Dirar. These verses of the Holy Quran were revealed on this occasion:

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مَسْجِدًا ضِرَارًا وَكُفْرًا وَتَفْرِيقًا بَيْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِرْصَادًا
لِمَنْ حَارَبَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ ط وَ لَيَحْلِفُنَّ إِنْ أَرَدْنَا إِلَّا الْحُسْنَى ط وَاللَّهُ
يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ۝ (التوبة: ١٠٤)

"And as for those who chose a place of worship out of opposition and disbelief, and in order to cause dissent among the believers, and as an outpost for those who warred against Allah ﷻ and His messenger aforesaid, they will surely swear: We purposed naught save good. Allah ﷻ bears witness that they verily are liars."

The Well of Arees

When we were coming out of Masjid-e-Quba, Asad told me that to the west of the Masjid there is the Well of Arees, which is closed because of extension of the road. I see in my imagination the Holy Prophet ﷺ is coming out of Masjid-e-Quba with his devoted Companions. It is summer. The Holy Prophet ﷺ comes to the Well of Arees, lifts cloth from his shins and sits on the parapet of the well. Hazrat Abu Musa Asha'ri رضي الله عنه stands nearby as a guard. After a while, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه and Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه come and seek permission to approach, The Holy Prophet ﷺ not only grants them permission but also gives the good news of Paradise. They sit to the right and left of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, hanging their feet into the well. What a beautiful scene is! After a while, Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه seeks permission and approaches. The Holy Prophet ﷺ also gives him the good news of Paradise. The Holy Prophet ﷺ

also tells him that he will face a great trial. This great *Companion* رضي الله عنه went through the trial and sacrificed his life but prevented a horrible war in Madinah. This well is also called the Well of Ring because the silver ring that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم wore, later on was worn by Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه and Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه. After them, it was in Usman's رضي الله عنه hands when it fell into the well. The inscription on this ring looked as under:



Masjid-e-Jum'ah and Salman Farsi's رضي الله عنه Well

Asadullah is turning the pages of history. When we passed in front of *Masjid-e-Jumu'a*, he told that when the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم came to lead *Friday prayer* they tethered his she-camel at that place across the road., There is a store named "Al-Qaswa", named after Holy Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم she-camel. We saw the relics of Salman Farsi's vast date-orchards near Madaras-al-Shawa. Near the orchards was a huge well that was used to water the orchards. It is named as *Salman Farsi's* رضي الله عنه well. The well exists there but it is closed with a barbed wire.

The Well of Ghars

A little ahead of Madaras-al-Shawa, one kilometer to the south of *Masjid-e-Quba* is the well of Ghars. It is covered with a wall and roof on it. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم liked its water and he would drink from it. Most importantly, the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم advised that he would be bathed, after his death, with water from this well. Therefore, the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم was bathed with the seven buckets of water from the well of Ghars.

Usman's رضي الله عنه Well

Asadullah took us from the well of Ghars to Usman's رضي الله عنه well. This well is situated in Azhari village near the *valley of Aqeeq*, 3.5 kilometers from *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and one kilometer from *Masjid-e-Qiblatayn*. This well was owned by a Jew when the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم came to Madinah. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "Whoever purchases this well for the Muslims, will be best

rewarded in Paradise." Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه purchased the well, firstly half then full, and endowed it to the Muslims. This well is situated in a vast garden and it is still working. It is open for public only on Thursdays. There are many stories about the water of this well. Drinking its water cures many diseases especially kidney diseases. Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه rendered unforgettable services for Islam and the Muslims. While standing on this well, I recalled all the past scenes. The Kharijites made his life difficult and blocked the water of this well for Usman Zin-Noorayn رضي الله عنه.

Masjid-e-Suqya and the Well of Suqya

Masjid-e-Suqya is visible while passing by Turkey Railway Station. This Masjid is situated inside the railway station, southwest to *Masjid-e-Nabawi*. It is named as Saqya because the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم took water from the well of this Masjid while going to *Battle of Badr*. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم performed ablution, offered two *Nawafal* and supplicated for the inhabitants of Madinah.

Masjid-e-Ijabah

Masjid-e-Ijabah is 8.5 kilometers to the northeast of *Masjid-e-Nabawi*. This Masjid was built during Holy Prophet's time in the street of Banu Mua'wiah. The reason behind its name is that once the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم came to this Masjid and offered two *raka't* prayer and supplicated for a long time. After that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "I supplicated three things from Allah; two of them are granted to me but the third is refused. I supplicated to Allah ﷻ that my Ummah may not die of famine and drowning. Allah ﷻ approved both of these supplications. Third supplication I made, "My Ummah may never fall into contention" but this was not approved by Allah ﷻ."

Fire, Basra and Black Mountains

Asadullah Madni is familiar with Madinah. He is returning to Pakistan after studying for 8 years in Madinah University. I was glad to know that Asadullah was born in Madinah. That is why Madni is part of his name. We went to the *Valley of Aaqool* and the *Valley of Qanat* where we saw black mountains everywhere. Going

closer to them, these mountains seem as if they were burnt. Asadullah narrated us Holy Prophet's ﷺ Hadith that "The *Day of Resurrection* will not dawn until there is a fire in the land of Hijaz. This fire will illuminate necks of camels in Basra." It came true what Holy Prophet ﷺ had said. On Wednesday, 3rd of Jamadi-al-Awal, 654AH, there were 18 earthquakes in Madinah. On the day of Friday, a fire appeared from eastern horizon. Dark clouds covered the horizon and darkness prevailed everywhere. This fire turned into lava. This fire blazed ahead consuming the mountains.

According to historians, this fire was so intense that it was visible from Makkah and Basra. This fire kept burning for three months. The lava emanated from volcano made its way to the graves of Martyrs ﷺ of Uhad, through eastern plains, the mountain of Wa'eera and the valley of Qanat. Tons of water pooled behind this lava, which was named as Sadd-e-Aaqool. Asadullah pointed towards the burnt mountains and showed us the burnt stones. Because of burning these stones became weightless and brittle. All the mountains of this valley are black and seemed burnt. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ words proved true. Verily, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said nothing save truth.

Ka'b bin Ashraf's Castle

We saw Ka'b bin Ashraf's castle and garden on the road of Sadd-e-Bat'han. He was a wealthy Jew and disrespectful to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He said profane things about the Muslims. The Holy Prophet ﷺ ordered to kill him. 'Death is the punishment for a blasphemer to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Muhammad ﷺ ibn Musailma killed him. This Jew owned huge gardens and palaces. His wealth could be judged today by the remains of his gardens and palaces. His castle was built of medium-sized stones. Southeastern walls are high. There is a well outside the castle. Asadullah showed us remains of castle, palaces and gardens. The walls of this castle are visible from a distance. May Allah ﷻ destroy the profaners of Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Urwah's Well

After that, we saw Urwah bin Zubair's palace. The walls of this palace stand until today. It had strong walls of stones. It also has a cellar underneath. Urwah's well is beside Urwah palace. This well was founded by Hazrat Urwah رضي الله عنه bin Zubair. It is situated on the left side of bridge in the valley of Aqeeq on Umar bin al-Khattab Road. As compared to Makkah, most of the relics of Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم age are reserved in Madinah and they are indicated too.

Fatimah bint al-Hussein's Well

Asad also showed us Hazrat Fatima bint al-Hussein's palace to the west of Umar bin al-Khattab Road. Besides well, there used to be a tank of free drinking water.

Abu Talhah Ansari's Well - the Well of Haa

I remember Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم era while walking in the streets and bazaars of Madinah with Asadullah. I step cautiously and respectfully on different places because these are the streets and paths where Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to walk. Perhaps I would step on the place where Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم walked, and thus I may succeed. Asad tells me that when you enter *Masjid-e-Nabawi* through Baab-e-Fahd, you see Abu Talhah Ansari's رضي الله عنه well a few meters from the gate to the left. This place is always carpeted. Most of the visitors look for this place. When the carpet is rolled out, three circles are revealed indicating the well of Haa. Hazrat Abu Talhah رضي الله عنه owned gardens in Madinah and he liked the garden with the well of Haa in front of *Masjid-e-Nabawi*, the most. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to come there to drink water from this well. Abu Talhah رضي الله عنه decided to give this garden in charity when this verse was revealed:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ (آل عمران: ٩٣)

Ye will not attain unto piety until ye spend of that which ye love.

Later on, Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised him to give away this garden to his relatives.

On the way, Asadullah served us Saudi breakfast from Mata'am Abu Zaid. It was a delicious dish of beans just like *Hareesa*. Asad told me that most of the Saudis have their breakfast outside their homes. Sweet dish was like *Halwa* but it was prepared of dates, honey and bananas.

Saqeefah Banu Sa'idah and the Well of Buda'ah

Asadullah is an encyclopedia of Madinah city. He knows all the streets and historical places of Madinah. We saw the place of Saqeefah banu Sa'idah. This place is situated in a garden 206 meters west to *Masjid-e-Nabawi*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ offered prayer here, rested and drank water here. To the north of this Saqeefah was the well of Banu Sa'idah, named as the well of Buda'ah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ used its water. After Holy Prophet's ﷺ death, the Holy Companions رضي الله عنهم gathered in Saqeefah banu Sa'idah and selected Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه as the First Caliph of the Muslims.

Shah Fahd Quran Printing Press

In the end of this morning journey, we visited the grand building of Shah Fahd Quran Printing Press. This noble deed is a source of perpetual reward for Shah Fahd and I am unable to appreciate it to the extent it deserves. It is the largest printing press in the world that prints the *Holy Quran* with translations in more than 86 languages. The *Holy Quran* was being printed on latest printing machines. All the system is automatic. It prints 10 million copies of the *Holy Quran* a year and all the copies are distributed as gifts. Apart from international languages, there were the *Holy Quran* with translations in Pashto, Brahvi, Sindhi and Balochi languages. Latest machines were printing, binding and packing the *Holy Quran*. Thousands of workers are employed for this sacred job. Shah Fahd's outstanding works can be seen everywhere in Hijaz, especially in *Haramayn Sharifayn*. Shah Fahd had a great love for the *Holy Quran*. He was very enthusiastic about beautifying *Haramayn Sharifayn* and extending them. Asadullah told me that Shah Fahd was a visionary man. He always thought of doing some service to *Haramayn Sharifayn* and the *Holy Quran* and he succeeded in this. May Allah ﷻ shower blessings on his grave and exalt his

ranks. The Saudi kings have a quality that they have a craze about the extension of *Haramayn Sharifayn*.

Salam at Roudha-e-Rasool ﷺ

I offered *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. A few days are left to stay in *Madinah*, *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and the *Green Dome*. As the day of departure approaches, I become sad. I cannot find such peace of mind, contentment of heart and spiritual elevation anywhere else. I offered *Maghrib* prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and my heart aspired to visit Holy Prophet's ﷺ *Mausoleum*. It is a pleasant spiritual experience to enter through *Baab-ul-Salam* and to stand in a queue to make an attendance there. One wishes to keep on standing in the queue waiting for his turn to say *Salam*. However, the guards and police officers do not spare you. Their duty is so difficult. They have to control and manage millions of visitors daily. They have to take care of everyone therefore; they clear the queue very swiftly. They order pilgrims to move forward, sometimes politely, humbly, affectionately, and sometimes harshly and wrathfully. Religious scholars are also present there who advise pilgrims to offer *Salaam* quickly and move ahead.

One starts sobbing, sighing and weeping coming near to Holy Prophet's ﷺ *Mausoleum*. One wishes to stay there and to keep on gazing at the meshes. I reached there and offered my *Salaam* to Holy Prophet ﷺ. I also offered *Salaam* from *Yumna*, *Huzafa*, *Mahnoor*, *Aslam Murwat*, *Dr. Ahsan*, *Fayyaz Malik* and my family. Then I came out and sat in the yard in front of the *Green Dome*. The *Green Dome* and the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* are before my eyes. What could be more splendid for a Muslim? I offered *Isha* prayer and returned to my room. *Mian Irshad* from *Lahore* and *Anees Baig* came to visit me. *Mian Irshad's* late father was a kind man and a true Muslim and lover of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He lived in *Madinah* for years. His sons *Sana* and *Irshad* permanently live here. Allah ﷻ established their business here. They have bought a house near *Harem*. From their home, one can see the mountains of *Uhad* and the *Green Dome*. They always talk about *Makkah* and *Madinah* with their visitors. I went to market with *Anees Baig*. I

bought some gifts for Asma and sister Najma because when we return home everyone will expect to receive something from Makkah and Madinah.

Seeing the Uhad Mountain at Night

On our way, I saw glowing, bright and lovely mountain of *Uhad*. Although I had visited *Uhad* Mountain many times but Anees Baig said that to go to mountain of *Uhad* at night has its own charm. I recalled that the Holy Prophet ﷺ loved this mountain and he frequently visited it. Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ went to this mountain with Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه and Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه. The mountain trembled and swayed. The Holy Prophet ﷺ thumped it with his foot and said, "O *Uhad*! Stay still, a Prophet of Allah ﷻ, a Siddiq (رضي الله عنه), and two martyrs (رضي الله عنهم) are standing on you." I visited *Uhad* Mountain at night. I went to the graves of martyrs رضي الله عنهم of *Uhad* and offered *Salaam* to those who sacrificed their lives for Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hind had chewed Hazrat Hamzah's liver. When Hind intended to embrace Islam, the Holy Prophet ﷺ recalled how Hamza's رضي الله عنه corpse was laying on the ground. His belly was torn apart. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had wept for Hamza رضي الله عنه but when Hind came to embrace Islam ... the Holy Prophet ﷺ permitted her to accept Islam but warned her not to come before him because that would remind him of his uncle. May our lives be sacrificed for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. After embracing Islam, if Hind had to come to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, she would have to come veiled.

Housekeeping in Masjid-e-Nabavi

Masjid-e-Nabavi is a sacred place for the Muslims in every aspect. Every inch of it has footprints of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Holy Companions رضي الله عنهم. One feels a unique sense of spirituality after entering the *Masjid*. One feels coolness and wants to spend more and more time there.

Thousands of workers remain twenty-four hours busy cleaning and administering *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. All the housekeeping staff belongs to Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Burma. The Saudis mostly look after security

and supervisory matters. The housekeeping staff remains always busy in cleaning one area or the other. Each area is assigned to a different group. Housekeeping arrangements are also excellent in *Masjid-e-Haraam*. However, there is no hustle and noise while cleaning and sweeping in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* as one observes in *Masjid-e-Haraam*. Here, housekeepers silently do their work in their assigned area. Everyone is assigned separate duty. You will always find dustbins empty and water-tanks for Zamzam filled. I went to *Masjid-e-Nabavi* at 1:00 a.m. and saw that hundreds of workers were cleaning pillars, electric lights and walls of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. In *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, washrooms are tidy and clean. There is such an excellent arrangement of cleaning that one would not feel any sort of pungent smell. Beside washrooms, there is the parking area. More than ten thousand vehicles can be parked in underground parking.

Prayer schedule in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* is like that of *Harem*. Prayer is offered at an earlier time all over Saudi Arabia. *Zuhr* prayer is offered at 12:00 p.m. and *Asr* at 3:15 p.m. Most of the people leave the place after prayer. Some remain busy in remembrances and sanctifications. *Isha* prayer is offered at 7:15 p.m.

Attitude of Pilgrims of Different Countries

Millions of pilgrims are still present in Madinah. One can assess the actual number of pilgrims at the time of *Fajr* prayer. People start arriving one or two hour earlier. Baab-e-Fahd is at a straight way from Dar-ul-Hijrah Intercontinental. I mostly stay near Baab-e-Fahd. All the halls of the mosque are full at the time of prayer. Gradually, the number of pilgrims is decreasing because thousands of pilgrims return to their countries daily. While everyone weeps while departing from *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ, *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and the *Green Dome*. Some people cry bitterly. No Muslim would want to be separated from *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ. Several groups of people stand before the *Green Dome* to say *Durood-o-Salaam*. They are crying and supplicating to Allah ﷻ for their repeated visits there. In these days, most of the people walking around in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* belong to South Asia.

Apart from the Turks and Arabs, African pilgrims are also present. As in *Harem*, here too, Turk Pilgrims' attitude is the most appreciable. Malaysian and Indonesian are also tolerant. However, African men and women do not show any reluctance going quarrelsome. The Police officers and soldiers control people very well. As at the *Black Stone*, one has to struggle to get a place in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*.

Our Pathan brothers show their strength to get instant access in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. As soon as the gate is opened people race into the *Masjid*, pushing others as if they are running in their streets. The Pathan and African are equally involved in this jostling and struggle. Pakistani, Indian and Bengali also behave similarly. Indonesian, Malaysian, Chinese and Nepali do not do any harm to others. They are short statured and swift in moving around. They do not push others. They always have smile on their faces. They do not speak complainingly. The Arab pilgrims too, make their visits silently and do not show intolerance, impatience or restlessness in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. Turk pilgrims are appreciated that they are well mannered during *Tawaaf* as well as here. Whether it is time for attendance at *Rauda-tul-Rasool* or time for offering *Nawafal* in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*, they never push others. If someone pushes them, they smile in return. As in Allah's ﷻ House, they walk in groups here as well.

Chapter 21

The Minarets of Masjid-e-Nabavi

As usual, I woke up early in the morning and went to *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. The beautiful *Masjid-e-Nabavi* is visible from the gate of the hotel. One observes the flood of light and luminosity. One is bewildered to see the beautiful dome and minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. One is present in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* even before entering it. As a poet says:

جب مسجد نبوی کے مینار نظر آئے
 اللہ کی رحمت کی آثار نظر آئے
 مکے کی فضاؤں میں، طیبہ کی ہواؤں میں
 ہم نے جدھر دیکھا سرکار نظر آئے

*When I saw the minarets of Masjid-e-Nabavi,
 I saw the signs of Allah's ﷻ blessing.
 In the airs of Makkah, in the winds of Madinah,
 The effects of Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ Sunnah and
 preaching are visible everywhere.*

We entered through Baab-e-Fahd. All the halls of the *Masjid* are filled though there is one hour left for prayer. The carpeted floor was occupied by the people. I got some space on the floor that was cold. The prayer call echoed in the air and it seemed that everything around was remembering Allah ﷻ and saying *Salaam* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Everything was testifying Allah's ﷻ greatness and the Holy Prophet's ﷺ prophethood. Blessings are being showered there. I offered *Tahajjud* prayer. I prayed for the safety of my dear homeland and her protection from internal and external threats, and for my children, family, friends, colleagues and assistants. I sat there to write something for this book. This blessed place gives inspiration to novel ideas. Before coming here, I

had intention to write a *Hajj Travelogue*, a travelogue not been written before. By virtue of blessings of *Ka'bah*, *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, *Roudha -e-Rasool* and other holy places Allah ﷻ provided me with an opportunity to write this book in a unique and novel style.

My Clinic in Madinah and Masjid-e-Nabavi

I had resolved to serve the pilgrims since the first day. Allah ﷻ allowed me to serve and treat pilgrims during all these days. I served pilgrims in *Aziziyyah*, *Mina*, *Arafat*, *Muzdalifah* and then in *Harem*. I served the pilgrims of my group, other groups staying in *Aziziyyah*, pilgrims from *Abbotabad* and *Peshawar* and pilgrims from Indian cities of *Madras*, *Mumbai* and *Bikaner*. I did not care for my comforts and sleep in this regard. I served the pilgrims irrespective of morning or evening and did not care about my comforts. Allah ﷻ blessed me, and accepted my services. Whomever I treated was healed. The Indian women were impressed by our treatment. They appreciated that my medicines was the best in healing. Indian cook affirmed several times that he was well and his stools were normalized. Our service and treatment is continuing in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. I keep medicines with me in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and *Harem* and provide it to the needy persons. Cough is a common complaint among the pilgrims. In *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, I gave medicines for cough and pain to several elderly people.

Room number 905 in *Dar-ul-Hijra Intercontinental* is our mini-clinic. Patients kept visiting here. Different patients suffering from cough, phlegm, chest infection, pain in body and legs, indigestion, fever, stiffed joints and eczema. By the grace of Allah ﷻ, there is no shortage of medicines despite hundreds of patients got medicines. I received the third lot of medicines from *Lahore*, now there is variety of medicines. Number of patients has decreased because most of the pilgrims have returned to their countries.

Hajj Roommates

We have to live in groups during *Hajj*. On most places, there are 4-5 persons in a room. There are tents in *Mina* instead of rooms

and one tent accommodates 16-30 men. We were lucky regarding the roommates during the whole journey. Sheikh Muhammad Zahid was already with me. In Aziziyyah, first Muhammad Khalid and later on Salim Latif and Doctor Umar Alvi were our roommates. We had great conversations and exchanged our thoughts with each other. Sheikh Zahid and Dr. Umar Alvi became fast friends. Often they would go out together after meals. I laugh remembering Salim Latif's comment that "prayer gaps are reduced here and we are praying one after another".

Mr. Khalid is a keen observer and reserved businessman. After Aziziyyah, many nice persons were our roommates in *Mina*. Among them were Shafiq-ur-Rehman, Taufiq-ur-Rehman, Mian Kashif-ur-Rehman, Gulzar Sahib, Javaid Sahib, Muhammad Khalid, Akhtar Ali, Muhammad Bilal and Afzal Kashif. All of them were good people. I spent good time with them. In *Arafat*, all the group members stayed in the same tent. Sabir Baig and Zafar Iqbal were roommates in Rehab-al-Raudah near *Harem*. I spent good time with them too. Khalid's wife and mother were Asma's and sister Najma's roommates. In Rehab-al-Raudah, they got a separate room. The selection of roommate became problematic in Madinah. Inam-ur-Rehman tried to attach different people with him one after another but at the end, two old men were left. Although all the pilgrims were in the age group of 40-70 years but nobody was ready to take these old men as roommates. I said to Inam-ur-Rehman that I would take anyone in my group. Dr. Bashir Ahmad and Muhammad Ameen were my roommates in Dar-ul-Hijra. If roommates were to given points then these roommates proved the best, the most cooperative and caring roommates.

Dars-e-Quran-o-Hadith in Masjid-e-Nabavi

Many A'immah and jurists taught and preached in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Imam Malik رحمته الله is the most prominent among all. How inspiring and faith invigorating it would have been when Imam Malik رحمته الله pointed his finger toward *Rauda-tul-Rasool* while delivering lectures on *Hadith*. He did not leave *Masjid-e-Nabavi* for his whole life fearing that he might die outside of it. Lectures on the *Quran* and *Hadith* are delivered at different places in *Masjid-e-*

Nabavi after prayers. A number of Pakistani scholars, who have earned Ph.D degree from Madinah University, delivered lectures in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* after prayers.

