

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَمَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ وَوَلَدِ أَدَمَ كَمَا يَحِبُّ وَيَرْضَى بِأَنْ يُصَلَّى عَلَيْهِ

In The Name Of Allah The Most Compassionate Very Merciful

All Praise Due To Allah And Peace And Blessings Be Upon His Beloved Messenger

**Me'raj Discourse of Hazrat Malekul 'Ulama
Allamah Zafruddeen Al-Bihaari, the Disciple
and Caliph of Sayyidi A'lahazrat Vol. 12**

May Allah be pleased with them

Introduction:

Hazrat Sayyid Shah Hameeduddeen, Sajjadah Nasheen Hazrat Shah Ruknuddeen 'Ishq – rahimahullah – established the conference of Rajab Shareef gathering in the year 1934 A.C. and continued till the year 1946 A.C. and perhaps continued even afterwards. He invited Hazrat Malekul Ulama to deliver the discourse. His students used to transcribe the speech every year and then he would proof read them later. The book “Tanweerus Siraj” is the collection of those series of lectures delivered over the period of 14 years at the occasion of Me'raj Shareef. (Khulafa-e-Imam Ahmed Raza p. 74 by Allamah Abdul Hakeem Sharaf Qadri)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

ALLAH in the name of, the Most Affectionate, the Merciful.

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ
الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَرَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ



Holy is He Who carried His bondman by night from the sacred Mosque to the Aqsa Mosque (Aqsa) around which We have put blessings that We might show him Our grand signs. No doubt, He is the Hearing, the Seeing.

(Bani Israel 17, Verse 1)

Respected Brothers, there is no doubt that it is through the Infinite Mercy of the Almighty azza wa jall that eleven sessions have been completed on the issue of Meraj. In this year, it would be the 12th session on this very topic. All of this has been accomplished by among others, the organizers and Sajjadah of the darbar, namely Hadrat Syed Shah Hameeddeen. May Almighty Allah azza wa jall prolong his shadow of blessing upon us.

It is also our fervent dua the next program would be better than the previous one.

By the Grace of Allah and His Favor, the previous eleven gatherings of Me'raj in Ghaat Shareef, Patna (Bihar, India) were successful. Today, it's the twelfth yearly Mehfil of Me'raj Shareef. The topic of my discussion will be concerning "Masjid Al-Haraam" and I hope that, like the past eleven gatherings, this year too, you shall listen attentively and be rewarded.

The scholars of Tafseer have mentioned that the word "Sacred Mosque" or "Masjid Al-Haraam" has been mentioned in the Holy Quran in four meanings:

1. The actual Kaba. In Surah Baqarah, verse 149, the Quran declares:

فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۗ

Turn your face towards the sacred Mosque (Ka'bah)

In other words, during Salah, we must turn our faces toward the Ka'bah. In this instance, it would signify and mean the Holy Kaba itself. As for those people who are present there, it means the facing of the actual Ka'bah. As for those who are not present there, it means facing that direction of the Ka'bah is necessary for the performance of Salah.

2. It signifies the Ka'bah and the Masjid attached to it. Allamah Nawawi rehmatullah alaihi in the Sharah of Muslim shareef explains that:
"The majority of the meaning signifies this. This is also signified in the verse of Meraj which appears in this Surah. This is based on the statement of Hadrat Sayyiduna Anas radi Allahu anhu and has also been accepted by Allamah Tabari rehmatullah alaihi and many authentic narrations also support this view."
3. It signifies the entire city of Makkah shareef. This is supported by verse 27 of Surah Al-Fat'h:

لَتَدْخُلَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ

You shall, no doubt, enter the sacred mosque.

In my opinion also, if we understand the meaning of the Meraj ayat in Surah Bani Israel, then the various narrations pertaining to the beginning of Meraj and the basis of it would certainly fit this or its various implications.

The reason is that in some reports, it is mentioned that the starting point of Meraj was from the Hajre Aswad. Some say that it started from the Hateem of the Ka'bah. Some say that it began from the house of Umme Hani. Some say that it began from the valley famously known as She'abe Abi Talib. These are four reports. If we accept the third meaning that this is what is meant by Masjidil Haraam in that it means the entire city of Mecca shareef, then the various disagreements, opposite meaning and variance in meaning would cease to exist.

This is the research of Allamah ibn Maneer rehmatullah alaihi. He is of the opinion that this verse does not negate the meaning of the various narrations because Al Masjidil Haraam signifies Mecca shareef and these four places are implicated in its meaning.