Maulana Attique-ur-Rehman, a resident of Faisalabad, delivers lectures near *Baab-e-Fahd* after *Fajr* prayer. There is question-answer session after the lectures. Pakistani pilgrims ask all sorts of questions. Some questions are irritating and about contentious issues but these are answered patiently and tolerantly in the light of the *Quran* and *Hadith*. It is a matter of great fortune to deliver lectures on the *Quran* and *Hadith* in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*.

Serving the Old Man Muhammad Amin

Muhammad Ameen is an aged fellow. He is 77 years old but a courageous man. He performed all *Hajj* rituals on his own. His brother is accompanying him but Baba Amin does everything himself. In the beginning, he did not talk to me but now we are comfortable with each other. We discussed different issues and shared our point of views. One day he said that he could not go to *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. At night, I took him to *Riyadh-al-Jannah* and we offered *Nawafal* there. Then he said that he also had not visited *Jannat-al-Baqee*. I took him there early in the morning. I also took him to holy places with Asadullah. I cared for him in the room as well. He had to go to *Umrah* with us but his *Ihram* was not washed. He went to the laundry but did not know rates there. He was unhappy knowing the rates. I took his *Ihram* and returned him after washing and drying. He was happy and prayed for me. May Allah ﷻ bless me to serve the pilgrims just like this!

Prayer and Salam in Masjid-e-Nabavi

I offered *Zuhr* prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Yesterday, it was cold but today it is sunny. The shining minarets and the *Green Dome* of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* are visible at a distance. It gives a sense of piety and freshness seeing the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. As usual, there was a funeral prayer after *Zuhr* prayer. I headed to *Baab-us-Salam* immediately after the prayer. Many people go to *Rauda-tul-Rasool* after prayer to say *Salam*. The place is thronged at that time because there are many groups of visitors. Although there

was, a long queue but I decided to show my attendance. Verily, Allah ﷻ has exalted the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The enemies of Islam and the Holy Prophet ﷺ have been destroyed. They have been ruined and wiped out from the surface of earth. Nobody remembers them whereas millions of people follow the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ followers are ready to sacrifice their lives for him.

One is enraptured, eager and restless seeing the mesh of Holy Prophet's ﷺ *Mausoleum*. One feels coolness and spirituality. One wishes that time should stop and queues should end. You wish that all people should leave after saying their *Salaam* and you should be left alone there. One wishes to keep on gazing at *Raudatul-Rasool* and saying 'Salaam. I pray that my life might end in saying *Salaam* and benedictions. If that happens, it will be a matter of great fortune. I offered *Asr* prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabawi* and went back to hotel. Sheikh Muhammad Zahid was not feeling well. I enquired about him.

There are many historical *Masjids* near *Harem*. I have visited most of them. There is a *Masjid* named as *Masjid-e-Abu Zar Ghaffari* رضى الله عنه on Abu Zar Ghaffari رضى الله عنه road. I saw this beautiful *Masjid* from inside. I recalled *Holy Companion* Abu Zar Ghaffari رضى الله عنه. This great *Companion* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ dissuaded Muslims to accumulate wealth. Abu Zar Ghaffari رضى الله عنه was the first to raise voice against capitalism. He was exiled because of this. At the occasion of *Battle of Tabook*, he carried luggage on his back and walked alone to *Tabook*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah's ﷻ mercy be on Abu Zar; he is coming alone, will die alone and alone will be resurrected." Holy Prophet's ﷺ words proved true. Abu Zar رضى الله عنه died alone in *Rabza*. No one was present for his burial. By chance, Abdullah رضى الله عنه bin Masood was returning from *Koofah* and he buried him after leading his funeral prayer.

Scenes of Departure

Pilgrims of different countries are returning to their homes. The atmosphere is emotional at the departure. The departing groups are standing before the *Green Dome*. They are crying,

weeping, and saying *Darood-o-Salaam*. They had arrived a few days ago. They got a few days to stay in Holy Prophet's ﷺ city. While going to *Harem* for *Zuhr* prayer, I saw that Malaysian and Indonesian were returning in buses. Women were weeping seeing the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* through the windows of bus. They were waiving their hands and bidding farewell to *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, *Harem* and the *Green Dome*. They had not visited Holy Prophet's ﷺ city to their complete satisfaction. Allah ﷻ knows whether they will ever be invited again.

I offered *Maghrib* prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Soon after prayer, lectures on the *Quran* and *Hadith* start at different places in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Saudi, Pakistani, Indonesian and Malaysian scholars, all graduates from *Madinah University*, deliver lectures in their native languages.

Visiting *Rauda-tul-Rasool*

I listened to the lecture for a while then walked toward *Raudh-tul-Rasool*. Now a few days are left to stay in *Madinah*. Living in the neighborhood of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and saying five prayers daily in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* give a feel that we are natives here. It seems that we will stay here forever. I went to visit *Raudh-tul-Rasool* to say *Durood-o-Salaam*. There are not so many people at *Baab-ul-Salaam* so I got a chance to say *Salaam* easily. One's heart is in a strange state at *Rauda-tul-Rasool*. One feels proud of one's luck, repents of his sins, misdeeds and wrongdoings. One's heart throbs at *Rauda-tul-Rasool* and prays for one's country and Islamic world. As a poet says:

سوچتا ہوں غمِ دل عرض کروں یا نہ کروں
 ان دنوں فکر سے ہے جینا حرام اے ساقی
 خوار ہے عالم اسلام نصاریٰ کے تلے
 آج امت کا دیگرگوں ہے نظام اے ساقی
 ایک امید شفاعت ہے فقط زادِ سفر
 جس سے ہمت ہی ہے کچھ گام بہ گام اے ساقی

*I am perplexed whether I should express my sorrow or not.
O Saqi, anguish has made life impossible to live nowadays.
Islamic world is dominated by the Christians and other
enemies of Islam.*

*O Saqi, Ummah is in a state of disruption.
The only viaticum is the hope for mercy
That inspires me to go along.*

I offered *Isha* prayer in front of *Baab-e-Jibrail*. I intended to visit *Suffah Patio* once again but it was already packed with people. They did not leave from there. A few moments are left to *Isha* prayer. At present, the *Green Dome* and the beautiful vast yard of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* are before my eyes. My eyes are fixed on the *Green Dome*. The wind is cold. To look at the *Green Dome* while sitting on the cold floor is the most pleasant experience of life. I am glad and contented at heart. However, I am anxious and dejected at the same time because time of separation is approaching. We had already bade farewell to Makkah and *Ka'bah*. Now we will bid farewell to Madinah also.

Baba Huzaifi, Imam of Masjid-e-Nabavi

Time of separation from the *Green Dome* is approaching. I offered *Isha* prayer led by Baba Huzaifi, Imam of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Imam is an aged man. He is just like a saint. Saying prayer in his leadership gives inner peace and comfort. A friend told me that a few days ago Imam Huzaifi was coming to *Masjid-e-Nabavi* to lead prayers when he collided with a Pakistani's car. That Pakistani stopped his car and demanded compensation for the damage. Imam Huzaifi said, "This is my phone number. I am in a hurry. Let me go; I will pay you later." Pakistani insisted on to receive the compensation at the spot. Baba Huzaifi said that he was going for an urgent task but did not introduce himself. Meanwhile police arrived and greeted Imam Huzaifi recognizing him. The Pakistani understood that he had stopped a famous personality. When he came to know that he had stopped Baba Huzaifi, Imam of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, he was stupefied and began to seek pardon. He regretted and bowed to Imam Huzaifi imploring for forgiveness. Imam Huzaifi said that he would compensate the damages. Such a pious

man is the Imam of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Asadullah told me that Imam Huzaifi is also the head of Fahd Quran Printing Press. As in Makkah, A'jamma are honoured and respected in Madinah too.

A Scene of Masjid-e-Nabavi

It is early in the morning. *Masjid-e-Nabavi* is glimmering. Allah's ﷻ servants and Holy Prophet's ﷺ lovers are sitting in front of *Baab-ul-Salaam* and *Baab-ul-Hijra*. They are waiting for the end of *Fajr* prayer so that they can visit *Rauda-tul-Rasool* and *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. The weather is cold and humid but who cares for weather. People are sitting on cold floor and waiting for their turn. They are offering *Darood* and *Islam* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Here is *Baab-ul-Salaam* gleaming in the flood of light. Everybody yearns to say *Salaam* as early as possible. People are enraptured coming here. All are devoted lovers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. A Muslim's life has nothing but Allah ﷻ and Muhammad's ﷺ love. Allah's ﷻ House in Makkah and Holy Prophet's ﷺ home in Madinah are always foci of attention in Muslim's life.

I offered *Fajr* prayer in the yard. After prayer, people hurried toward *Baab-ul-Salaam*. Some people sat near *Baab-us-Siddique* to go to *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. Amin Sahib was accompanying me but was lost somewhere on the way. Gradually, the number of people waiting for *Durood-o-Salaam* increased. The police officers kept on advising pilgrims to walk slowly and patiently, caring for others. They speak loudly but no one pays attention to them. Here everyone is enthusiastic and enraptured. Everyone wishes to be first to say *Salaam* at *Rauda-tul-Rasool*.

From Baab-ul-Salaam to Rauda-tul-Rasool

To walk from *Baab-ul-Salaam* to *Rauda-tul-Rasool* is a spiritual and inspiring experience. As one enters the gate, police officers shout to hurry up. People walk slowly so that they can stay little longer at *Rauda-tul-Rasool* and say *Salaam* satisfactorily. However, some people become impatient and they move forward ignoring others. Allah ﷻ blessed me to visit *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ early in the morning. When we came out through *Baab-e-Baqee*, we saw that people were crying. They were supplicating and begging pardon

for their sins. They were seeking mercy and absolution. Some were visiting the *Green Dome* for the last time. It was time for separation. They were feeling sad and dejected seeing the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. An Afghan old man was weeping and sobbing. He was supplicating in Pashto his absolution, the Holy Prophet's ﷺ mediation, Islam's exaltation and Mujahideen's victory. I joined him and said *Āmeen* in his prayers. I asked him to pray for Pakistan too. This Afghan was supplicating so beseechingly that he made all the people standing around him cry. I prayed with this old Afghan for Pakistan's safety from internal and external threats, for my children, family and friends.

Chapter 22

Visit to Dar-ul-Madinah Museum

At 8:30 a.m., Mian Irshad came with his friend Muhammad Ahmad Somro who appeared like a Saudi in his Arab dress. He is a Pakistani, born and brought up in Madinah. However, he is not a Saudi citizen till today. It was disturbing to know that foreigners cannot get Saudi citizenship despite living for whole of their lives in Saudi Arab. Government of Pakistan must devise a strategy in this regard in collaboration with the Saudi government. We reached *Dar-ul-Madinah Museum*. In the Museum, different stages of Holy Prophet's ﷺ life are displayed with maps and models. All the events of migration from Makkah to Madinah are beautifully presented. The common route from Makkah to Madinah is displayed and the route adopted by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه is highlighted with the help of maps and drawings. The guide Muhammad Madni, a Pakistani, elaborated all the routes of migration in the maps. He explained the details of migration so beautifully and impressively with the help of maps and models that the whole journey from Makkah to *Quba* revolved before the eyes. The extension of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* in different eras is also explained with the help of different models. Lanterns, lamps, clothes and other things used in the past are also displayed in the Museum.

The bridal dresses of Arab brides are also displayed. In addition, different clothes worn by brides at different ceremonies of wedding are displayed too. There are coins and currency notes used in different epochs. You will be surprised to know that there was a time when Pakistani currency was used in Saudi Arabia. During Malik Abdul Aziz regime, Pakistani government used to give 10-Rupee *Hajj* notes to every pilgrim. Sixteen such notes were equal to 950 Saudi riyals. It meant that one rupee was equal to six

Saudi riyals whereas now 160 rupees are equal to 6.28 Saudi riyals. Apart from this, different stages of Madinah are displayed in drawings and maps.

There are stone-mills used to grind wheat grains. Museum has a huge collection of classic and modern books. Visitors are entertained with dates and Kahwa. The inhabitants of Madinah had distributed a drink made of Rose celebrating the Holy Prophet's ﷺ arrival in Madinah. Visitors to the Museum are offered same kind of drink in small cups. It is very delicious drink; we all drank four cups each. In Museum, there are portraits of ruins and relics especially that of *Madai'n Valley of Aad and Samood*. Visiting the Museum is useless without a guide.

On our way, we saw *Masjid-e-Abu Zar Ghaffari* ﷺ. All the streets and roads of Madinah are sacred. One feels piety in *Harem* and Madinah. All the roads of Madinah are named after the *Holy Companions* ﷺ. I recall Hazrat Abu Zar Ghaffari ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had a great love for this great *Companion* ﷺ. There is another museum named as *Al-Motaf al-Ghulami* in Madinah. It is a small but beautiful museum. Here, a movie about initial construction and later extensions of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* was being shown with commentary in Urdu, English, Arabic, Persian and other languages.

Wonderland of the Valley of Jinn

If water is thrown on a slope, it should flow downward but here it flows upward. Here such wonders happen daily. This famous *Valley of Al-Bayza* is 20 kilometers away from Madinah. The mountains of this valley are high, black, rugged and rocky. Their sight is appalling. Some mountains are so horrifying that they look like *Jinn* and *Giants*. The more you advance in the valley, the more horrifying the mountains become. That is why Pakistanis call this valley "the *Valley of Jinn*". For the natives of Madinah, however, this valley is a picnic spot. At weekends, you see vehicles all over the place. Small huts are built there. Most of the peoples set their tents and enjoy the whole day. The young come in racing cars. The dauntless Pakistanis have sketched Pakistani flag on these

appalling mountains – even though it is risky to go to this place yet they have also inscribed, “I love Pakistan”.

Ahmad stopped the car. Mian Irshad told to switch off the engine. It was switched off but it started moving by itself. We did not know whether it was driven by a Jinn or it was an effect of force of gravity. Ahmad Somro says that these mountains have a force of attraction. Gradually, the car started moving faster. When it was moving at the speed of 110 kilometers per hour, Ahmad said if it got faster than that, it would get out of control. It was switched to reverse gear and but even then it moved automatically. Oh Allah! ﷻ, What is the matter? The Pakistanis believe that *Jinn* live in this Valley so vehicles move automatically because of *Jinn*. Native people believe that vehicles move freely in this area due to magnetic field. You must come to this Valley to see this scene.

Irshad Sahib took a can of water and threw some water on the slope. In fact, this should have flown downward but water started flowing upwards. We returned amazed and wonder-struck from the *Valley of Jinn*. On the way, there were huts in the *Valley of Abu-al-Dad*. There were sofas in the huts. Camels were wandering around. Ahmad Somro said that people especially visit this place. They drink camel milk which is very delicious and nutritious before going to the *Valley of Jinn*. It was time for *Zuhr* prayer so we returned and could not drink camel milk. After *Zuhr* prayer, we had delicious Arab food at Irshad Sahib's house. We were hungry so we ate to our fill.

I rested for a while and went to *Harem*. I offered *Asr* prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. I went to *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ after *Maghrib* prayer and offered *Durood* there. I offered *Salam* at *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ from friends particularly and my children Yumna, Huzaifa and Mahnoor. People who have come for *Salaam* stand at *Baab-ul-Hijra* and pray facing *Ka'bah*. They seek pardon and Holy Prophet's ﷺ mediation. Those who are departing have watery eyes and pray for their second invitation. No one wants to leave this place.

I returned after *Isha* prayer. Tariq Shah said, "let us go to Makkah for *Umrah*." We started preparations immediately but could leave at 10:00 p.m.

Second Invitation from Makkah

While leaving the magnificent, glorious and exalted *Ka'bah*, at the time of *Farewell Tawaf* and at the last night in Makkah I had repeatedly prayed to Allah ﷻ to invite me again to His House. I was not certain about the second invitation. Allah ﷻ invited me just after six days. Supplications are certainly approved in Allah's ﷻ House. It was programmed all of a sudden. We had performed *Umrah* before reaching Madinah. Shah Sahib met and suggested us to go to Makkah. I talked to Asma and she readily consented for another *Umrah*. Again, we will visit *Ka'bah* and revolve around Allah's ﷻ House.

It is the Holy day of Friday, 9th of Muharram. Weather is cloudy. The air is cool and satisfying. I am writing these lines sitting in *Ka'bah*. My gaze is fixed on *Baitullah*. I had supplicated to Allah ﷻ while leaving *Harem* to be invited time and again. The news of going to Makkah spread like wildfire and several devoted men and women got ready. A group of twelve pilgrims left for *Harem* under Tariq Shah's leadership. There were buses, cars and other vehicles on taxi stand. Drivers were shouting "Makkah".

Soon we got a bus. Asma forgot her card in the room. Driver was a good man. He took us to hotel and we got the card. It is necessary to keep the card while going out of Makkah or Madinah otherwise there can be some problem. The driver clearly told that the pilgrims without card could not board on the vehicle. It was late at night. No one had had meals being delighted to go to Makkah. At one place, the vehicle stopped and we ate famous Arabian dish "*Mandi Dajjaj*". We were hungry so we ate all the food in the plate. All the fellows were weary so they soon went to sleep. The vehicle stopped at "*Masjid Zil-Hulayfa, Ali' Well*" so that passengers could wear *Ihram*. It is *Meeqaat* for the residents of Madinah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had worn *Ihram* for *Umrah* from this place that is why it gave much pleasure and contentment

wearing *Ihram* there. It feels that one is free from all cares of life. All the fellows wore *Ihram* and offered *Nawafal*. The driver asked us to hurry up. During the journey, the driver played a cassette of light Arabian music because all the passengers were asleep and he had to stay awake.

It is a distance of 416 kilometers and the bus is moving at a speed of 120-140 kilometers per hour. The driver awakened all the passengers when lights of Makkah became visible. The minarets and the Tower Clock of *Harem* also became visible. Mr. Rafique and his wife were speechless because of overwhelmed by intense emotions. All praises be to Allah ﷻ Who invited us again to His House. Asma said, "I had not thought that Allah ﷻ would invite us so soon". Tariq Shah told all of us to recite *Talbiyah*. Once again, we were chanting "*Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik*". Allah ﷻ is to be praised.

Once Again Tawaaf and Sa'ee

Lo! We are near *Harem*. The driver was worried about his fare, but when he received the same, he was happy. He thanked us and requested for prayers for him. We entered *Harem* at 3:30 a.m. We performed ablutions and went to *Ka'bah*. Once again, *Baitullah* was in front of us. On the first sight of it all the fellows got tears of joy in their eyes. I prayed for my country, children, family and friends. *Tawaaf* was going on as usual. Many native people were also present because of Friday night and Muharram. A great number of people had come here for *Umrah*. We joined the *Tawaaf*. Revolving around Allah's ﷻ House is a spiritual, inspiring and idealistic experience.

The Muslims have an eternal and constant passion with *Ka'bah*. This love is increasing with the passage of time. The weakest and the most sinful Muslim also yearns to visit *Ka'bah*. Asma turned the beads from rosary indicating the first round of *Tawaaf*. We did *Istilaam* toward the *Black Stone* and praised Allah ﷻ Almighty. Countless people are here to do *Tawaaf* despite late hours of night. All of us are passionate. There is a big crowd and jostling at the *Black Stone*. People are hasty and impatient.

Therefore, I was contented to waive hands according to the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah. In the second and third round, I got chance to touch and kiss the walls of *Ka'bah* and *Rukn-e-Yamani*. I easily got place in *Hateem* to say *Nawafal*.

The number of people increased in the fifth round. The weather is pleasant and the sky is cloudy. The cool wind is blowing. There is fragrance in the air. Light is being showered and serenity is descending. The men of faith are doing *Tawaaf*. Birds are also doing *Tawaaf* around *Ka'bah*. The angels are doing *Tawaaf* around *Bait-ul-Ma'moor*. I completed seven rounds, did *Istilaam* and offered two *Nawafal*. Now I will do *Sa'ee*. It is the essential part of *Hajj* and *Umrah*. Truly speaking, mother Hajira's *Sa'ee* impressed me the most among all the rites of *Hajj* and *Umrah*. Allah ﷻ Almighty and angels liked her *Sa'ee*. There is logic in *Sa'ee* after *Tawaaf*. One is weary after *Tawaaf* and wants to take a rest. *Sa'ee* is more difficult than *Tawaaf*. Although one has to run and walk more than in *Tawaaf* but wisdom behind this instruction is that Allah's ﷻ order must be carried out in every situation. We are weary and exhausted and want to have a rest but Allah ﷻ commands us to do *Sa'ee* after *Tawaaf* conforming to mother Hajira's action. Allah ﷻ has ordered us to adopt the same path and style as was adopted by mother Hajira.

Hajj and Hajira

Mother Hajira's sacrifice, patience, struggle and restlessness are matchless and eternal. Her *Sa'ee* is patience, forbearance and acceptance of Allah's ﷻ orders without any doubt. Her worrying about her child, acceding to Allah's ﷻ will, believing in Allah ﷻ and not caring for the means - all these qualities are called *Hajj*. *Hajj* is patience, tolerance, bravery and courage. Hajira's *Sa'ee* is nothing but the practice of these qualities. *Hajj* is Hajira and Hajira is *Hajj*. She is on the barren *Hill of Safa*; has nothing to eat and drink. She has a little child and there is no sign of any human being or water in the surrounding. When Ibrahim (عليه السلام) is leaving Hajira in this valley, she asks him why he is doing this. Ibrahim is silent. Finding no reply, mother Hajira asks, "At least tell me if it is Allah's ﷻ order?" Ibrahim (عليه السلام) replies in the affirmative. Now

mother Hajira is content and satisfied. She addressed to herself "I will definitely obey Allah's ﷻ order, come what may."

Ibrahim ﷺ goes away. After a few days stock of food finishes. The child is dying of hunger and thirst. Mother Hajira is restless; she runs from *Safaa* to *Marwah* and back to *Safaa*. Jibrail ﷺ arrives and touches his wing where Ismail ﷺ rubbed his heels. Water gushes out from ground. Mother Hajira is pleased to see water. She praises Allah ﷻ; drinks water herself and gives to her child. Mother Hajira tries to stop water with her hands but it does not stop. Allah ﷻ blessed this bounty not only for Mother Hajira and her child but also for all the humankind for all times to come. If mother Hajira had not stopped this water saying "Zamzam", it would have flooded the entire earth. Mother Hajira had found water in the seventh round. Asma too, found Zamzam water in the seventh round. We are following mother Hajira. I run fast where mother had run fast. Allah ﷻ liked mother's Sa'ee and made it one of His signs. Allah ﷻ mentioned her Sa'ee in the *Holy Quran*. *Hajj* and *Umrah* is incomplete without Sa'ee. We drink Zamzam, supplicate to Allah ﷻ standing on the *Marwah Hill*, and pay tribute to mother Hajira.

Third time Head-shaved off

It was time for *Fajr* prayer. The call for *Fajr* prayer in *Harem* has its own impact. When *Moazzin* calls for *Fajr* prayer, it seems that time has stopped. Everything seems to be praising Allah's ﷻ greatness. During Friday *Fajr* prayer in *Harem*, Imam recites *Ayaat-e-Sajdah* conforming to Holy Prophet's Sunnah. *Fajr* prayer, Allah's ﷻ House and Imam-e-Ka'bah reciting what could be more blessed and sacred scene than this. We got our heads shaved off after prayer and now we were bald third time during *Hajj*. A few days ago, Huzaifa was asking me how my baldhead looked like. I rested for two to three hours after prayer.

Today is the holy day of Friday. Now there are fewer pilgrims in *Harem* but natives with their families come to *Harem* on Friday. That is why *Harem* is in a state of cheer. *Mataaf* and the corridors around *Ka'bah* are full of people. People are doing *Tawaaf*

despite the day being sunny and hot. *Ka'bah* is before my eyes. Even looking at *Ka'bah* is considered as worship. I am sitting beside a pillar from where I am having full view of *Ka'bah*. My eyes turn to *Ka'bah* every now and then. Charagh Din and his daughter Robina told that we have to do a *Farewell Tawaaf*. Whoever comes to Makkah and performs *Hajj* or *Umrah*, is bound to do a farewell *Tawaaf* after completing all the rituals and before leaving Makkah. I did farewell *Tawaaf* and prayed to Allah ﷻ to invite me again to His ﷻ House.

Friday Prayer in Harem

As the time for *Friday prayer* is approaching, the number of people is increasing. Usually, natives do not come to *Harem* during *Hajj* days. Mian Irshad and Muhammad Ahmad told me that during *Hajj* natives rarely come to *Harem* so that Allah's ﷻ guests can perform their *Hajj* rituals easily. Tariq Shah asked us to do *Tawaaf* before prayer. The sky was cloudy. We started *Tawaaf*. Once again, the magnificent, glorious and exalted *Ka'bah* was the focus of attention. *Ka'bah* is charming and attractive. Neither the eyes get tired visiting it nor is one satiated with *Tawaaf*. One yearns to look at it and revolve around it. I observed that birds also do *Tawaaf* of *Ka'bah* like humans. I completed seven rounds when prayer call was given. Imam Sahib arrived. Imam of *Ka'bah* has great honor. In his sermon, Imam Sahib advised to follow the *Quran* and *Hadith* and to live according to the teachings of Islam. He highlighted the importance of the month of Muharram and fasting on 9th and 10th of Muharram. Then he did humble supplications to Allah ﷻ. I listened to Friday sermon sitting in front of *Ka'bah*. I offered my prayer focusing my attention on *Ka'bah*. Most of the fellows were observing fast. I had not eaten any thing since last night but six glasses of *Zamzam* water satiated the appetite. It gave pleasure to observe fast in *Harem*. It started raining. A few raindrops refreshed our souls. After prayer, I had a sound sleep in *Harem*. *Asr* prayer has just finished. We are sitting on the carpets in *Mataaf*. Dining cloths have been set for *Aftar*.

Aftari in Harem

Abd-us-Salaam from Tunis is sitting beside me. He is a Ph.D. and Professor of Mathematics in Madinah University. We exchanged our thoughts and discussed revolution in the Arab world. We also discussed successful operations by freedom fighters of Gaza. We prayed for the victory of *Mujahideen* in Syria. We agreed that we could fight the spurious forces if there is a sincere leadership in the Islamic world. As the time for Aftari is approaching, the number of people is increasing. A few days are left for stay in Makkah and Madinah. The moments spent in these holy cities are precious treasure of my life. Sitting in front of *Ka'bah* and gazing at it, I prayed to Allah ﷻ for my frequent visits to *Ka'bah*.

I am observing supererogatory fast of 9th Muharram and present in *Harem* in front *Ka'bah* at the time of *Aftari*. Dining cloths are set exactly in front of *Ka'bah*. Hospitality of the Arabs is proverbial. They set dining cloths; distribute dates and fruits, served Kahwa and *Zamzam* water. It is a spiritual scene. Allah's ﷻ House is before the eyes and his servants, residents of Makkah are serving the people observing fast. All are reciting *Durood-o-Salaam*. They are praying and requesting for absolution. All are weeping before Allah ﷻ at the time of *Aftar*. At the same time, some people are doing *Tawaaf*. Different groups are busy in sanctifications, remembrances and recitation of the *Holy Quran*. Allah ﷻ Almighty expresses His pride to angels on such groupings. I remember all my beloved ones particularly I pray for the safety of Pakistan. I pray for my friends, relatives and colleagues. May Allah ﷻ fulfill their wishes! I enjoyed the pleasures of *Aftari* with Prof. Dr. Abd-us-Salaam and other fellows.

Mother's Blessing

Abdur-Rehman-al-Sudais, Imam of *Ka'bah* led *Maghrib* prayer. Tariq Shah told me about him that he had been a naughty boy in his childhood. Once his mother prepared food for guests and he mixed dust in it. His mother was a pious woman. Instead of scolding at him, she prayed that he might become Imam of *Ka'bah*.

Mother's prayer was accepted and today Abdur-Rehman-al-Sudais is not only Imam of *Ka'bah* but millions of people are desirous of shaking hand with him: We ate meals from Zamzam Tower. Baba Amin said that it was last prayer in *Ka'bah* so we should offer it in *Mataaf*. We entered through Bab-e-Abdul Aziz and reached in front of *Ka'bah*. People had lined up for prayer.

Black Veils and Cloaks

Today *Harem* is packed with the Arabs. The Arabs draped in black veils and long cloaks are everywhere. During *Hajj*, natives of Makkah and Madinah rarely come to the Holy place so that the guests may not face difficulty. Since most of the pilgrims have returned so, *Harem* is full of natives. It is my luck that Allah ﷻ invited me to *Harem* before returning home. I spent the whole day in *Harem*. When call for *Isha* prayer was given, it seemed that everything was praising Allah ﷻ. Imam Sahib recited the *Holy Quran* in such a way, as if the verses were being revealed that day. Allah ﷻ is directly communicating with His servants. The cold wind is blowing. The air is full of fragrance. My gaze was focussed on *Ka'bah* during the prayer. After prayer, I bade farewell to *Ka'bah*.

Back to Madinah

Most of the group fellows have gone to Madinah; only ten of us are in Makkah. We will leave together. We came from Madinah and now we are going back. We will visit *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ and the *Green Dome*. We will go to *Riyadh-al-Jannah* and *Suffah Patio*. *Harem* is clearly visible from taxi stand. I am seeing *Harem* from taxi. Makkah is Holy Prophet's ﷺ birthplace and Allah's ﷻ House is there. The Holy Prophet ﷺ walked in these streets and paths. He ﷺ preached in these streets. The *Holy Companions* رضوان الله عليهم were steadfast and devoted... Two friends left the taxi so two seats were unoccupied. I got some more time to see the sparkling and gleaming *Ka'bah*. The minarets of *Harem* are soothing my heart and eyes. We are about to set for Madinah. As the taxi geared, all companions were asleep. The driver woke us up near Madinah. The minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabawi* were visible.

Ashurah in Masjid-e-Nabavi

We reached Madinah at 1:00 a.m. Tariq Shah brought *Sehri* from Al-Bake. Today is Ashurah. Yesterday, Imam-e-Ka'bah highlighted the importance of fasting on Ashurah and the day before it. Yesterday, I had *Aftari* in front of *Ka'bah*. The Muslims from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Sudan, Tunis and Bangladesh were sitting around. After *Sehri*, I went to *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Many people are present in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. It was a blessing that yesterday I offered *Fajr* prayer after Imam-e-Ka'bah while gazing at *Ka'bah*. Just now, I have offered *Fajr* prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. As usual, there was a funeral prayer immediately after *Fajr* prayer. Now I will go to *Baab-ul-Salaam* to say *Durood-o-Salaam* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. One's heart beat increases after entering *Baab-ul-Salaam*. Presently, the place is not thronged as it was before. The police guards are ordering people to be quick so that others may get a chance to say *Salam*. To stand in the queue to say *Salaam* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ is itself a spiritual as well as rewarding experience. People of different colours and races have the same desire to visit *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ. Their languages are different but they are chanting the same phrase. They are praising benedictions for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Some are weeping but their faces are glowing. Verily, Allah ﷻ has exalted the Holy Prophet's ﷺ name. I reached *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ and offered *Durood-o-Salaam* to Holy Prophet ﷺ. I also paid tribute to Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه and Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه. Then I went to *Jannat-al-Baqee'*. The only voice in the graveyard was that of footsteps. Scholars from Saudi Arabia and other countries were telling people in different languages about the manners appropriate in graveyards. They were answering to people's annoying questions. It is 10th of Muharram so people are asking questions about Ashurah. It seems that Allah's ﷻ blessings keep showering all the time in this graveyard. A great number of *Holy Companions* رضي الله عنهم, *Tabi'een*, *Taba' Tabi'een*, martyrs, saints and *A'imma* are buried there. I went to Hazrat Usman's رضي الله عنه grave and stood there respectfully, thinking about the past events. History cannot provide another example of such selflessness. In spite of being a powerful

ruler, he sacrificed his life to save his people from bloodshed. No one could have done this except Hazrat Usman رضي الله عنه. Many other *Holy Companions* رضي الله عنهم, *Ummahat-ul-Moumineen* رضي الله عنهن, Hazrat Haleema Sadia, Hazrat Tameem Dari and Holy Prophet's صلوات الله وسلامه عليه son Ibrahim are also buried there.

Police Guards

I wanted to stay there and visit some more graves but the police guards arrived and ordered us to be quick. They said that time was over. The police guards have learnt some words of other languages like *Tareeq*, *Rasta*, *Sabr*, *Jaldi Jaldi*, *Chalo Chalo*, *Utho* etc and they frequently speak these words to control the crowd.

Asma said that women guards in *Harem* and *Masjid-e-Nabavi* also behave similarly. They have also learnt similar words. Apart from these typical and common words, they use body language, gestures and clapping to convey their instructions to the pilgrims.

These police guards are an essential part of *Hajj*. They have different attitudes in *Madinah* and *Makkah*. The guards in *Makkah* are stern and harsh whereas in *Madinah* they are mostly softhearted. However, they know how to manage and control the crowd otherwise there will be chaos and mayhem everywhere.

Once Again in Riyadh-al-Jannah

On returning, I saw that there was no one at *Baab-ul-Siddiq*. I availed myself of the opportunity and entered *Riyadh-al-Jannah* to offer *Nawafal*. People were impatiently waiting to go inside. After a while, we were allowed to enter. The police guards were watching and they strictly ordered to offer only two *Nawafal*. I tried and found a place. *Riyadh-al-Jannah* is a part of Paradise. You can feel the fragrance and coolness of paradise here. I praised Allah ﷻ Who blessed me with a chance to come here. I intended to offer more than two *Nawafal* but the police guard ordered me to leave the place for others. I went to *Rauda-tul-Rasool* to say *Salaam*. I prayed and supplicated Holy Prophet's صلوات الله وسلامه عليه mediation.

اے خاصہ خاصانِ رسل وقتِ دعا ہے
 امت پہ تیری آ کے عجب وقت پڑا ہے

*O! The Chosen Leader of the Messengers It is time to supplicate you.
 Your Ummah is passing through a crucial era.*

I offered *Durood-o-Salaam* and moved ahead. I praised Allah ﷻ that I was twice blessed to offer Salaam. Time for separation is drawing near. I will remember streets of Madinah, prayers in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, the *Green Dome* and minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. I am sad and doleful. I do not want to leave *Masjid-e-Nabavi*.

I offered *Zuhr* prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and rested there for a while. The number of people in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* has decreased. Most of the pilgrims from the hotel have returned to their countries. Asma and sister Najma are also packing the luggage. My family has arrived in Lahore from Sargodha. Friends are waiting but I am sad that I shall be separated from *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ.

An Incomparable Aftari in Masjid-e-Nabavi

I took food items from my room Baba. Mr. Ameen gave me two apples. I tried to enter through *Baab-e-Fahd* but the guard stopped me at the gate. He said that food items for Aftari were not permitted. I tried to sneak through the other gate but faced the same situation. They said that everything was present inside. There were two Bangladeshi old men; I gave them my bag of food items. They became happy to receive this bounty. This food was not destined for me. Dining cloths were set in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. There were dates, Arabian loaf, dry fruit and yogurt. It seemed as if it was month of the *Holy Ramadan*.

People are waiting for Aftari. A Saudi certified Pakistani scholar is delivering lecture. He is answering the questions of pilgrims. I sit among them but Mian Irshad asks me to reach at first canopy near *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ. Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz M.P Kabuli from Tayyiba University is present there. There is a strange scene in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. It seems as if it is the month of Ramadan.

I walked toward the canopy and several people invited me to join them. The little Arab children were looking like angels. Two kids invited me so humbly that I could not help but sit there. They said, "You are a guest of Allah ﷻ and Holy Prophet ﷺ; it will be blessing if you will be our guest too." When they went to other side, I moved ahead. There were so many dining areas that it became difficult to find the way. Every one wished us to join him. I had heard that the Arabs are very hospitable but that day I practically observed it. Dr. Abdul Aziz and Mian Irshad had jointly set a dining cloth. Dr. Sahib received me affectionately. I said that their *Aftari* was extraordinary. Dr. Sahib said, "These are our beautiful traditions. I have been always doing this alongwith Irshad's late father."

Dates, breads, dry fruit, kahwa and cold water were provided there. We did *Aftari* together. It gave me much pleasure. After prayer, I visited *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ and offered *Durood-o-Salaam*. Meanwhile, it was time for *Isha* prayer. I offered prayer after Baba Huzaifi.

The Night of Departure

Tonight is the sorrowful night of separation. We are about to leave the streets of Madinah, the Green Dome and the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Now I am sitting in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*, in front of *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ. There is light and luminosity everywhere in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. I could not spend much time here. My heart yearns to live my life here. I have not quenched my thirst. The moments of meeting were too short. Time went fast while walking in the streets of Madinah. Tomorrow's *Fajr* prayer will be my last prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. Then I will return to my home. I have to return to my children but I do not want to leave this holy place.

Almighty Allah ﷻ invited me after a long wait. I had been eager to visit these places for years. Why this early separation? I wish that time of separation had never approached. I wish to live in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* until my death. I have only this desire, as the poet says:

کاش مرے محبوب کی دھرتی، مجھ پر نَفِیس یہ شفقت کرتی
 اپنے اندر مجھ کو سموتی، صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم

Nafees, I wish the land of Prophet ﷺ were my permanent abode.

After Isha prayer, we received meals from Mian Irshad.

Biryani was very tasty and delicious.

Chapter 23

The Last Night in Masjid-e-Nabavi

It is the night of sorrow and separation. I shall spend this night in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. Allah ﷻ descended only one Paradise in this world, all the remaining bounties are in the heavens. I am fortunate that I am offering *Nawafal* prayers in *Riyadh-al-Jannah* during this night of separation. Here is silence; all are offering *Nawafal* attentively. These are the last moments in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. A number of days have passed here. Now it is time for separation. The night of separation has drawn near. Luminosity and slumber is descending in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*.

Although it is night, *Riyadh-al-Jannah* is gleaming. While offering *Nawafal* and sitting in *Riyadh-al-Jannah* I feel that, there is no burden on my heart and mind. I feel as if all the burden of sins, misdeeds and impurities is removed. I am feeling lighthearted. I am most fortunate that I am sitting in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*. Allah's ﷺ Messenger ﷺ said, "The place between my pulpit and my home is the *Garden of Paradise*." To one side is *Sutoon-e-Hannana*. There is buried the galley that the Holy Prophet ﷺ used as support while delivering sermons. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ received a pulpit, this wood moaned like a pregnant woman. It was comforted when the Holy Prophet ﷺ caressed it. That piece of wood was not ready to separate itself from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I am a living person after all. I am sinful, mischievous and wrongdoer but I love Allah's ﷺ Messenger ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is everything for the Muslims. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ pulpit is before me. I imagine that the Holy Prophet ﷺ comes out of his house after taking a bath. His hairs are wet. The Holy Prophet ﷺ sits down and his hairs are unkempt... Mother Ayesha رضي الله عنها brings hair oil. She is oiling the Holy Prophet's ﷺ hair. It is *Ustowana-e-Sareer*. Beside this is *Ustowana-al-Hars* where Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه stands alert.

I feel that I am in Holy Prophet's ﷺ time. Before me is *Ustowana-e-Tauba*. Abu Lubaba رضی اللہ عنہ has tied him up to this pillar. Abu Lubaba رضی اللہ عنہ commits a mistake and he ties himself to this pillar as a punishment... He is losing his senses. The *Holy Companions* رضی اللہ عنہم are requesting Allah's ﷻ Messenger ﷺ for forgiveness. Abu Lubaba's رضی اللہ عنہ supplication is approved. Allah ﷻ absolves him of his mistake. The *Companions* رضی اللہ عنہم come to untie him but he says that he will die here unless the Holy Prophet ﷺ unties him. The Holy Prophet ﷺ arrives and unties the chord. Abu Lubaba رضی اللہ عنہ is prostrating before Allah ﷻ. There is Hazrat Fatima's رضی اللہ عنہا home. I remember all this. Lo! Once again, I wish I were born in the Holy Prophet's ﷺ time.

I come back to my world. I am in *Riyadh-al-Jannah*, near Holy Prophet's pulpit. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is resting there. He is asleep. I seek permission to leave. It is time for separation. I am present before the Holy Prophet ﷺ for my last *Salaam*. If the Holy Prophet ﷺ grants me permission, I shall leave. The moment of separation is full of grief. I came to Madinah and everywhere I looked for Holy Prophet's ﷺ footprints. Eager to find his footprints, I went to the mountains and to all the places where the Holy Prophet ﷺ had walked. I have only one supplication:

اے خاصہ خاصانِ رسل وقتِ دعا ہے
امت پہ تیری آ کے عجب وقت پڑا ہے

*O the Chosen leader of Messengers! It is time to supplicate
Your Ummah is passing through a crucial era.*

The Ummah, divided among various groups, is dominated by her enemies. Men of belief and followers of Allah's ﷻ Messenger ﷺ are passing through hard times. The Muslims are being slaughtered on one or other pretext. Today's infidels are crueller than the infidels and Jews of Makkah. They are determined to wipe out Allah's ﷻ name from our globe. Ummah needs Holy Prophet's ﷺ mediation and Allah's ﷻ help.

The night falls. The police guards are observing me. They wonder that I am busy in writing something whereas others are busy in recitation of the *Holy Quran* or prayers. May be they think that I am

a mad and crazy man. I go to *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ to say *Durood-o-Salaam*. This night of separation will pass and there will be union again. I hope I will be invited again. The Holy Prophet ﷺ permitted me to leave. I do not want to leave but I have to leave. I bade farewell to *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ, the *Green Dome* and *Masjid-e-Nabavi*.

Last Prayer in Masjid-e-Nabavi

I had bidden farewell last night. I was permitted to leave but I was not satisfied. The call for *Fajr* prayer echoed in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and it seemed that all the creatures of Allah ﷻ were repeating the words of prayer call. Allah's ﷻ servants are waiting for their turn. Many devotees are leaving today. It is their last *Fajr* prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. My attention was focused on *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ during the prayer. Once again, I wished to visit *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ and to recite *Durood-o-Salaam* there. After prayer, Baba Ameen and I went for the last *Salaam*. This doleful, repenting, regretting, sinful and indulged in worldly affairs servant is present before the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I remained there for a long while. At last, a police guard sighted me and ordered me to leave the place. It was useless to argue with the guard so I moved ahead. I said my *Salaam* for the last time:

*O people of Makkah and Madinah, may you live happily forever!
May Allah ﷻ keep the grandeur Haramayn Sharifayn safe forever!
May these Holy Houses be exalted and elevated!*

The people of Makkah and Madinah served us well for forty days. They are generous people. These people had not visited *Haramayn Sharifayn* during *Hajj* so that Allah's ﷻ guests might not have any problem. Everywhere they welcomed us warmly and sincerely. The Arab elders as well as youngsters are extraordinarily hospitable and kind. An Arab child stuffed my bag with dates. Makkah and Madinah are the cities of peace. Allah's ﷻ blessings and peace keeps on showering all the time. I have no words to thank people of Makkah and Madinah. I bid farewell to the people of Makkah and Madinah respectfully and with tears in my eyes. O people of Makkah and Madinah! May Allah's ﷻ blessings be on you forever.

Farewell Makkah and Madinah.

Last Visit to Jannat-ul-Baqee

Baba Ameen had not visited *Jannat-ul-Baqee*. We headed towards the Graveyard after prayer. The sky is cloudy and the wind is cold. One comes under a special sort of feeling of spirituality after entering this graveyard. Hundreds of people are already present there and many more are coming. People are strolling in the Graveyard. Different people are looking for different graves. Some people have come with books and maps to find out the particular graves. The police guards and Saudi authentic scholars are directing people. They are telling them the right way to visit a graveyard. A pilgrim collected some soil from a grave and the guard and scholar noticed this. The religious scholar told him that such acts were prohibited in Shariah. He gets the point and throws the soil. Greet the dwells of graveyard according to *Hadith*. Thousands of great *Holy Companions*, *Ummahat-ul-Moumineen* ﷺ, *Tabi'een* and *A'immah* ﷺ are buried in this Graveyard. It seems that the Graveyard is covered with a blanket of light and spirituality.