Allamah Khateeb ibn Hajr Asqalani rehmatullah alaihi has explained the various reports in this manner. He says that the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam spent the night in the house of Umme Hani radi Allahu anha. Her house was also in She'abe Abi Talib. The roof of her house was open, hence this is from where Jibraeel Ameen entered. However, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam has insinuated that this is his house because that is where he lived at that time. Jibraeel alaihis Salam brought him from there to Masjidil Haraam and if by Masjidul Haraam, the whole of Mecca shareef is meant, then in this case, there would be no need to explain further because all the places mentioned above would fit into this explanation.

4. The fourth meaning would be the entire Haram shareef which is a place of safety and protection. This is also a place where it is Haram to hunt any animal.

This is explained in Surah Taubah, verse 7 which is:

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ^ع

“but those with whom you covenanted near the Sacred Mosque! “

In this verse, the place of covenant and agreement has been referred to as Masjidil Haraam. Even though this covenant was made in Hdaybiyyah.

In like manner, again in Surah Taubah, verse 28,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُوا الْمَسْجِدَ
الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هَذَا^ع

'O believers! The associates (polytheists) are altogether unclean, then let them not approach the sacred Mosque after this year.

In like manner, it could imply as is found in Surah Baqarah, verse 196 that:

ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلَهُ حَاضِرِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ^ط

“This Command is for him who is not the dweller of Mecca “

Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Abbas radi Allahu anhu narrates that it could also imply the entire Haram shareef.

Allamah Mawaradi rehmatullah alaihi explains that wherever the words “Al Masjidul Haram” is mentioned in the Quran, it would imply the actual Haram shareef. Except the verse in Surah Baqarah, verse 149 which is:

فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ

Turn your face towards the sacred Mosque (Kaaba)

In the above instance, it would strictly imply the actual Ka’bah. This is the reason why it is necessary that one turns to the direction of the Ka’bah in Salah. It is not sufficient that one only turns towards the Haram shareef.

In the Holy Quran, the word Masjidil Haram has been mentioned fifteen times. Six times in Surah Baqarah.

Surah Baqarah, verse 144:

قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا

We are seeing the turning of your face towards heaven repeatedly; necessarily then We will turn you towards that Qibla which pleases you.

Verse 149:

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِنَّهُ لَلْحَقُّ

مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفِيلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ

And from where so ever you come forth turn your face towards the sacred Mosque (Kaabah) and that is necessarily, the truth from your Lord and Allah is not unaware of your doings.

Verse 150:

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ^ط وَحَيْثُ مَا
كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ ^{لَا} لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ ^{لَا}

And O beloved! When so-ever you come forth turn your face towards the sacred Mosque (Kaaba) And O Muslims! Turn your faces towards the same, wherever you be, so that people may have no argument against you-

Verse 191:

وَلَا تُقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتَّى يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ ^ع فَإِنْ قَتَلُوكُمْ
فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ ^ط كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٩١﴾

And do not fight them near the sacred mosque unless they fight you therein; and they if fight against you, then kill them. This is the only punishment of infidels

Verse 196

فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ^ع فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجِدْ
فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ^ط تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ^ط
ذٰلِكَ لِمَنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ اَهْلُهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ^ط

then whoso takes advantage by combining Umrah with Hajj, on him there is sacrifice which may be obtained easily. Then whoso cannot afford, he should fast for three days during Hajj and seven days when he return back your to home, these are ten days complete. This Command is for him who is not the dweller of Macca

For the people of Mecca shareef, there is only Tamattu and not Qiran. As for those who live within the area of the Mawaaqet, the same rule applies to them as it applies for the people of Mecca shareef.

The Miqaat are five in number:

For the people of Madina shareef, it is Zul Hulaifah. For the people of Iraq, it is Zaat-e-Iraq. For the people of Syria it is Juhfah. For the people of Najd, it is Qarnul Manaazil which is near Arafat. For the people of Yemen, it is Yelamlam.