I had to go to Hazrat Usman's ﷺ grave. I paid my gratitude there. I recalled his services for Islam and his martyrdom. Hazrat Usman's ﷺ grave is the most sacred and illuminated place for me. I turn the pages of history coming there. Baba Ameen pointed toward some new graves. A distinction of this graveyard is that here all the graves are alike and made of mud. Two stones are placed on each grave: one at the head and other at the foot. These are small graves. There is silence and peace. The police guards are ordering to be quick and leave the Graveyard because others are waiting. We came out of the Graveyard and sighted the sparkling *Green Dome* and minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. I said to Baba Ameen that it was a good chance to have a view. We sat in the yard of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. My gaze was fixed on the *Green Dome*. From now on, the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* will be a part of my dreams and imaginations. I will remember them forever. I shall be invited again if Allah ﷻ willed so.

Serving the Pilgrims from all over the World

In addition to *Hajj*, I was also blessed to serve the pilgrims. Patients kept on visiting from the first day to the last. I checked

them, diagnosed them and gave them medicines. There were patients from India, Malaysia, Indonesia, and China and from Pakistani cities of Abbotabad, Peshawar, Faisalabad, Lahore and Gujranwala. All the patients were healed with my medicines and they prayed for me. The elderly men and women from Madras and Mumbai admired me. They said that they were cured by my medicines. They prayed for the best rewards from Allah ﷻ. I gave the remaining medicines to the people of Madinah hoping that they would pray for me and I would be invited again.

تمنا ہے کوئی اللہ والا پھر دعا کر دے
کہ مجھ کو رب کعبہ دولت حج پھر عطا کر دے

*I wish that some pious man prays for me.
That Allah ﷻ blesses me again to perform Hajj.*

Memories of Makkah and Madinah

At last, the moment of separation approached. Buses arrived and our luggage was loaded.

“Look at the streets of Madinah and the minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* for the last time. Inhale this air of Madinah.” Mr. Tariq Shah advised us to pray and supplicate. *Khuda Hafiz Masjid-e-Nabavi.*

There is the mountain of *Uhad*, Hazrat Hamza's ﷺ tomb and graves of other martyrs in the *Battle of Uhad*. Every inch of Madinah is sacred. Buses are passing through the streets of Madinah. All the fellow pilgrims are weeping. Forty days had passed so quickly. We grew familiar to Madinah and Makkah, as if we were natives. However, our stay is over. Now we are returning from Madinah. I will remember these days. I will remember *Ka'bah*, walking around Allah's ﷻ House and *Sa'ee*. I will remember the scenes of minarets and the *Green Dome* of *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. I will remember prayer call and prayers in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and *Harem*. I will remember how I visited *Riyadh-al-Jannah*, how I entered *Baab-ul-Salaam*, visited *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ and offered *Durood-o-Salaam*. I will remember:

Wearing Ihram from Zil-Hulaifa,

Arab children's invitation to meals,

Travelling to Makkah for second Umrah and back to Madinah,

Walking in the streets of Madinah and visiting the holy places,

Visits to Ghaar-e-Hira, Ghaar-e-Thaur, Uhad and Sala,'
Visit to Madinah Museum, and wells of Usman, Arwah, Ghaars,
and Talhah,
Drinking the healing water from the wells of Rauha and Zamzam,
Being always eager for Baitullah, Tawaaf, Nawafal, Slaam,
Riyadh-al-Jannah and Jannat-tul-Baqee,
Staying up all night long,
Sitting in front of Ka'bah, gazing Allah's ﷻ House,
Kissing and caressing the walls of Allah's ﷻ House,
Wearing Ihram, staying in Mina and spending night under the
open sky in Muzdalifah,
Pelting the Devil and being in a state of complete surrender to
Allah's ﷻ will,
Getting head-shaves and sacrificing the animals commemorating
Ibrahim (عليه السلام)
Searching for the footprints of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Holy
Companions in Makkah and Madinah,
Visiting the Masjids named after the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the
Holy Companions,
Visits to the Masjid-e-Quba, Umrah without Ihram in Masjid-e-Quba,
Visit to the Masjid-e-Qiblatayn and the Valley of Jinn.

I will remember all this. It seems that forty days passed in a few moments. What is started, ends too. Everything will perish. Only Allah ﷻ is eternal. We come out of Madinah.

Salam to the Streets of Madinah and Masjid-e-Nabavi

Salam to the streets of Madinah, minarets of Masjid-e-Nabavi,
the Green Dome, cool winds of Madinah, inhabitants of the Holy
Land and our hosts. We are going to Jeddah. All the pilgrims are
weeping. They are sad because of separation from Madinah. All of
them were talkative especially the women but today they are silent.
They are stealthily looking at each other. Allah Diya was reticent.
Rasheeda and Robina Butt were fond of chatting. Attique-ur-
Rehman and others too were talkative fellows. However, now all
are grief-stricken. Living in Makkah and Madinah, we had started
feeling that we were natives of these lands. We thought we would
live there forever. It is true that a Muslim, no matter where he lives,
always thinks about Makkah and Madinah. When he comes for Hajj,

his soul and body is connected directly to Allah ﷻ. A Muslim forgets everything when he comes to the court of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He is enraptured in Holy Prophet's love. He is preoccupied in the thoughts of Madinah. When he visits *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ and says *Salaam*, he feels that everything is granted to him. He is liberated from all the cares of life. Just as *Ihram* has wiped out all the distinctions of caste, colour, creed, status and wealth, here too all become same and equal. *Ihram* and *Kafan* are similar. Both remind of one's original status. In both situations, man is attentive to Allah ﷻ. After wearing *Ihram*, man is freed from all worries, impurities and sins. He chants *Talbiyah* and announces his humility. Now minarets of *Masjid-e-Nabavi* are out of sight. All the fellows are silent. Mr. Tariq Shah broke the silence. He pointed toward the mountains of *Uhad* and invited us to see them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ loved these mountains. He used to come there. Holy Prophet's ﷺ uncle was martyred there. Seventy Holy Companions رضي الله عنهم were martyred and Allah's ﷻ Messenger ﷺ was wounded. The mountain of *Uhad* welcomed the Holy Prophet ﷺ and he rested there. Now the mountain of *Thaur* became visible. We are crossing the boundary of *Harem*. Non-Muslims are not permitted to enter the area of *Harem* so there are different routes for them...

Sacred Mountains of Madinah and the Journey of Migration

The bus is moving on. I recall the Journey of Migration. I imagine how the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه migrated to Madinah. Imagine what Madinah would look like at that time. There are high mountains, barren land, wilderness and rugged stones. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضي الله عنه and Holy Prophet ﷺ are walking in the darkness of night, hiding from enemies. If Allah ﷻ wished so, they would have been carried to Madinah in a moment. Allah's ﷻ Messenger travels to heavens and back to his house within seconds. Holy Prophet's whole life is a guiding star for Muslims and others as well. He ﷺ is mercy not only for the Muslims but also for others. His ﷺ every act teaches us a lesson that we can succeed if we are steadfast and sincere. Allah ﷻ helps when we do our best. A man will attain nothing but for which he strives. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ Journey of Migration is a lesson that we should invest all our energies to achieve our objective. It is a lesson that the

Muslims will have to leave their homes, riches, family and tribe if it becomes necessary for the establishment of an Islamic state. It is not an act of loss but a profitable act.

Sacrifice transforms Yathrib (the old name) into Madinah and constant struggle transforms Madinah into the best State in the history. We are passing through the valleys. The Holy Prophet ﷺ chooses the difficult path. There comes the *Valley of Qudaid* where the Holy Prophet ﷺ stays. Here Umm Ma'bad presents a goat to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is thin and lean goat. It does not give milk but when Holy Prophet ﷺ touches her udders, they are full of milk... I look at this Valley respectfully. Jeddah city is near.

At Jeddah Hajj Terminal

Jeddah is the most advanced city of Saudi Arabia. People from all over the world can be seen there. There are high-rise buildings, stores, shopping malls and beaches. Thanks to Allah ﷻ that the Arab women are veiled even at the beach. Cloak and scarf are essentials of female dress in Saudi Arab. We are in the suburbs of Jeddah. At last, the journey ended at Hajj terminal. Hajj terminal is stretched over several kilometers. After passing through several checkpoints, bus stopped at the place reserved for Pakistanis. Sighting of the Pakistani flag after many days pleased my heart. "East or West, home is the best." I always remembered Pakistan in my supplications during *Hajj*... I liked it when a Pathan of Peshawar said, "I did a *Tawaaf* for Pakistan". Getting inspiration from this Pathan, I did many *Tawaaf* and prayers for Pakistan.

From Jeddah to Lahore

We alighted from the bus. Man is Allah's ﷻ wonderful creature. In *Ihram*, you have a different appearance. During *Tawaaf*, you have different feelings. While being present at *Raudatul-Rasool* ﷺ, you are unmindful of everything else. All were weeping while returning from Madinah but their mood changed on reaching Jeddah Airport. All are worried about their luggage. No one thought of prayers. Everyone has his own problem: lost bags, leaked bottles, dates.... Everyone is worried about luggage and concerned about oneself. Those who found the luggage were satisfied whereas others remained disturbed, anxious and restless. It took one hour but everyone found his luggage. Indeed man is hasty.

Now the pilgrims thought of prayer. Some went to buy food others sat comfortably. All the pilgrims had done a lot of shopping. They had purchased dates, *Zamzam* water and other gifts. Everyone had more luggage than weight limit. How will be the weight adjusted? What will be done? The *Devil's* apprentices were all around. We had pelted him and he had turned revengeful. He whispered into pilgrims' ears, "Overweight luggage is not a problem at all! I will solve this problem. Bribe the officials." Allah Diya spent the Riyals on shopping. They have daughter-in-laws and grandchildren so they had to buy something for everyone. Their luggage was piled in bundles. His wife went to the counter and they told her that every extra kilogram would be charged 20 riyals. She did not have a single riyal. Tariq Shah borrowed 200 riyals from someone and cleared her luggage. Shahbaz Senior, famous Pakistani hockey player, was general manager of PIA. By virtue of him, I was given protocol and my luggage as well as that of my friends was cleared. A bearded man took advantage of the situation and put two bags in our luggage.

Mr. Zahid caught sight of this and the person was embarrassed. We got boarding cards. All the problems were solved. The flight was scheduled at 2:00 a.m. so we roamed about. We were resting in the masjid when we came to know that flight was late for three hours. It is 10:00 p.m. now. Other passengers told that they had been waiting since yesterday evening. We do not know what will happen. We rested in the masjid. Asma and sister Najma went to women's area. Here all the masjids have separate areas for women.

Immigration and Checking

Time passed. At midnight, we were ordered to make a queue for immigration. All stood in long queues. The Saudi Customs officers checked our passports and stamped "Exit". Asma and I were separated. It took two hours. PIA crew announced to submit knife, blade, scissors or other metal if any; otherwise, it would cause trouble later on in checking. Some people submitted theirs, while such articles later found in scanning were confiscated. All people gathered in a hall after briefing. Now all were contented and remembering the moments spent in Makkah and Madinah. People were contacting their families and friends in Pakistan. They

were telling about arrival timing. Some were still-lost in thoughts. The flight was ready after an hour. A lot of luggage was in passengers' hands. Friends handed over their luggage to me. Sheikh Zahid and Tariq Shah were carrying friends' bags. PIA did not object to this. Allah Diya' wife was annoyed there too. She complained that everyone was checking her luggage. Because of Shehbaz Senior's favor, we got good seats. I am with Inam-ur-Rehman and Tariq Shah. It took one more hour in flight's clearance. A passenger had fallen ill and much time was spent in checking and treating him. The flight took off for Pakistan at 5:00 a.m.

From Jeddah to Lahore

It was time for *Fajr* prayer. The advantage of front seats was that we found proper place for prayer inside the plane. I gave a prayer call in the plane in the airs of Jeddah. Inam-ur-Rehman led the prayer with his melodious voice. A small number of pilgrims joined the prayer. Others were sleeping because they had remained up for the last day and they were exhausted too. After all, it was not a prayer in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* or *Harem*. Behind my seat was a Mewati elder couple, chatting about the past days. They were weeping remembering the days spent in Makkah and Madinah.

Ahmad Din: Makkah is an extraordinary place.

His Wife: Yes, we will remember the prayers in *Harem* and *Masjid-e-Nabavi* all our lives.

Ahmad Din: I cannot forget the attendance in *Masjid-e-Nabavi* and *Rauda-tul-Rasool* ﷺ.

His Wife: I could not say *Salaam* often enough. The place was always crowded. I tried my best to kiss the *Black Stone* but pushing and jostling were so severe that I might have died. However, I touched the walls of *Ka'bah* many a times.

Ahmad Din: I had warned you not to go there.

His Wife: I thought to try once.

Service and Treatment in the Plane

Asma also talked about *Harem* and *Masjid-e-Nabavi*. I felt drowsiness but I remembered all the events. These forty days were the most precious days of my life. My life is nothing excluding these forty days. A Muslim is connected to Allah ﷻ and the Holy

Prophet ﷺ through *Ka'bah* and *Masjid-e-Nabawi*. Everything else is artificial and perishable. I will remember these precious moments of life. Whenever I am going to recount my past, these days will be the most important. We flew over Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Masqat and now we are flying over Karachi. There came a voice that a passenger is feeling sick. They called for a doctor. Four doctors gathered there but they allowed me to do checkup. I checked up the old woman and gave her medicines. She felt well. Allah ﷻ blessed me to continue my service and treatment even in the plane. This service continued from the first day until the last hour. May Allah ﷻ approve it!

Welcome at Lahore Airport

Flight time, speed of the plane, altitude, flight route and landing time is flashing on the screen in front of me. We were to land about 11:00 a.m. All the passengers were awake. The crew had announced to keep the mobile phone off but passengers started contacting their relatives etc. People were in tears because of happiness. We have returned from the Holy Land but Pakistan too is a Holy Land. Airhostess announced "Lahore". Everyone picked up his handbags. All passengers stood up. The plane landed and doors were opened.

Everyone wanted to alight first but we made a queue. We returned the luggage to the fellow pilgrims. I thanked Allah ﷻ while getting off the plane for reaching back safely. Bashir, Muhammad Ashfaq, Shahid Butt, Tariq Ameen and other staff welcomed me at the airport. All the team members under Asistant Collector Ammar were present to welcome me. They garlanded me. My parents and children were also present at the airport. Yumna and Huzaifa hugged me. I hugged my father and mother. My eyes were full of tears because of emotions. Thousands of people were present outside to receive their guests...My brothers Munir Ahmad, Masood-ur-Rasool, Dr. Naveed from Sargodha, Nasir Mehmood, Nosheen and their families from Faisalabad, Farrukh and Faheem with their families from Lahore and other friends were present outside. Aslam Marwat remained in contact with my family and me all these days. He remained in touch with my

children and now he was present there wearing his traditional turban. All welcomed me and garlanded me. Their faces were bright with happiness. Mahnoor was taking examination. Taufique brought her and she hugged me at once.

Welcome by Children

Yumna had instructed the driver that he should not let us enter home without her. The home had been decorated. They had written "Welcome" in bold letters outside the home. As we entered, children showered flowers, petals and welcome spray. My brother-in-law Shahid, Huzaifa, Yumna, Mahnoor, Nouman, Abdullah, Areesh Ahmad, Abu Bakr, Navirah, Ayesha, Talha and Hassan had decorated the home in the past two days. Ashfaq and Ramzan had painted the house.

There was cheerfulness and felicitousness. The weariness was gone seeing them all. May Allah ﷻ always bless me happiness like this and invite me again to His House!

All the fellows were present outside the home. They had arranged for a lunch. We took lunch together. Friends kept visiting until late night. We were greeted by friends. Just now, I have inserted my SIM in the mobile phone and SMS are being received. My friends and colleagues are contacting. We are talking about Makkah and Madinah. I wish that every visitor should keep on asking me about Makkah and Madinah and I would keep on recounting my feelings and experiences in the Holy Lands until my last breath.

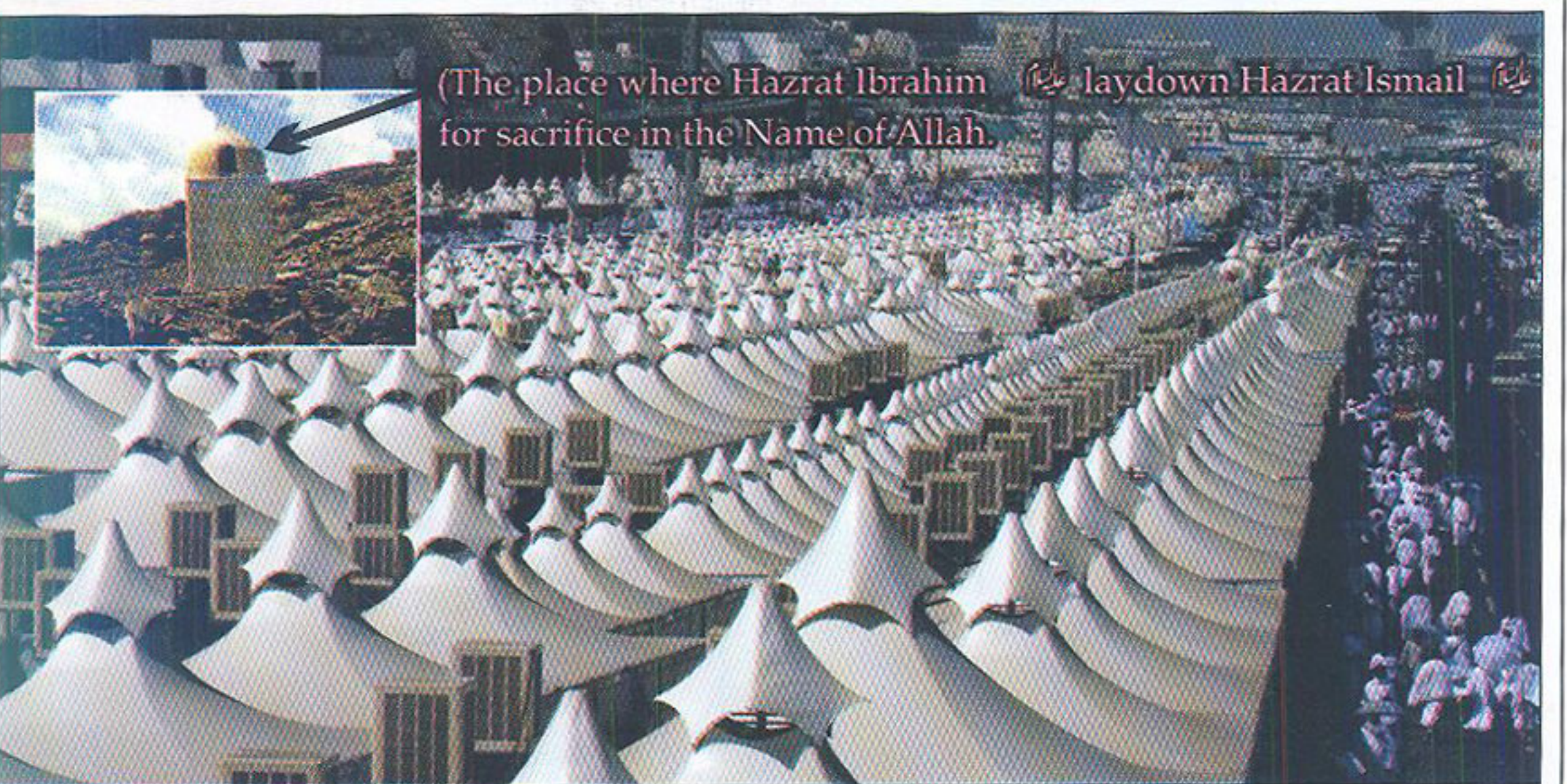
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



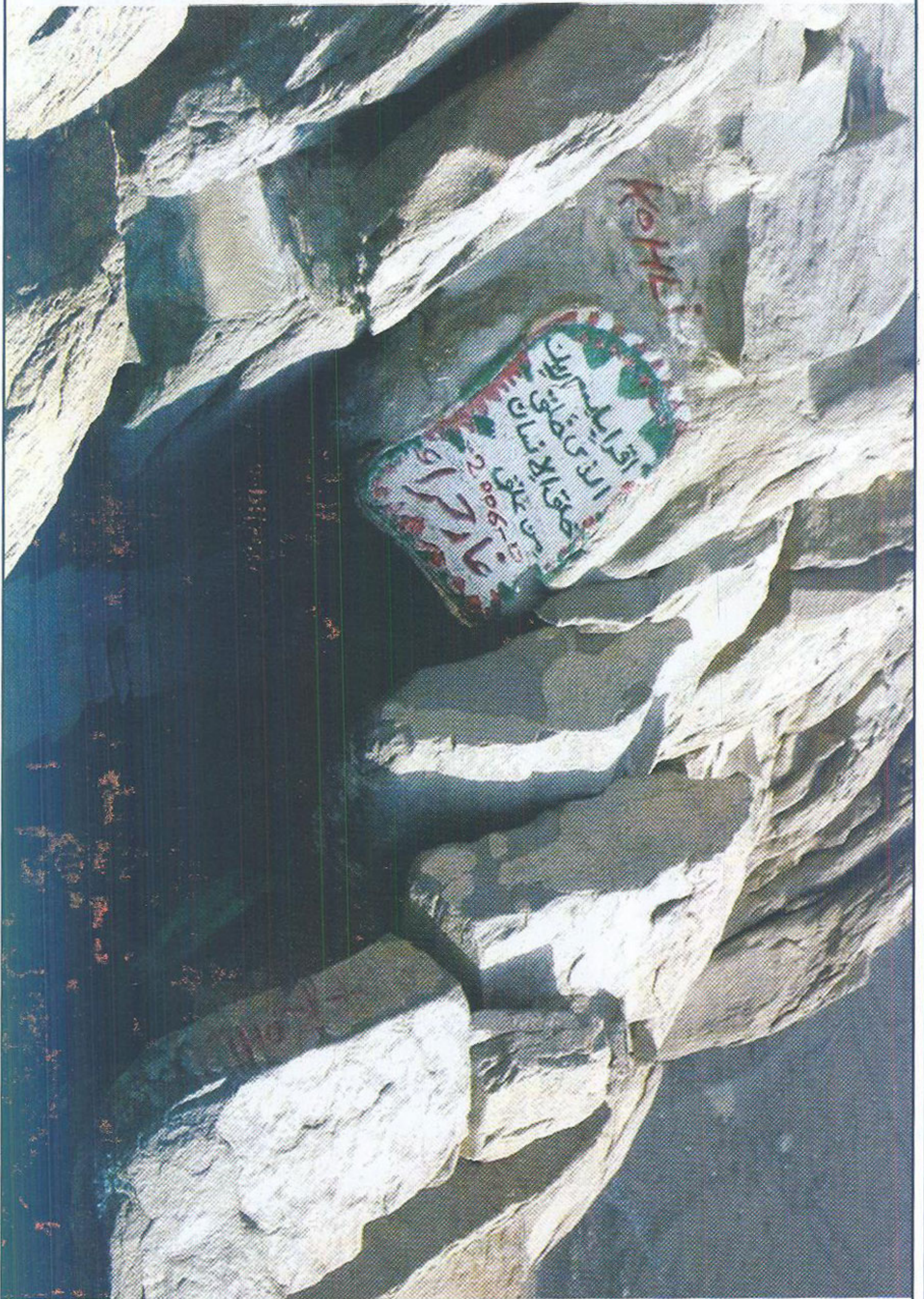
The birth place of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.



The Place of *Sae* between the mountains of *Safa* and *Marwa*.



The tent houses of Hajjis in Mina.



*The Cave of Hira where the first revelation was brought by
Hazrat Jibrail عليه السلام.*

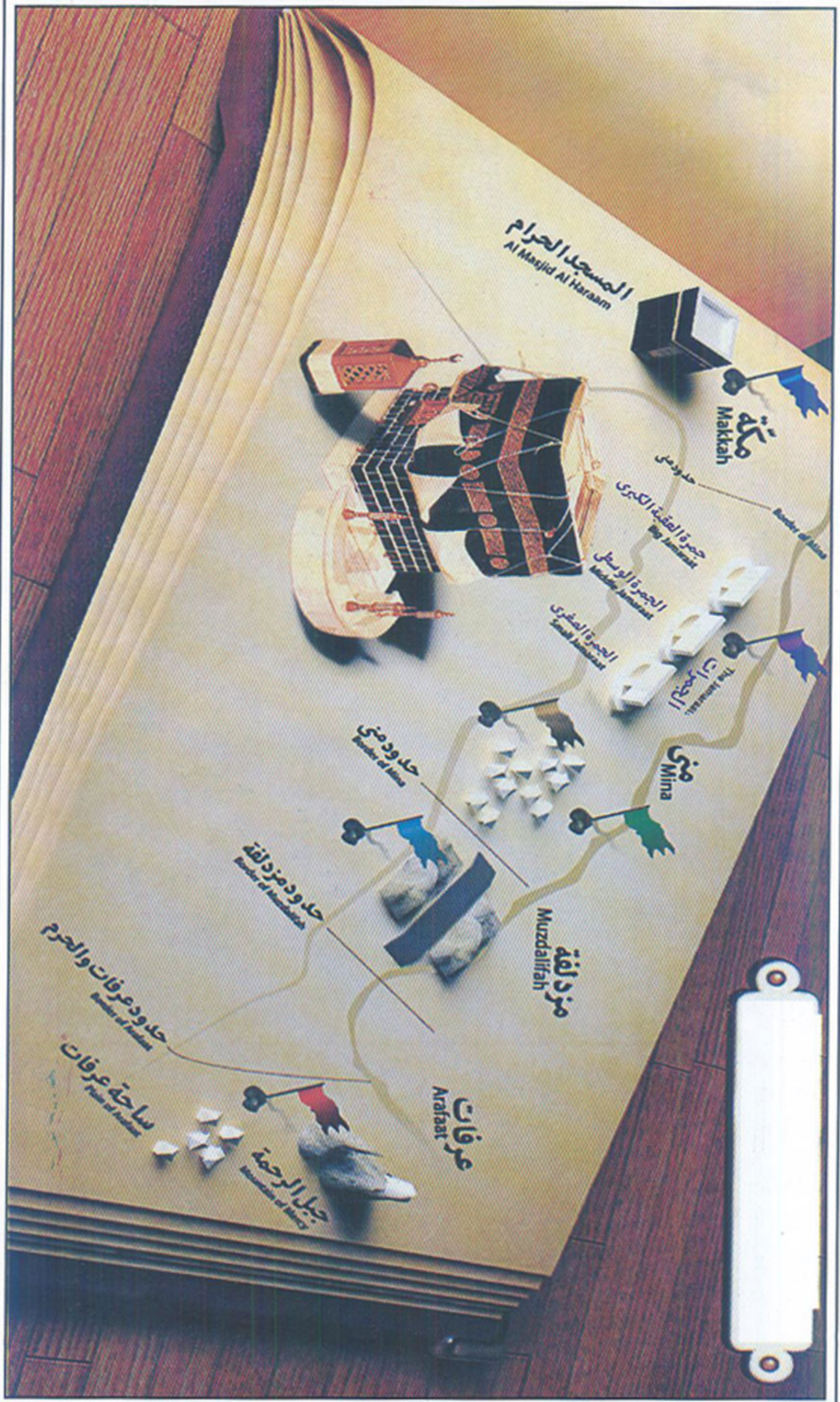
The Historical route between Makkah and At-Ta'if which the Prophet (ﷺ) followed

To Ta'if

Back to Makkah



An eyesight view of different places during performance of Hajj.



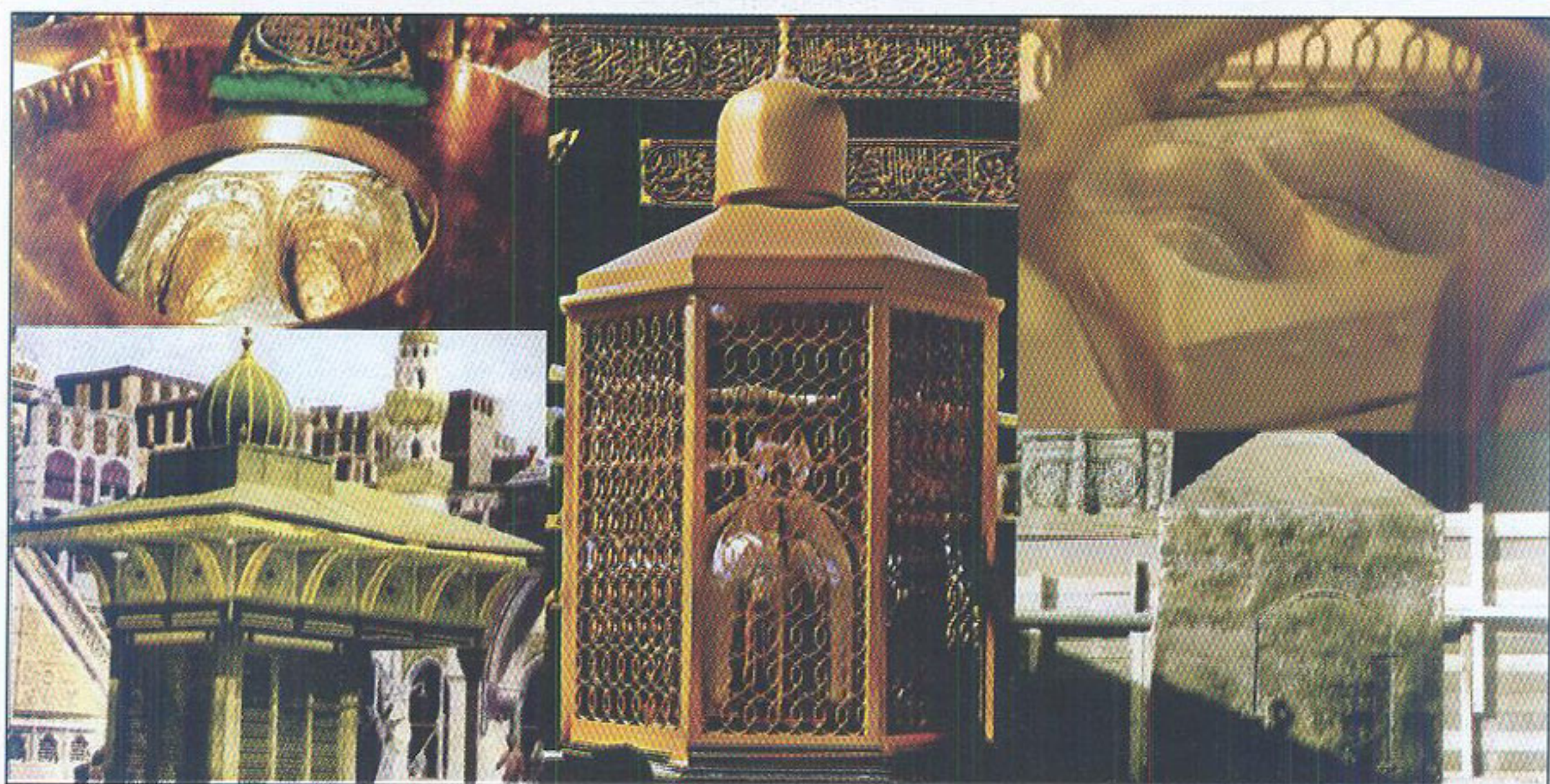


Hajr-e-Aswad

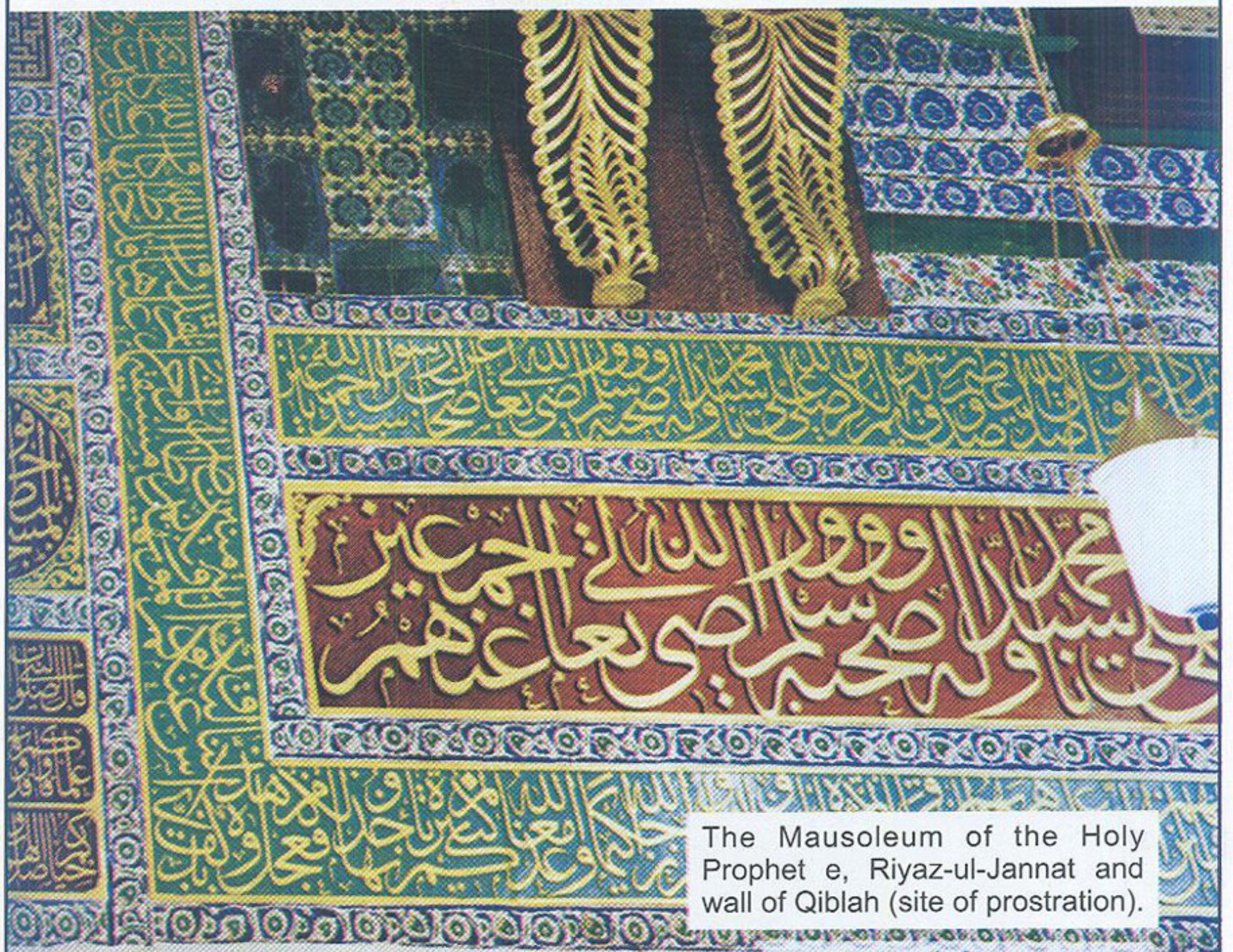
(The *Black Stone*) which was placed in the wall of the *Holy Kabah* by the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Rukn-e-Yamani

One of the corners of the *Holy Kabah*, between this corner and Hajr-e-Aswad seventy Prophets ﷺ are buried.

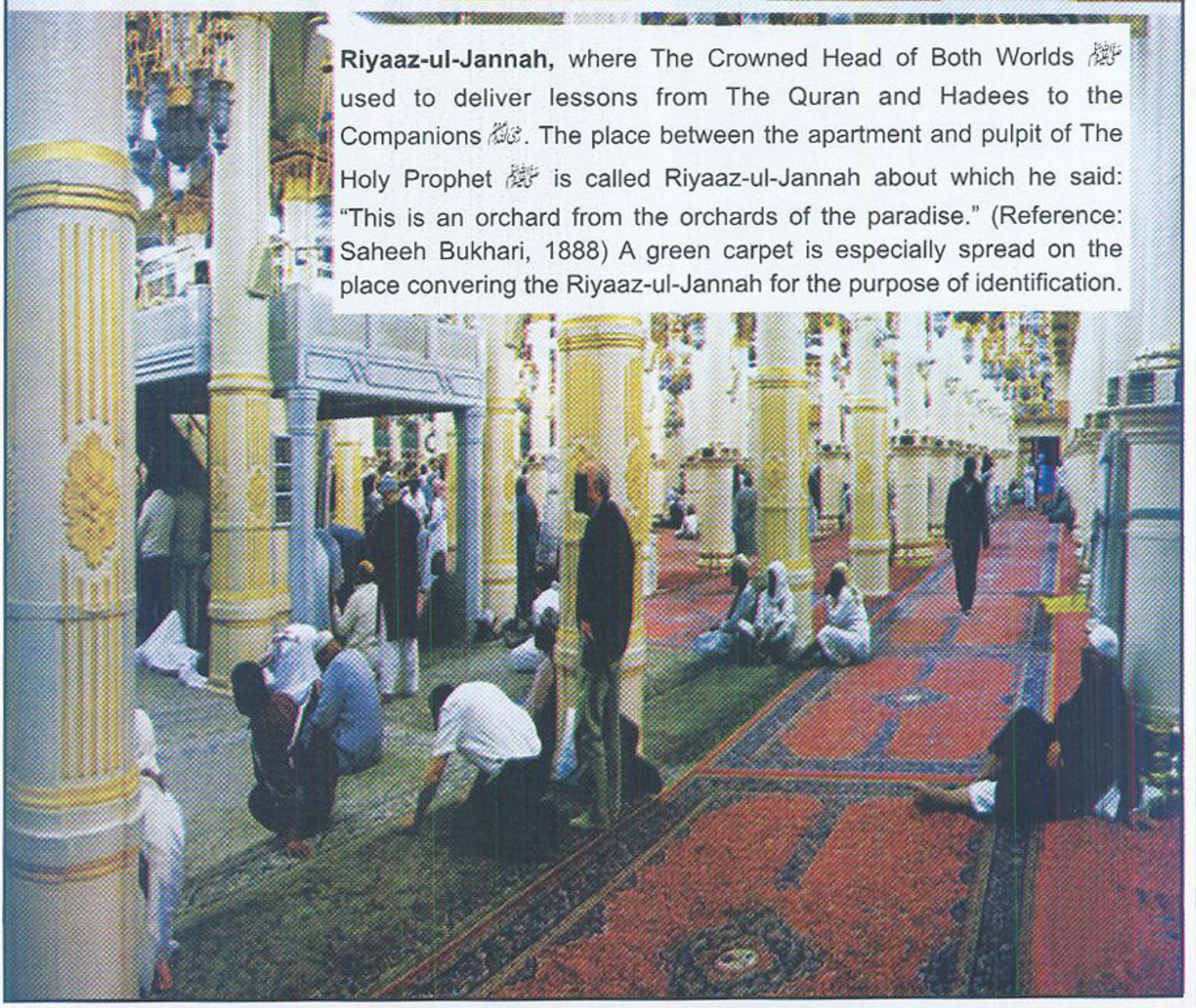


Muqam-e-Ibrahim ﷺ, the place where the stone carrying the footprints of Hazrat Ibrahim ﷺ is placed. Hazrat Ibrahim ﷺ used to stand on this stone during construction of the *Holy Kabah*.

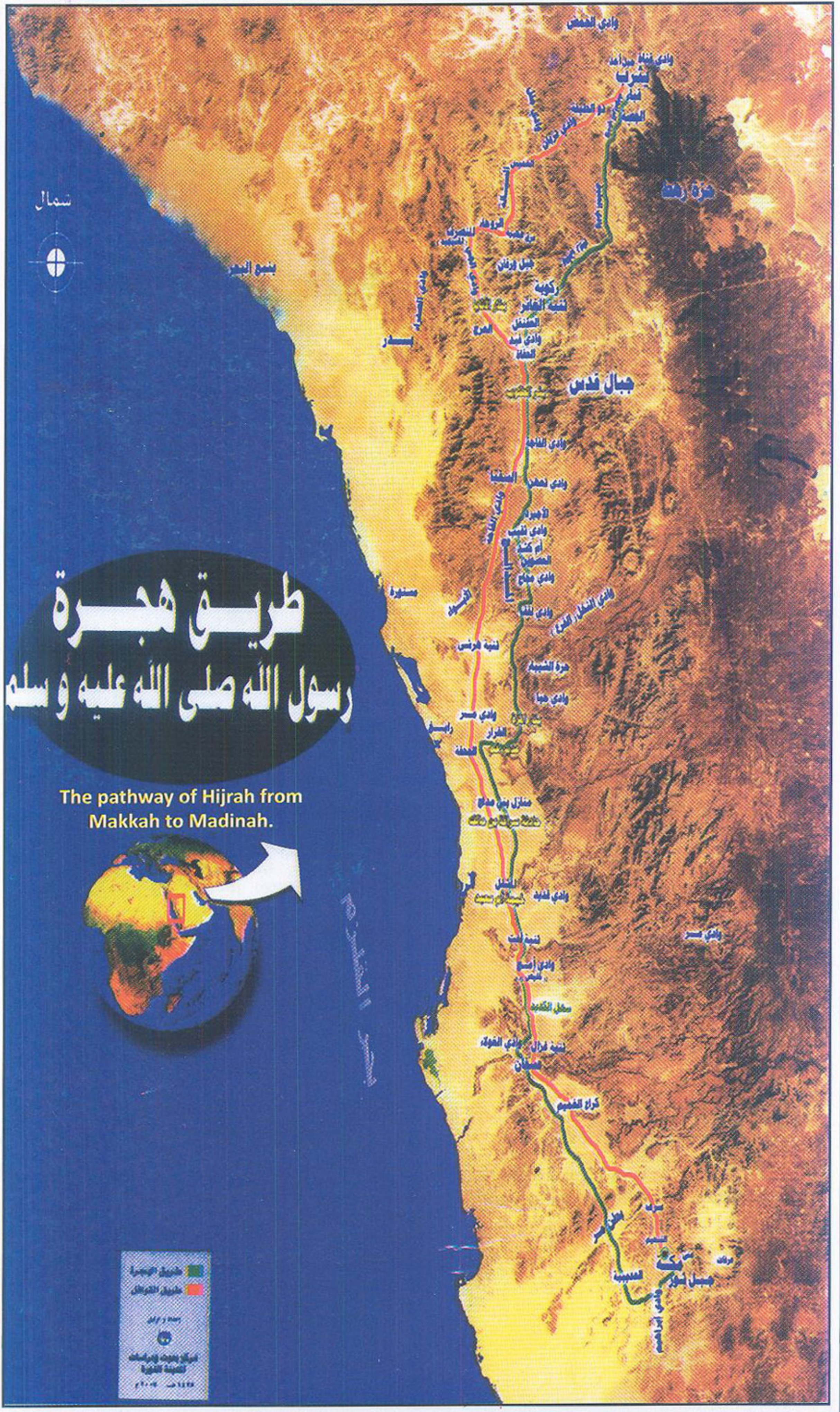


The Mausoleum of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), Riyaz-ul-Jannat and wall of Qiblah (site of prostration).

روضہ رسول ﷺ ریاض الجنۃ اور قبلہ والی دیوار۔



Riyaz-ul-Jannah, where The Crowned Head of Both Worlds ﷺ used to deliver lessons from The Quran and Hadees to the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. The place between the apartment and pulpit of The Holy Prophet ﷺ is called Riyaz-ul-Jannah about which he said: "This is an orchard from the orchards of the paradise." (Reference: Saheeh Bukhari, 1888) A green carpet is especially spread on the place covering the Riyaz-ul-Jannah for the purpose of identification.



طريق هجرة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

The pathway of Hijrah from Makkah to Madinah.

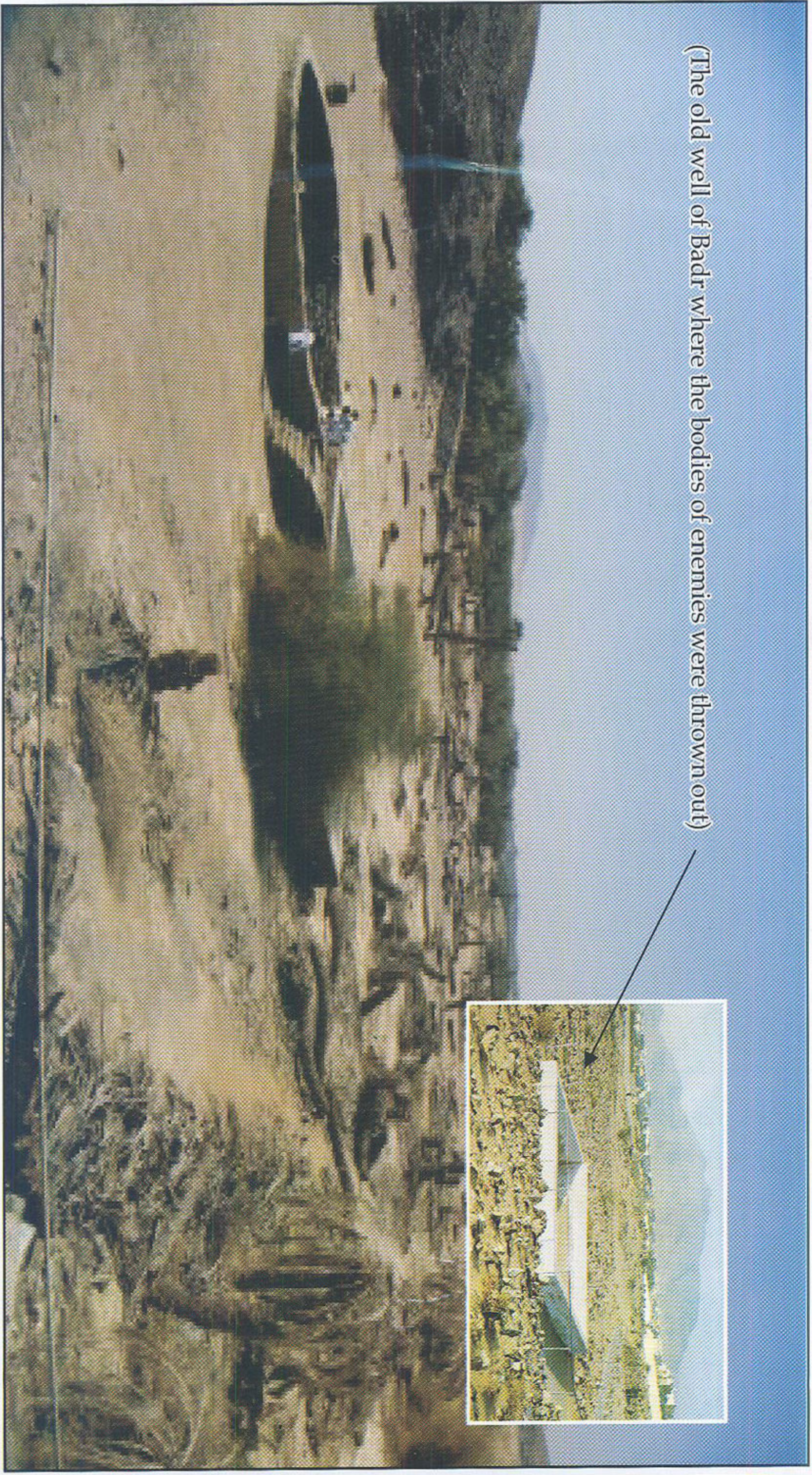


طريق الهجرة
 طريق القريش
 ١٤٢٥ هـ
 مركز بحوث ودراسات
 المدينة المنورة
 ١٤٢٥ هـ



Panoramic view of Masjid-e-Nabawi مسجد النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم.

(The old well of Badr where the bodies of enemies were thrown out)



The place at Badr where the first battle of Islam (*Gazwa-e-Badr*) was fought in which seventy enemies of Islam including Abu Jehal were killed.

The picture seen here is of the eastern wall of Masjid-e Nabawi ﷺ. Four sites are marked here:

الصورة تسمى منظر الدار الشرقي للمسجد النبوي حيث رسمت هنا الامكنة الاربعه.

1 یہ دروازہ باب البقیع کے نام سے مشہور ہے جو یہاں حاجت البقیع کی طرف باہر ہے۔

2 یہاں حضور ﷺ 1400 سال قبل نماز جنازہ پڑھایا کرتے تھے۔

3 باب جبرئیل آپ ﷺ کو نبوتی آئے کے لئے اس دروازہ کو استعمال فرمایا کرتے تھے۔

4 باب النساء ہے حضرت مرثدہ بنت عمار کی آہ کے لئے ڈھونڈ کر لے کر آیا گیا۔

1 ہذا الميكنة مشهور باسم باب البقيع الذي ينتهي بجهة البقيع

2 الميكنة الذي كان النبي ﷺ يصلي بها للموتى قبل 1400 عاما

3 باب جبرئيل كان يستعمله النبي ﷺ للدخول في المسجد النبوي

4 باب النساء التي مات عمر بن الخطاب ﷺ عنده القديم النساء تحت الشجر اقره قريشا

1 This door is known as 'Baab-ul Bagee' and leads straight to Jannat-ul Bagee'

2 The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to lead the Namaaz-e Janaazah - prayer for the dead at this place 1400 years ago

3 Baab-e Jibraeel: The Holy Prophet ﷺ would use this door to enter Masjid-e Nabawi ﷺ

4 Baab-un Nisa: The door for ladies which Hazrat Umar r.h had got constructed under his direct supervision.

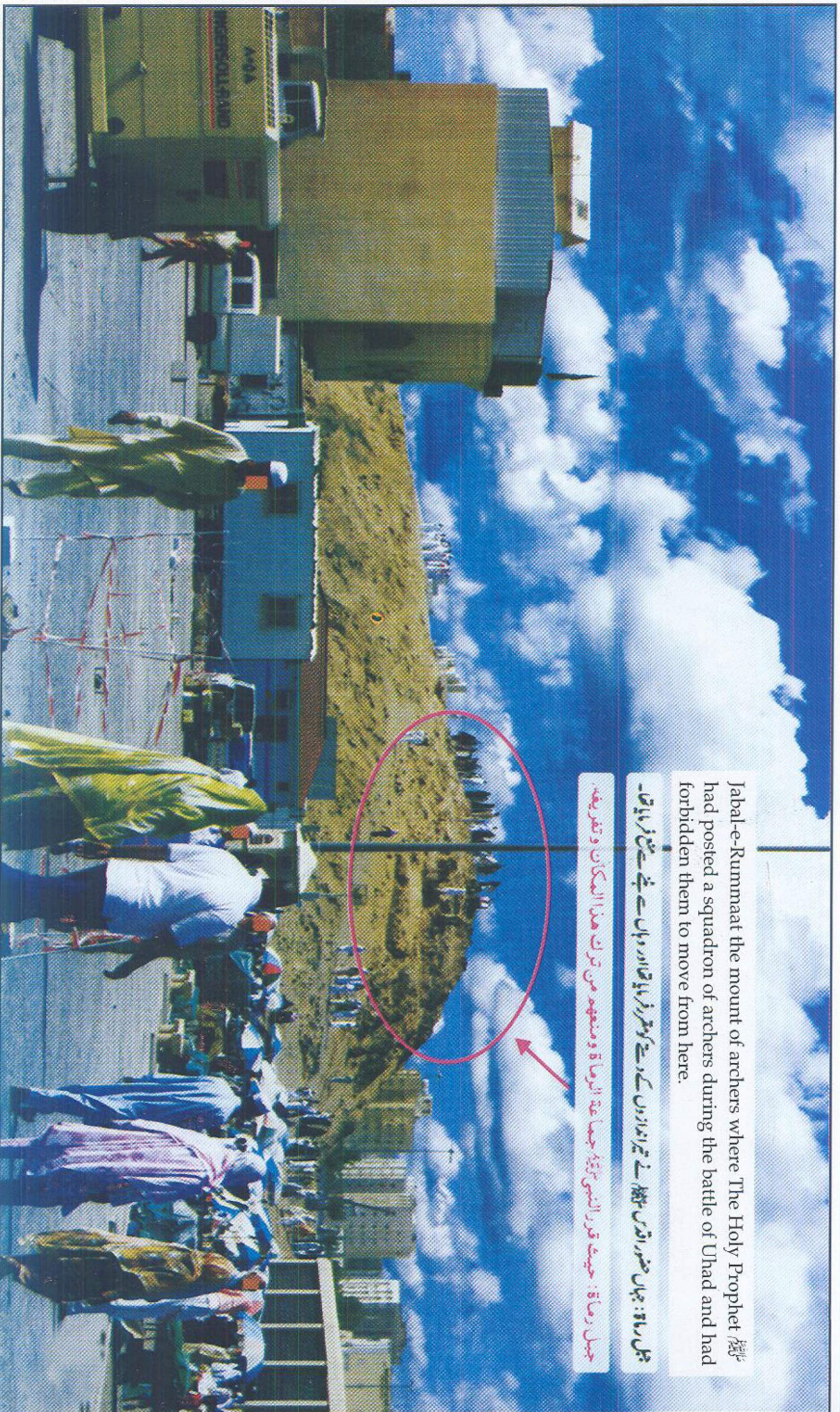
زیادہ نظر تصویر مسجد نبوی کی مشرقی دیوار کی ہے یہاں چار مقامات کی نشاندہی کی گئی ہے۔



ﷺ
Jabal-e-Rummaat the mount of archers where The Holy Prophet
had posted a squadron of archers during the battle of Uhad and had
forbidden them to move from here.

جبل رماة: جہاں حضور اقدس ﷺ نے تیغ اندازوں کے رستے کو پتھر فرمایا تھا اور وہاں سے بچنے سے منع فرمایا تھا۔

جبل رماة: جہاں قرآن النبی ﷺ نے جمعاً عتہ الرماة و منعہم من ترک هذا المكان و تفریقہ.



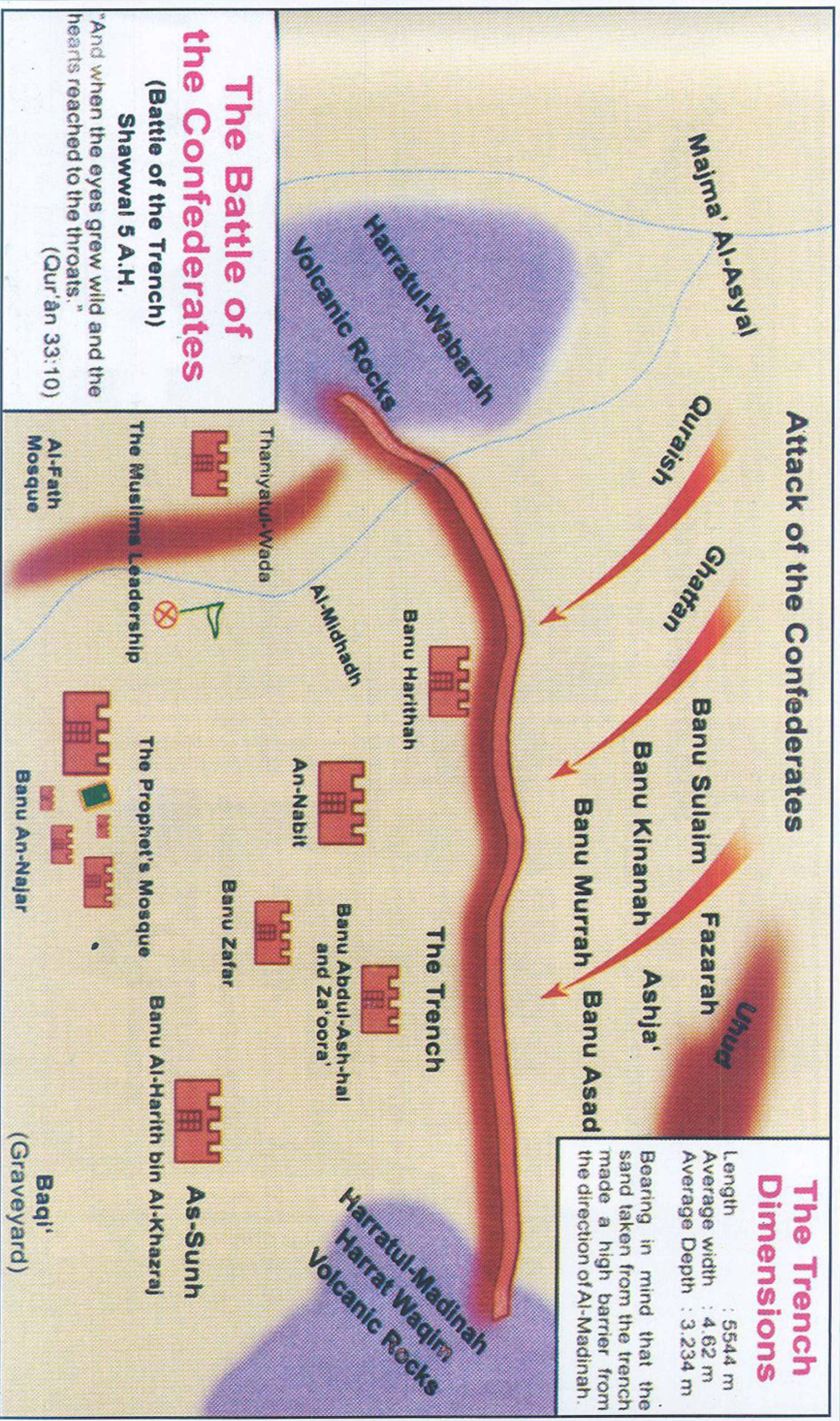
هذه صورة لبئر روحاء في الطريق من المدينة المشهورة الى البندر وقد صلى هنا
سبعون نبياً و قد ثبت في رواية ان موسى عليه السلام ولا تقطع الساعة
حتى يمس بهذا المكان عيسى عليه السلام و قد ثبت وضوء النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم
(خلاصة الوفا)

زیر نظر تصویر مدینہ سے بدرجات ہوئے راستے میں واقع بندر روحانامی کنوئیں کی ہے۔ یہاں 70 انبیاء علیہم السلام
نے نماز پڑھی ہے ایک روایت میں کہ حضرت موسیٰ علیہ السلام سے گزرے اور قیامت اس وقت تک
تاکم نہ ہوگی جب تک حضرت عیسیٰ علیہ السلام سے گزر جائیں۔ حضور صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کا یہاں سے پانی سے
وضو کرنا بھی ثابت ہے۔ (خلاصہ الوفا)

Be. r-e Rauhaa the well named Rauhaa

The picture sen here is of well situated in the way between Madinah Munawwarah and Badar. 70 Prophets ﷺ have performed prayers here. In a tradition of Hadeeth, the Prophet Moosa ﷺ passed from here and Qiyaamah - the Resurrection - will not be established until the prophet Eesa ﷺ, too, passes from here. Making of ablution with the water of this well by The Holy Prophet ﷺ is also a proven fact. (Reference: Khulaasat-ul Wafaa)

Attack of the Confederates



The Trench Dimensions

Length : 5544 m
 Average width : 4.62 m
 Average Depth : 3.234 m

Bearing in mind that the sand taken from the trench made a high barrier from the direction of Al-Madinah.

The Battle of the Confederates

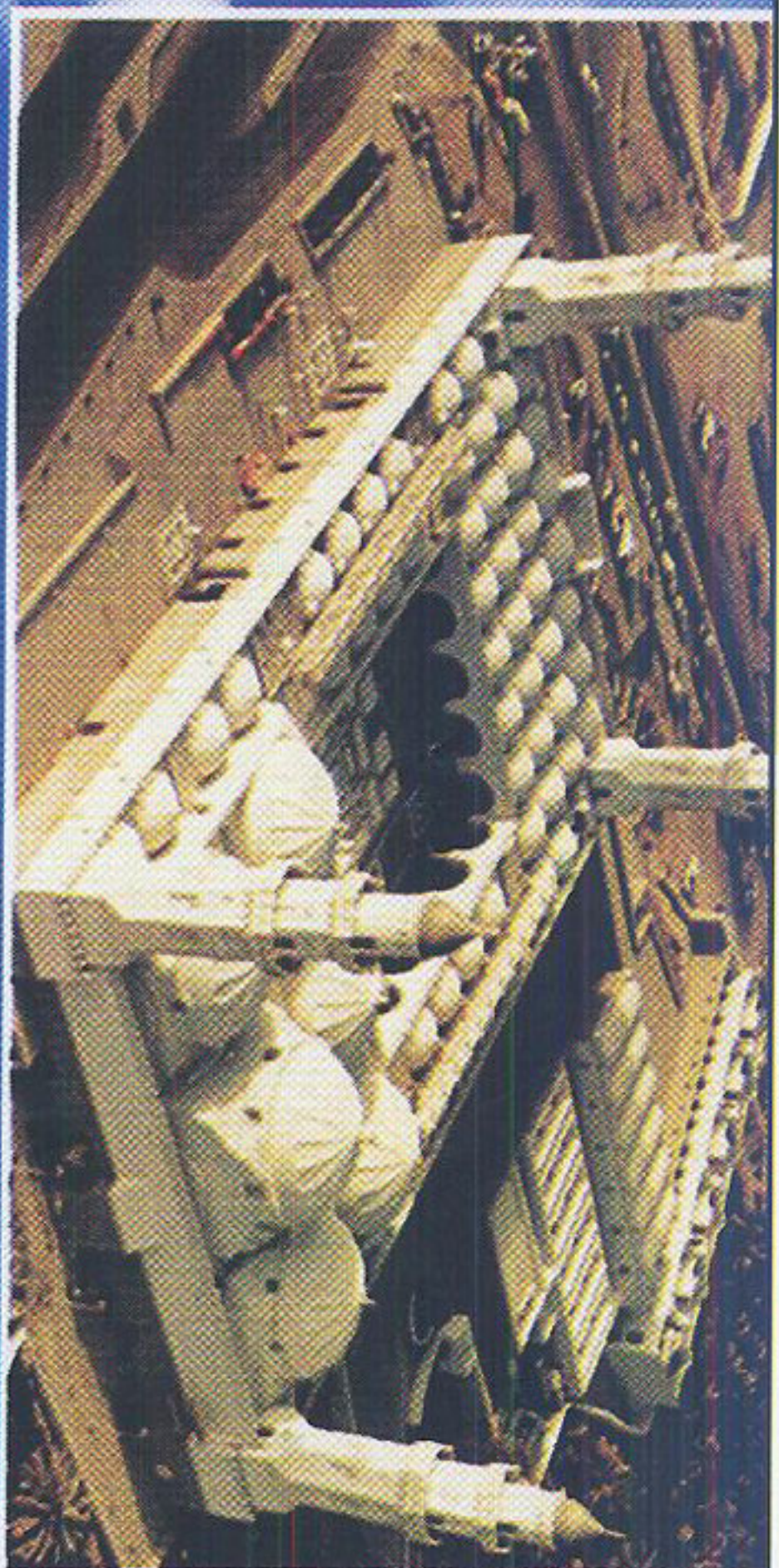
(Battle of the Trench)
 Shawwal 5 A.H.

"And when the eyes grew wild and the hearts reached to the throats."
 (Qur'an 33:10)

محراب نبوی

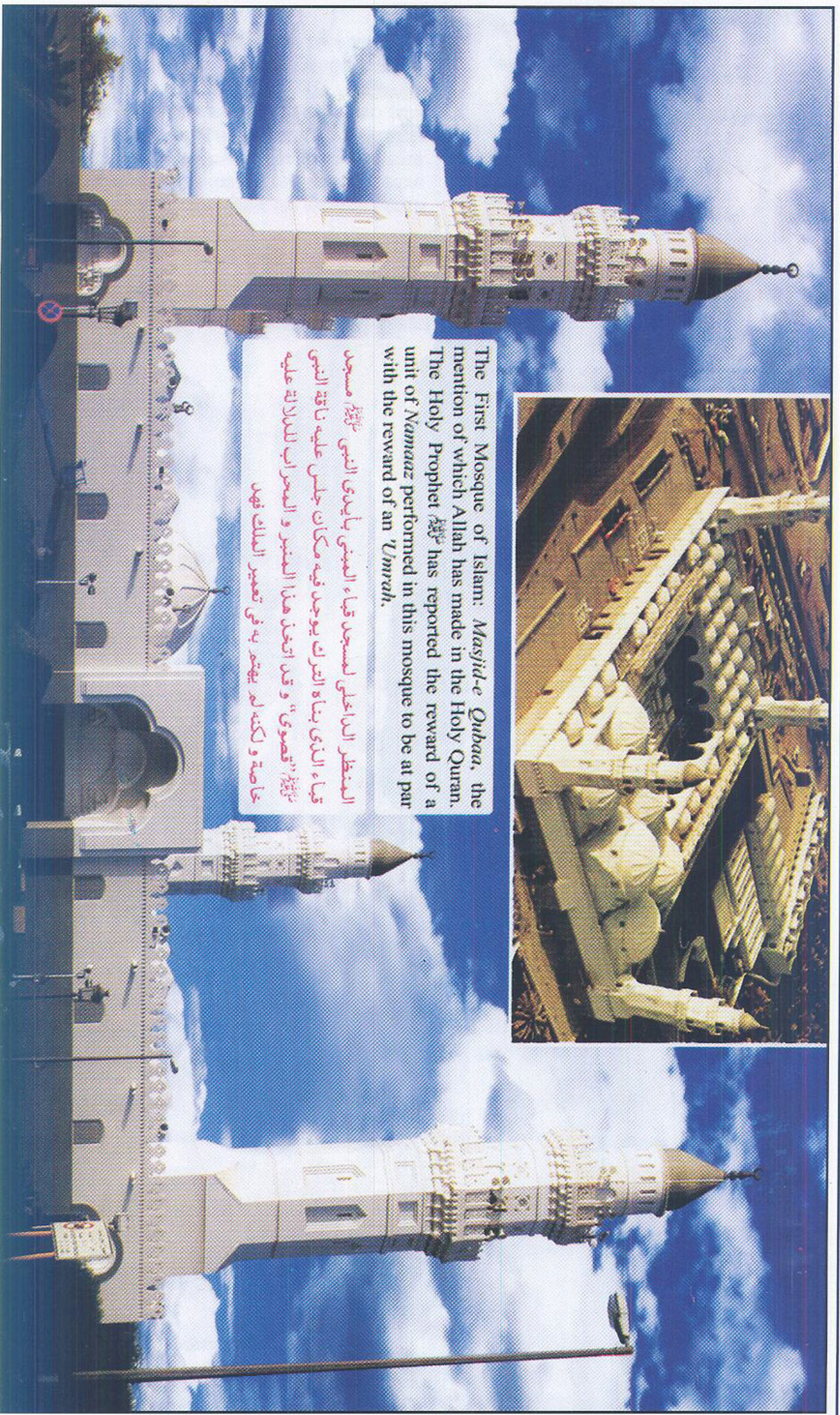
The Prophetic arch.
At this site there used to be the Holy Prophet's auspicious feet when leading prayers. The remaining portion has been utilized in the construction of the arch. For this reason when prayer is offered here, the head of the worshiper lies at the feet of the Holy Prophet.



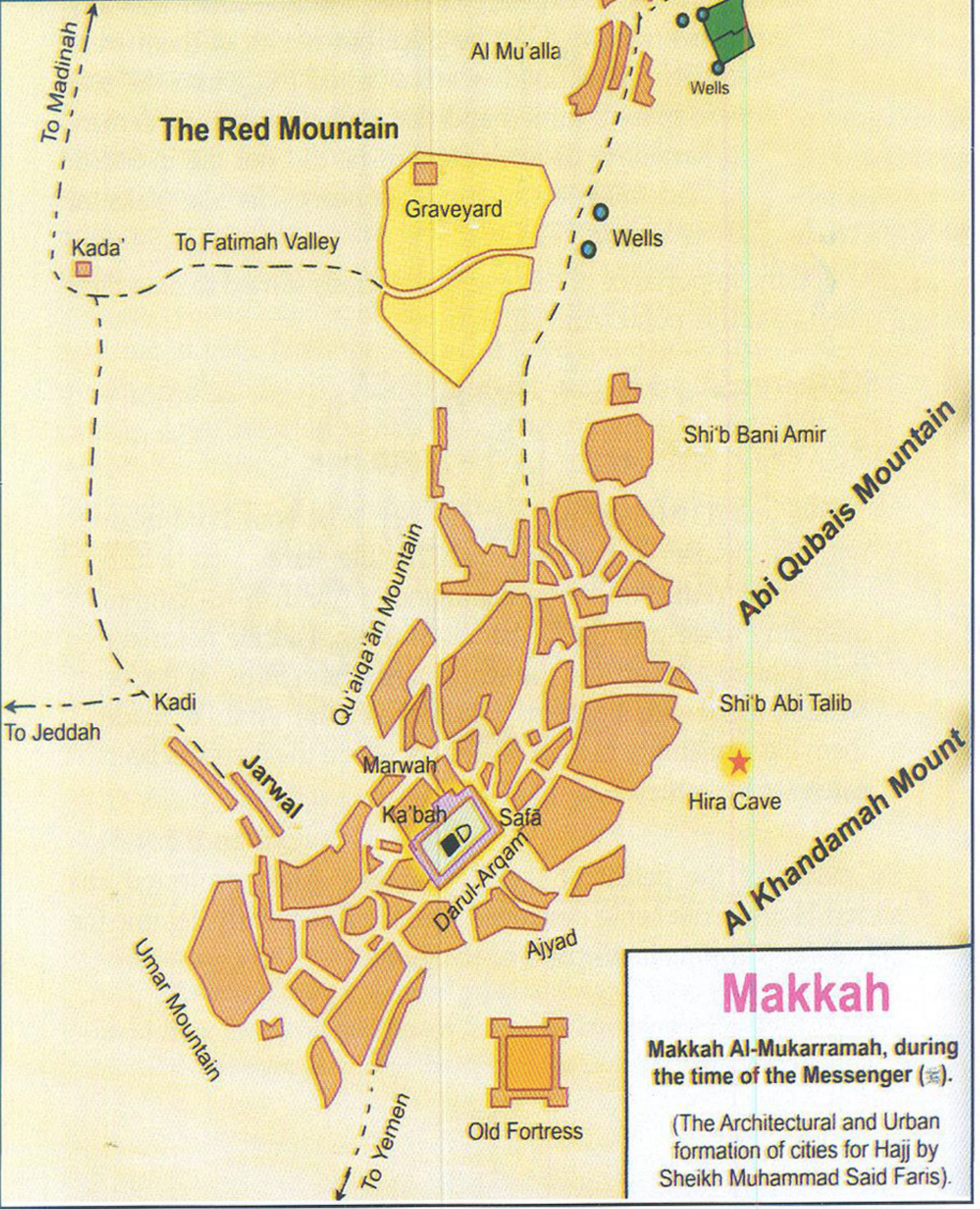


The First Mosque of Islam: *Masjid-e Qubaa*, the mention of which Allah has made in the Holy Quran. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has reported the reward of a unit of *Namazz* performed in this mosque to be at par with the reward of an *Umrah*.

المنظر الداخلي للمسجد قباء المبنى بأيدي النبي ﷺ مسجد قباء الذي بنىه الترتك يوجد فيه مكان جلس عليه ناقة النبي ﷺ "قصوى" و قد اتخذ هذا المنبر و المحراب للدلالة عليه خاصة و لكنه لم يهتم به في تعمیر الملك فهد



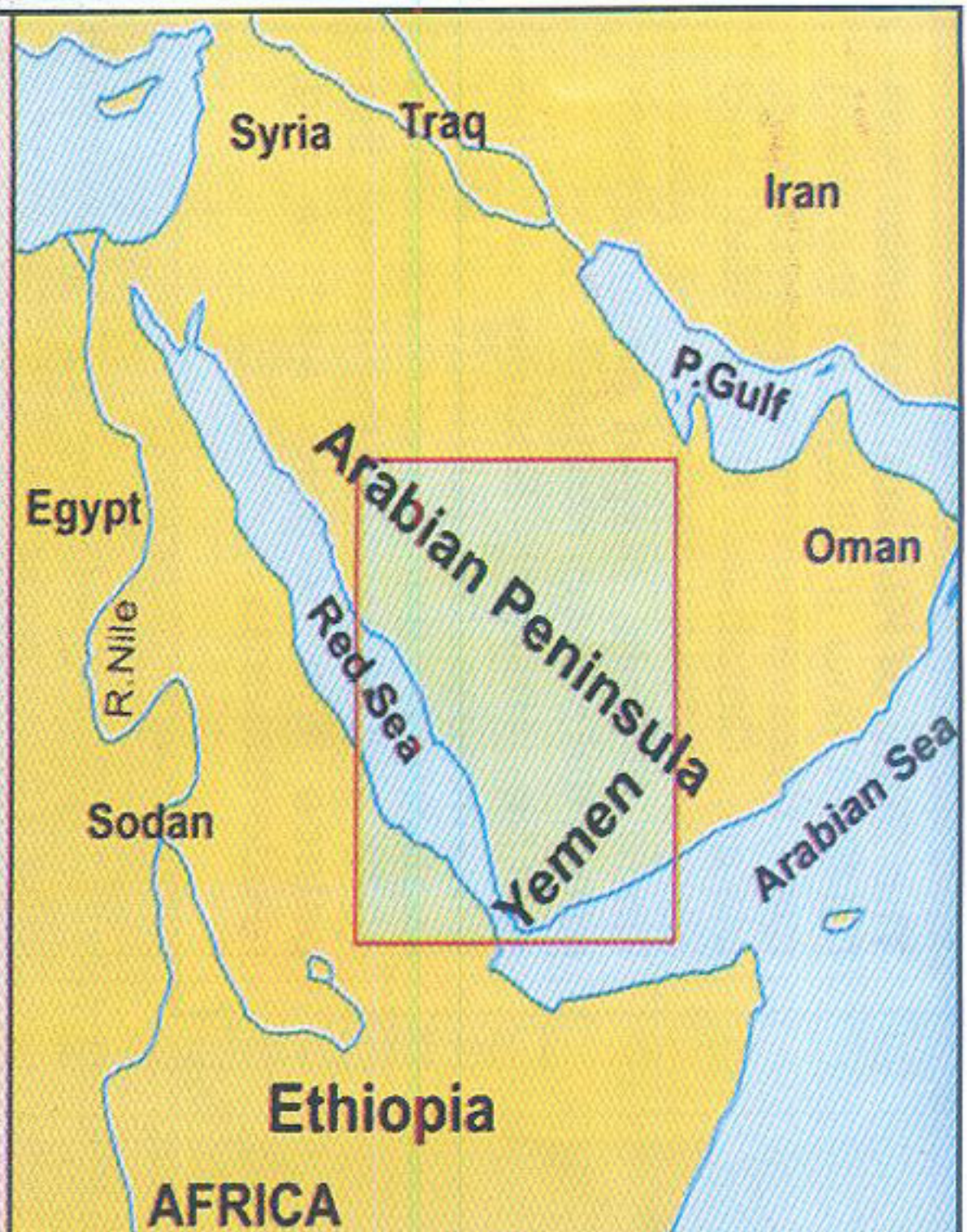
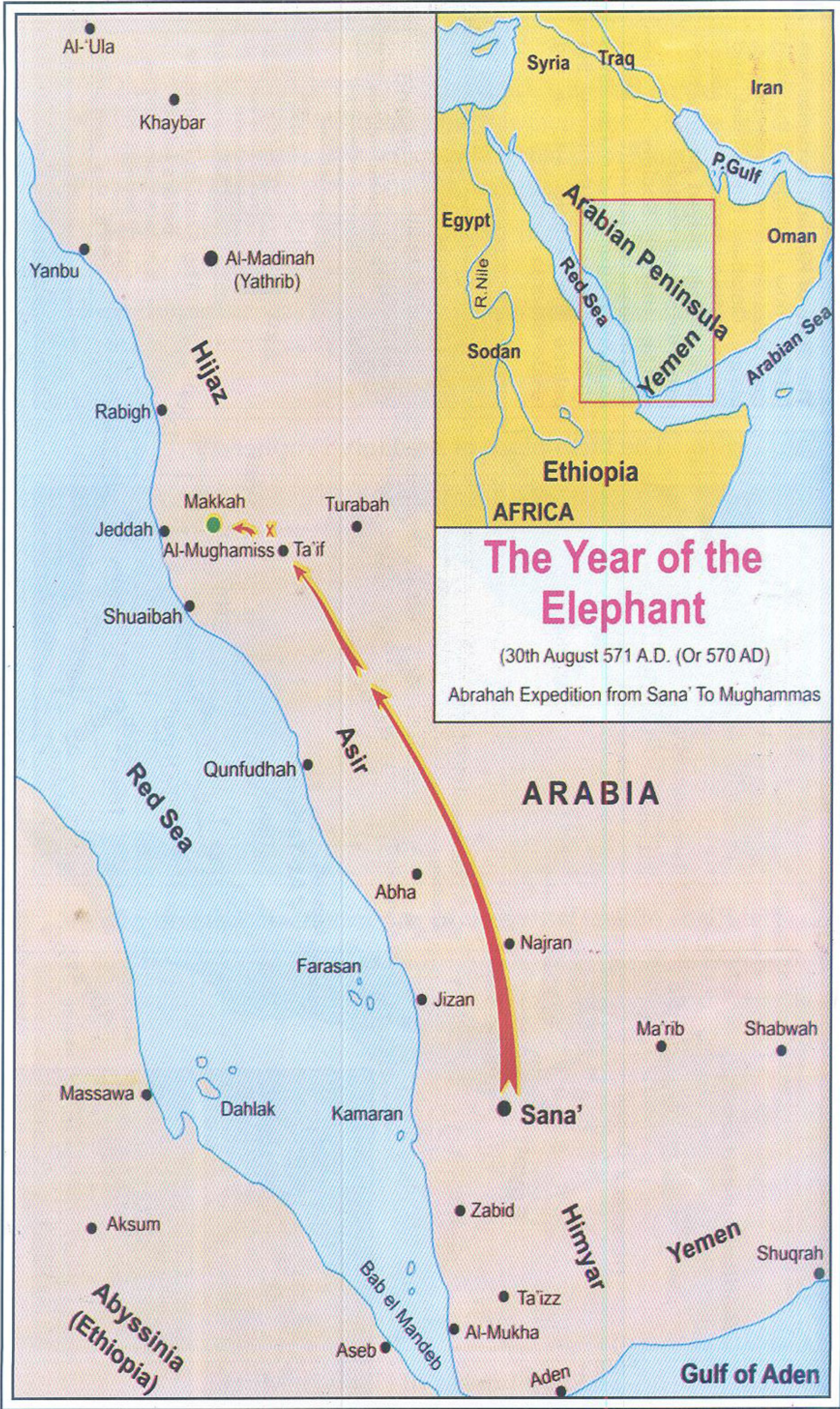
The Place where the Prophet ﷺ was born



Makkah

Makkah Al-Mukarramah, during the time of the Messenger (ﷺ).

(The Architectural and Urban formation of cities for Hajj by Sheikh Muhammad Said Faris).



The Year of the Elephant

(30th August 571 A.D. (Or 570 AD))

Abrahah Expedition from Sana' To Mughammas

Al-'Ula
 Khaybar
 Yanbu
 Al-Madinah (Yathrib)
 Rabigh
 Makkah
 Jeddah
 Al-Mughammiss
 Shuaibah
 Turabah
 Ta'if

Hijaz
 Asir
 Qunfudhah
 Abha
 Farasan
 Jizan
 Massawa
 Dahlak
 Kamaran
 Aksum
 Abyssinia (Ethiopia)
 Bab el Mandeb
 Aseb

Syria
 Iraq
 Iran
 P.Gulf
 Oman
 Red Sea
 Arabian Peninsula
 Yemen
 Arabian Sea
 Ethiopia
 AFRICA
 ARABIA
 Najran
 Ma'rib
 Shabwah
 Sana'
 Zabid
 Ta'izz
 Al-Mukha
 Aden
 Himyar
 Yemen
 Shuqrah
 Gulf of Aden

Interior and external view of Masjid-e-Adaas built in the orchard of Ta'if. Adaas was the name of the caretaker of this orchard who had presented grapes and cool water to The Holy Prophet ﷺ, and on hearing the message of Islam by him ﷺ, had brought faith on the divine guidance.

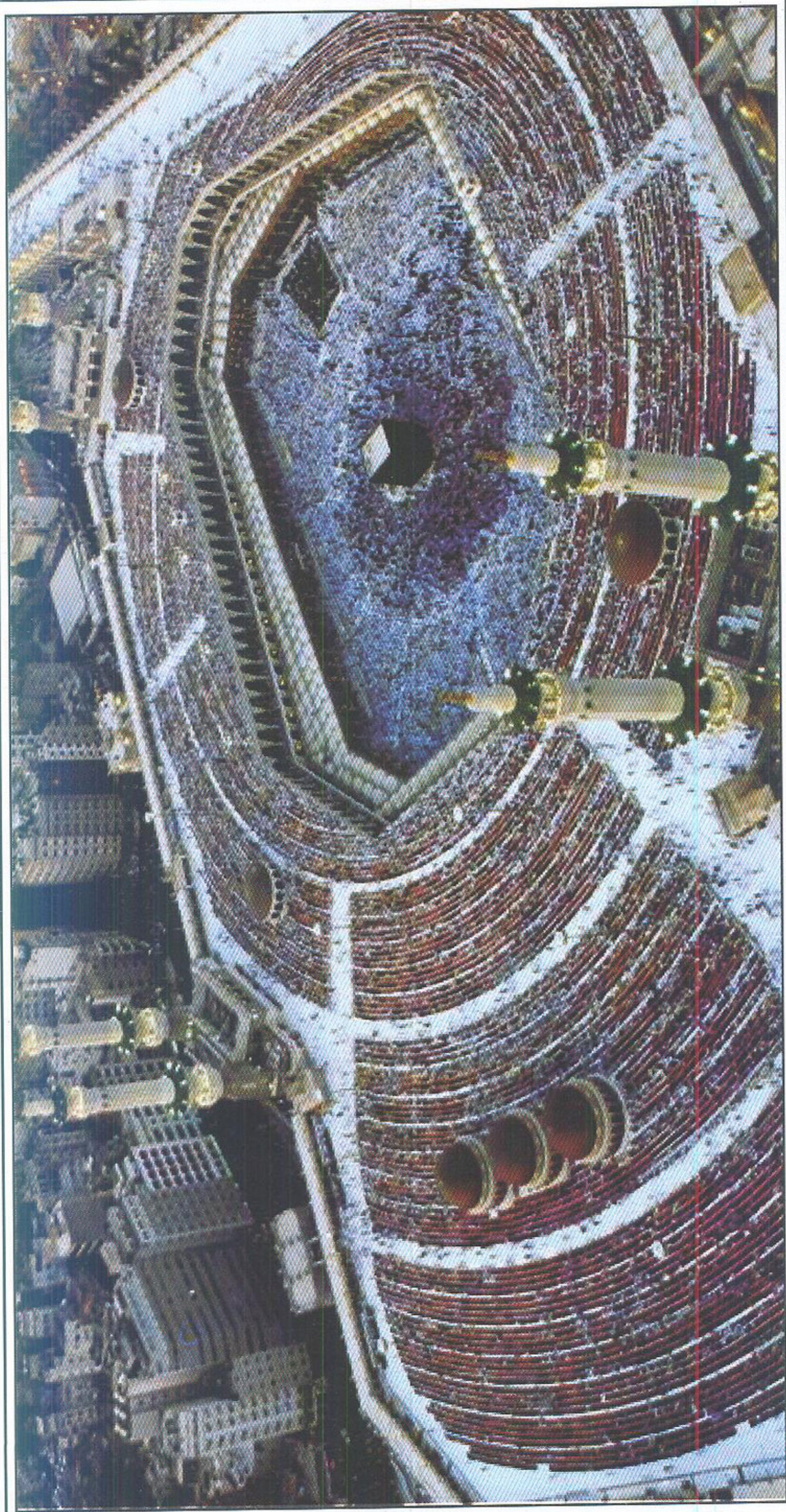
منظر المسجد عدااس في بستان طائف من الخارج في بستان طائف الذي قدم هذا عدااس ﷺ للنبي ﷺ العيب و الماي البر ذو سمع كلامه۔

طائف کے باغ میں موجود مسجد عدااس کا بیرونی منظر جہاں باغ کے خادم حضرت عدااس ﷺ نے آپ ﷺ کو انور اور شفا پانی پیش کیا تھا اور آپ ﷺ کی باتیں سن کر ایمان لے آئے تھے۔

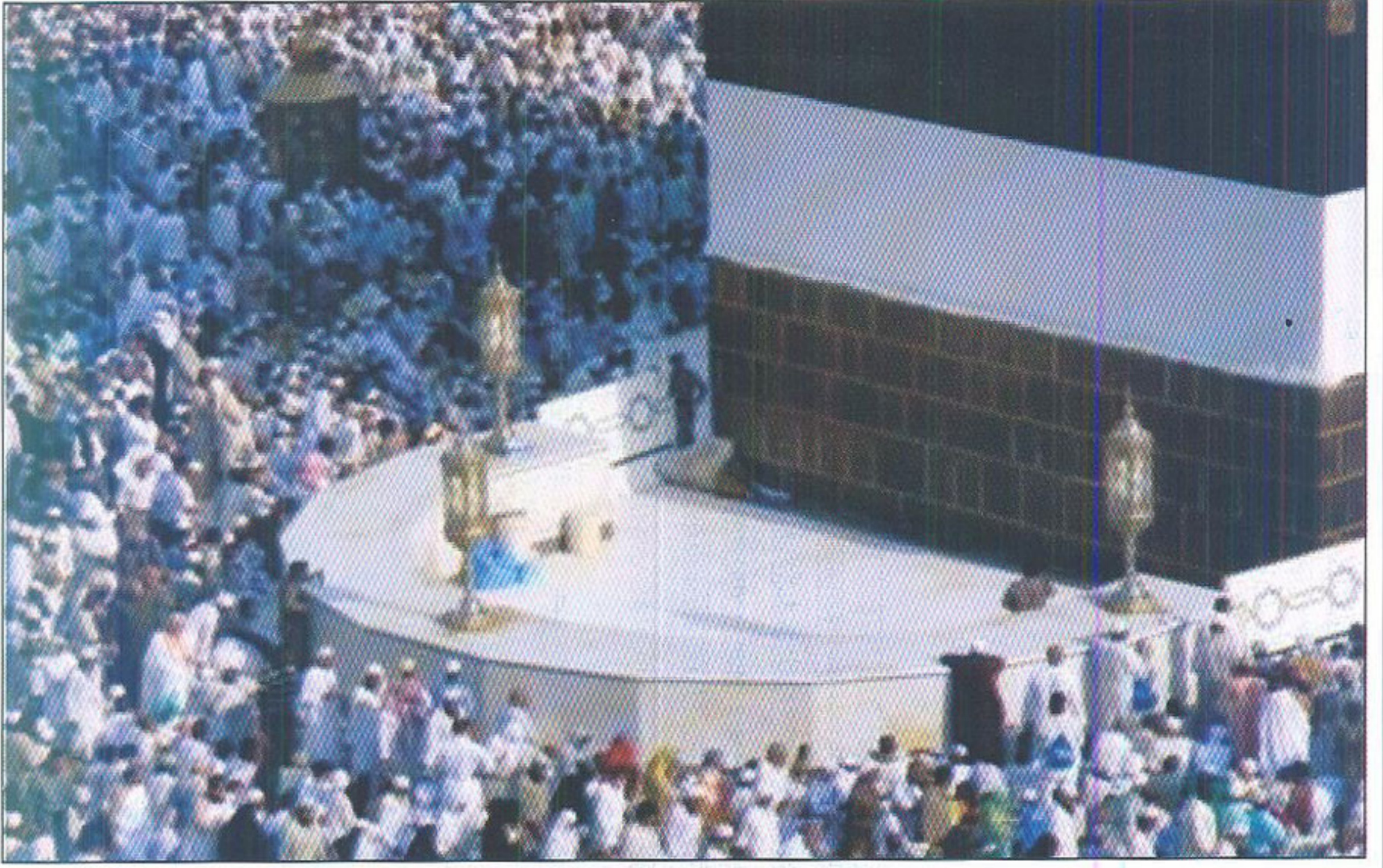
مسجد عدااس 'Adaas



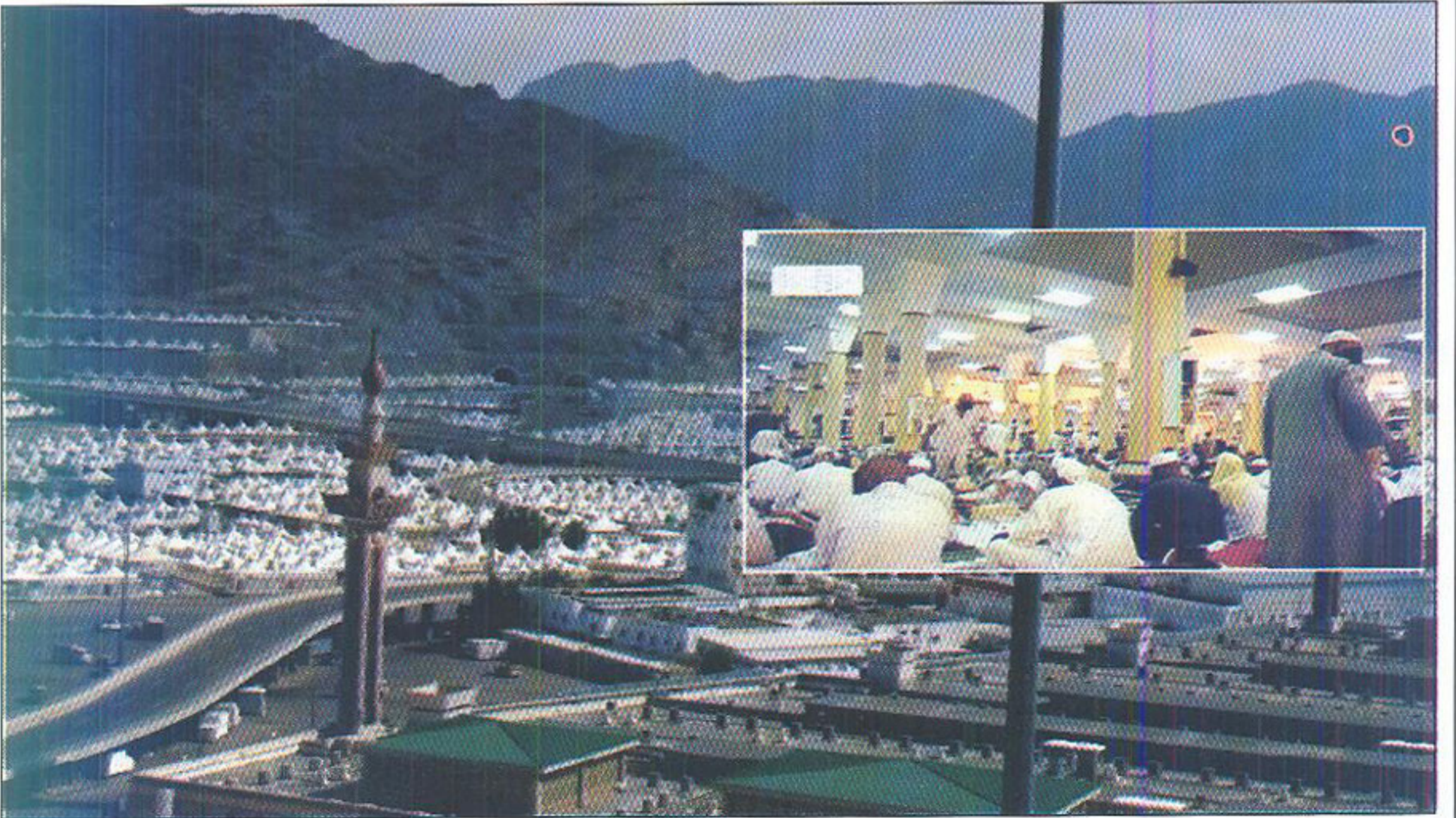
The *Cave of Thaur* where the Holy Prophet ﷺ stayed for 3 days with Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique رضي الله عنه.



An eye - catching view of offering of prayers around Baittullah.



The *Hateem*, uncovered part of the *Holy Kabah*.. To offer *Nawafils* in *Hateem* is equal to offer the same inside the *Holy Kabah*.



The grand *Masjid Al-Khayf* in *Mina*. 70 Prophets ﷺ are buried within the vicinity of this *Masjid*.



(And those who before them had homes «In Madinah» And had adopted the Faith, show their affection to such As came to them for refuge, and entertain no desire in their hearts for things given to the «later» but give them preference over themselves, even though poverty was their «On lot». And those saved from covetousness of their own souls, - they are the ones that achieve prosperity)

«Al-Hashr Sura Verse (9)»

The Prophet (PBUH) says:

«The rightfulness will come back to Madinah as same as the serpent returns back to its hole».

Prophet saying.
Sahih Al-Imam Al-Bukhari. 3/19.

قال رسول الله ﷺ :

« إن الإيمان ليأرز إلى المدينة
كما تأرز الحية إلى جحرها ».

حديث شريف
(صحيح الامام البخاري ١٩/٣).



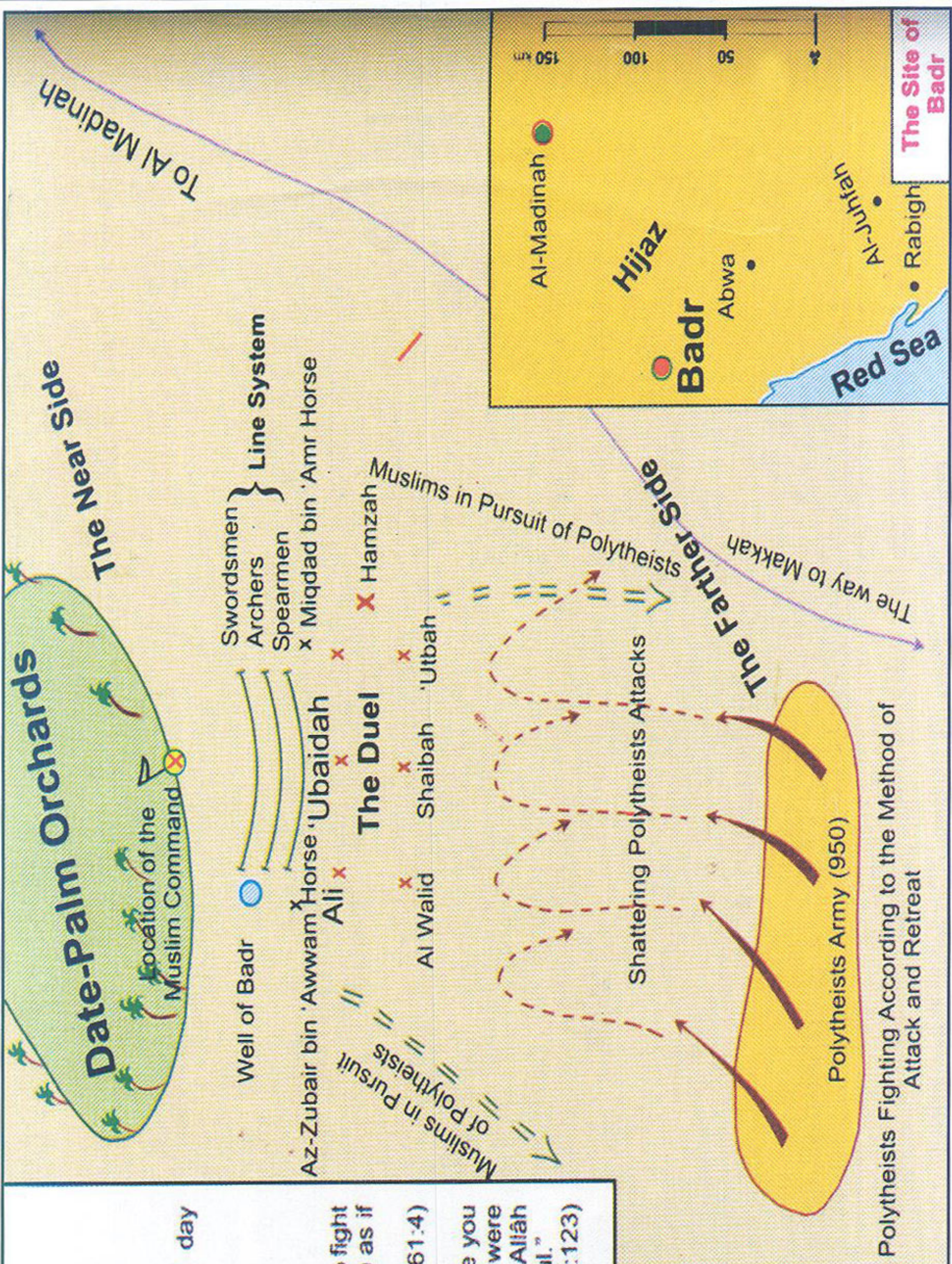
Front view of Roudha-tul-Rasool صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Battle of Badr

(The Day of Criterion, the day when the two forces met.)
17 Ramadan 2 A.H.
13 March 624 A.D.

"Verily, Allâh loves those who fight in His Cause in rows (ranks) as if they were a solid structure."
(Qur'ân 61:4)

"And Allâh has already made you victorious at Badr, when you were a weak little force. So fear Allâh much that you may be grateful."
(Qur'ân 3:123)

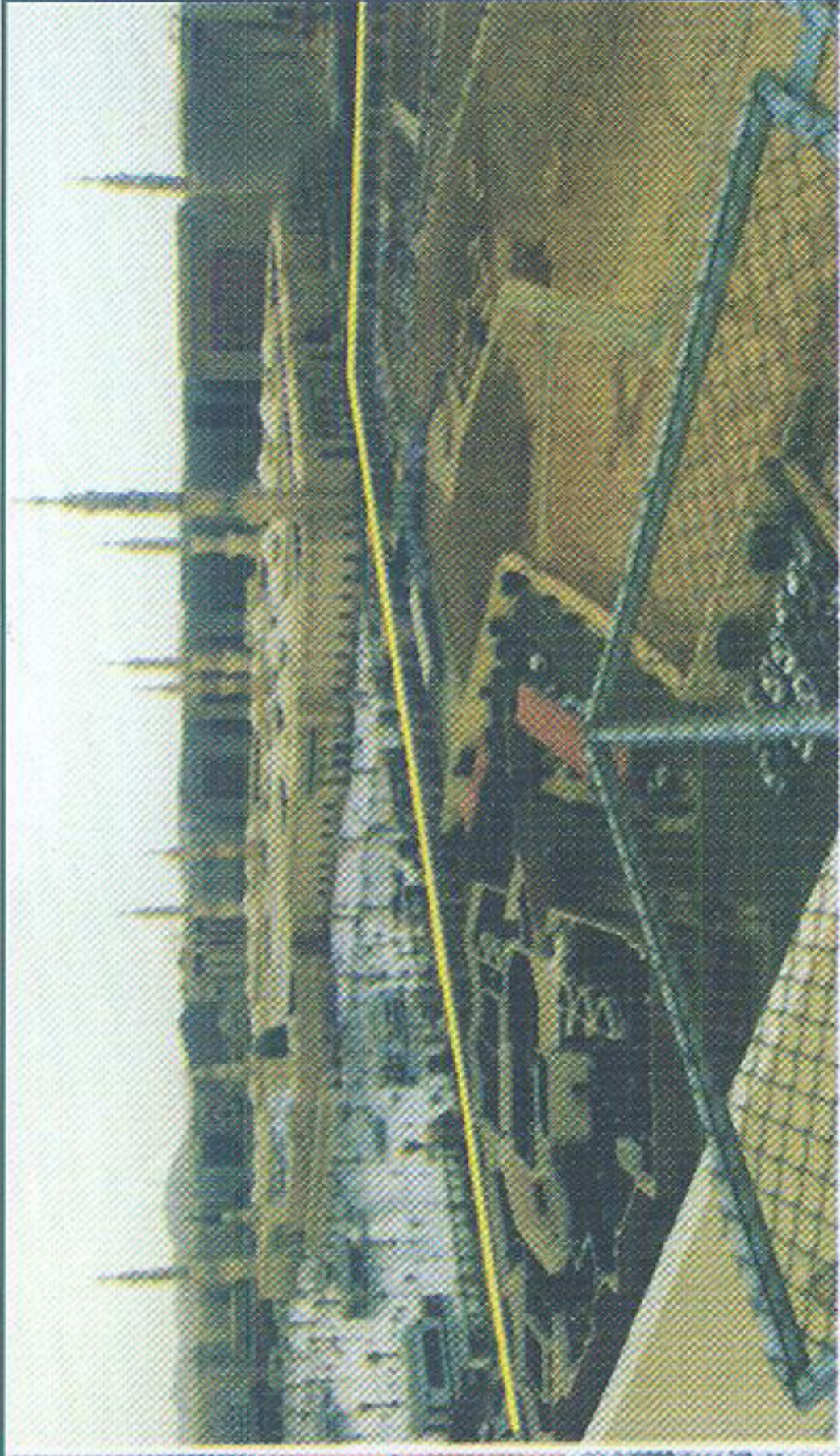


Polytheists Fighting According to the Method of Attack and Retreat

Jannat-ul Baqee' and Masjid-e Nabawi ﷺ side-by-side

المنظر الجوي لمرافقة المسجد النبوي و البقيع

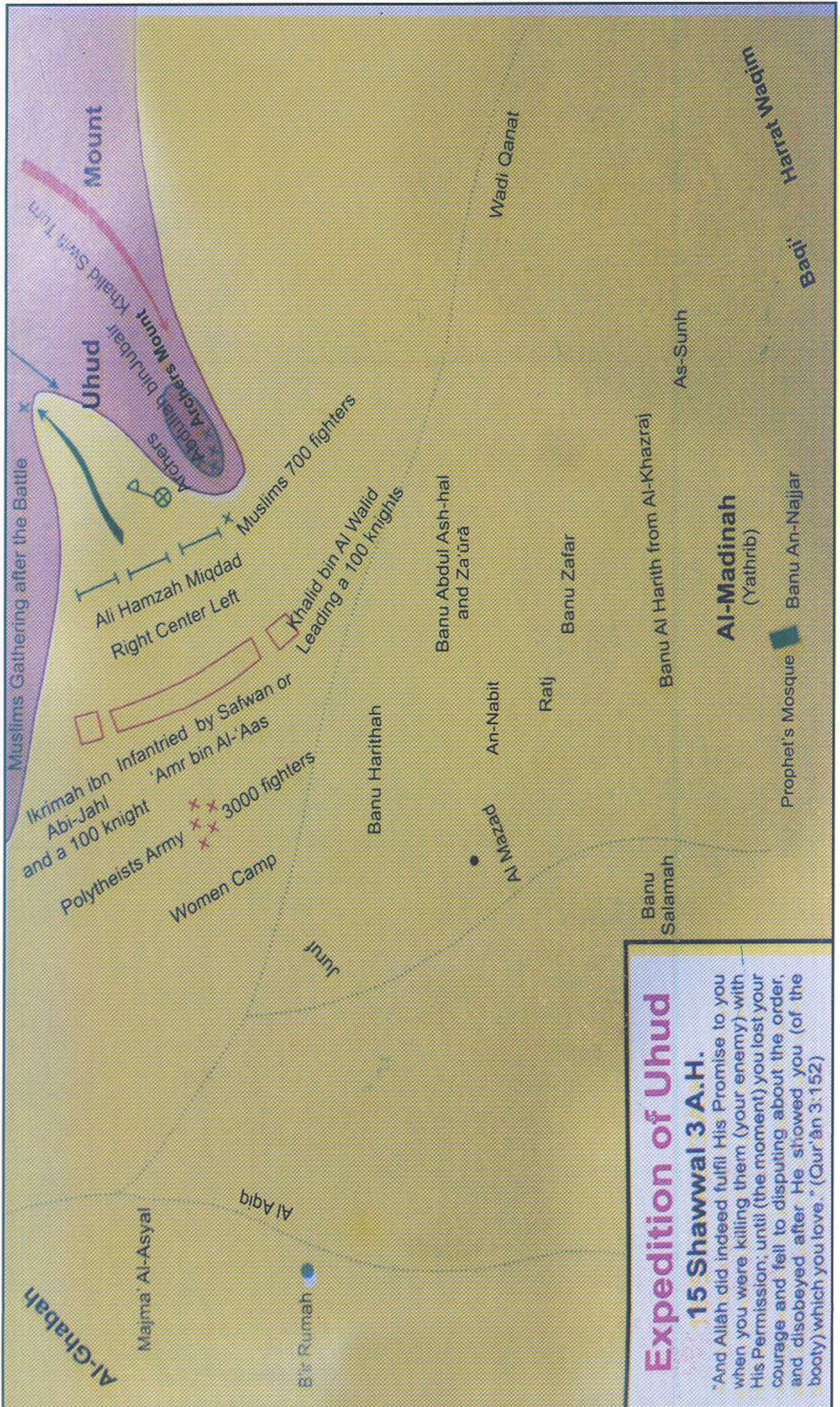
جنت البقيع اور مسجد نبوی ساتھ ساتھ۔



The auspicious grave of Hazrat 'Usmaan Ghaniؓ in Jannat-ul Baqee'

مقبرة عثمان غنیؓ فی البقيع





Expedition of Uhud

15 Shawwal 3 A.H.

"And Allah did indeed fulfill His Promise to you when you were killing them (your enemy) with His Permission; until (the moment) you lost your courage and fell to disputing about the order, and disobeyed after He showed you (of the booty) which you love." (Qur'an 3:152)



Interior view

المنظر الداخلي

کتوں کا اندرونی منظر



بئر رومة: جسے حضرت عثمان رضی اللہ عنہ نے یہودیوں سے خرید کر مسلمانوں کیلئے وقف کر دیا تھا۔ جس پر انہیں بارگاہِ رسالت سے جنت کی بشارت ملی۔ چنانچہ اب یہ کواں بئر عثمان کے نام سے مشہور ہے۔

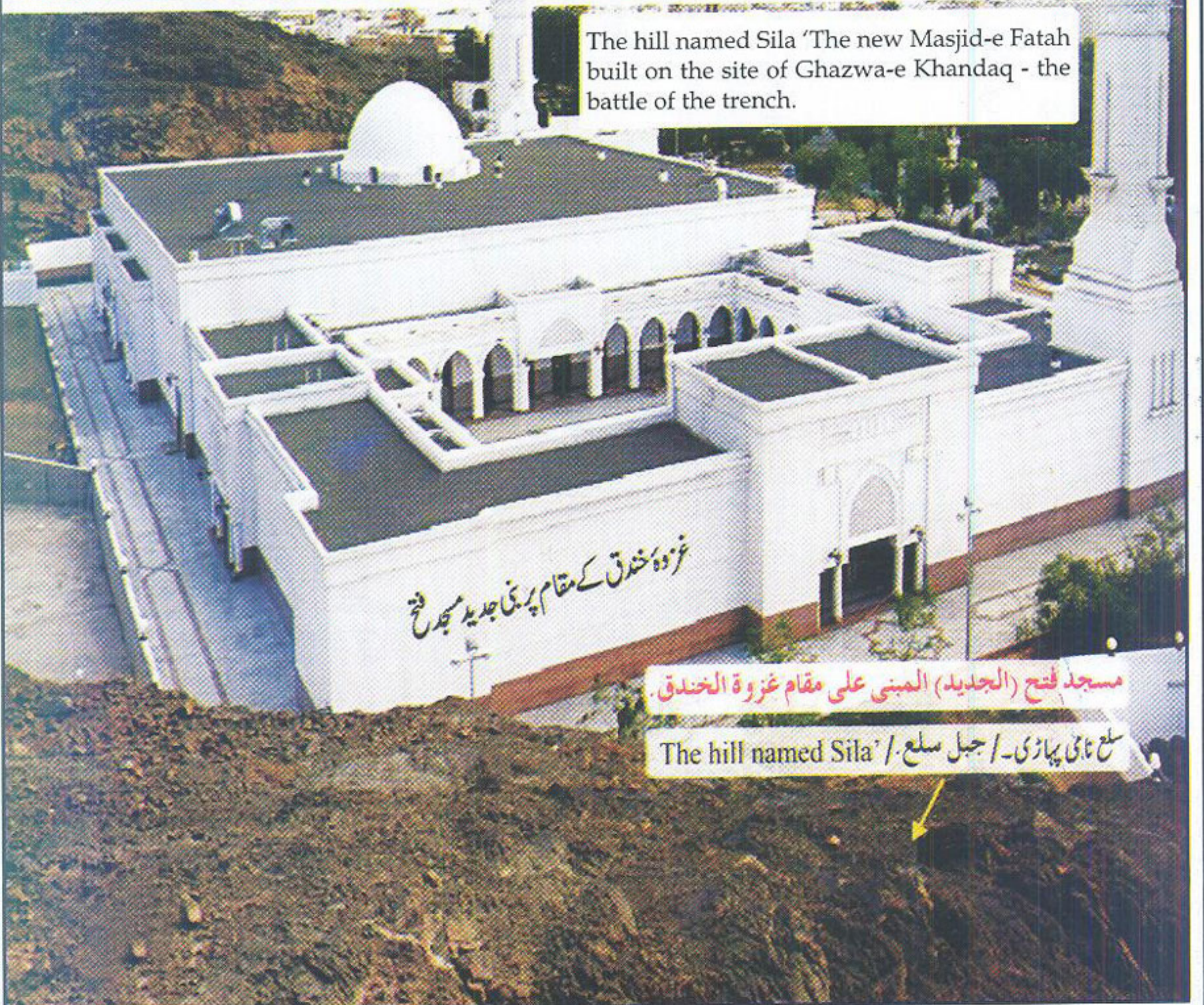
بئر رومة: حيث وقفه عثمان رضی اللہ عنہ للمسلمين بعد ما اشتراه من اليهودي وبشر على الفعل المقبول بلسان النبي ﷺ وهي المعروف اليوم باسم "بئر عثمان رضی اللہ عنہ"

Outer and inner views of well of Hazrat Usman رضی اللہ عنہ previously called well of Ruma.



Interior view / المنظر الداخلي / مسجد فتح کا اندرونی منظر

The hill named Sila 'The new Masjid-e Fatah built on the site of Ghazwa-e Khandaq - the battle of the trench.



غزوة خندق کے مقام پر نئی جدید مسجد فتح

مسجد فتح (الجدید) المبنى على مقام غزوة الخندق.

سلا نامی پہاڑی۔ / جبل سلا۔ / The hill named Sila'

چبوترہ اصحابِ صفہ / The platform of Ashab-e-Safah

بابِ تہجد

مقام اصحابِ صفہ

مسجد نبوی میں موجود وہ جگہ جہاں غریب صحابہ رہتے تھے

The place present in Masjid-e-Nabwi where poor and indigent Companions used to reside.

یوجد مقام اصحاب الصفة امام محراب التہجد عند بعض المؤرخین