In surah Baqarah, verse 217, it is stated that:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ ۖ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ ۖ وَصَدٌّ
عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۖ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ۗ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقْتَلُونَكُمْ حَتَّى
يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَنْ دِينِكُمْ إِنِ اسْتَطَعُوا ۗ وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَيَمُتْ
وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَأُولَٰئِكَ
أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۗ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢١٧﴾

They ask you the precept for fighting in the sacred month. Say you: fighting therein is a great sin; but to prohibit from the way of Allah azza wa jall, and not to have faith in Him and to prevent from the sacred Mosque (Haram) and to oust its dwellers, are greater sins than it, with Allah azza wa jall; and their mischief is more grievous than killing. And they will remain fighting against you always, until they turn you back from your faith, if they can. And whoso among you turns back from his faith, then dies as an infidel, then their works shall go in vain in the world and in the Hereafter, and they are the people of Hell and will abide in it.

In surah Maidah, verse 2, the Quran declares that:

وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ اَنْ صَدُّوْكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ اَنْ

تَعْتَدُوْا

And let not the enmity of any people, as they had prevented you from the Sacred Mosque incite you to commit excessiveness.

In other words, advice is given to the Muslims that they should not seek revenge against those who stopped them from performing the Umrah on the occasion of the treaty of Hudaibiyah.

In Surah Anfal, verse 34, the Quran declares that:

وَمَا لَهُمْ اَلَّا يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَهُمْ يَصُدُّوْنَ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَمَا كَانُوْا

اَوْلِيَاءَ ۗ اِنْ اَوْلِيَاءُ ۙ اِلَّا الْمُتَّقُوْنَ

And what have they that Allah azza wa jall should not chastise them, when they are hindering from the sacred mosque, and they are not its guardian. Its guardians are the pious ones only.

In other words, what is wrong with these people that they restrict the Muslims from coming to the Haram shareef. Yet, in reality it is the Muslims who are actually entitled to come to the Haram shareef in the first place because they are the people of piety. This also indicates to the treaty of Hudaibiyah.

In Surah Taubah, verse 7, the Quran declares that:

كَيْفَ يَكُوْنُ لِلْمُشْرِكِيْنَ عَهْدٌ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَعِنْدَ رَسُوْلِهِ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ

عٰهَدْتُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ فَمَا اسْتَقِمْوْا لَكُمْ فَاَسْتَقِمْوْا لَهُمْ

How can there be any covenant for the associators with Allah and His Messenger but those with whom you covenanted near the Sacred Mosque! Then as long as they keep their covenant for you, you should also stand for them.

In Surah Taubah, verse 19, the Quran declares that:

أَجَعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَاجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ أَمَنَ بِاللَّهِ

وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَجَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ^ط لَا يَسْتَوْنَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

Then do you hold the offering of water to the pilgrims and service of the Sacred Mosque equal to one who believed in Allah azza wa jall and the Last Day and struggled in the path of Allah azza wa jall? They are not equal in the sight of Allah.

It is reported that when Hadrat Sayyiduna Abbas radi Allahu anhu was captured after the battle of Badr, he mentioned to the Muslims that even though they had surpassed the disbelievers in accepting Islam, in making Hijrat or in taking part in Jihad, yet, as inhabitants of the Haram, they also took care of the Haram shareef and had given water to those who came to the Haram shareef. However, on this occasion, the Quran clearly declared that the “the disbelievers are clearly impure and that after this year, they would not be allowed inside the Haram shareef”.

In Surah Bani Israeel,verse 1 the Quran declares that:

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ
الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَرَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا ^ط

Holy is He Who carried His slave by night from the sacred Mosque to the Aqsa Mosque (Aqsa) around which We have put blessings that We might show him Our grand signs.

In Surah Hajj, verse 25, the Quran declares that:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ الَّذِي
جَعَلْنَاهُ لِلنَّاسِ سَوَاءً الْعُكْفُ فِيهِ وَالْبَادِ ط وَمَنْ يُرِدْ فِيهِ بِالْحَادِ يُظْلَمِ
نُذِقَهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْيَمِّ ﴿٢٥﴾

Undoubtedly, those who disbelieve and hinder from the way of Allah azza wa jall and from the Sacred Mosque which We have appointed equal for all, both for dwellers therein and visitors. And whosoever seeks any excessiveness in it unjustly, We shall cause them to taste painful torment.

This verse was revealed about such people as Sufyan bin Harb who had stopped the Muslims entering Mecca shareef. In this context also, “Masjidil Haram” would signify the actual Kaba which is the Qiblah of everyone. This obviously means whether they live in Mecca or outside. For everyone of them, respect and reverence for the Holy Kaba is a requirement.

This is also the opinion of Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam Shafi radi Allahu anhu. Imam Azam radi Allahu anhu on the other hand is of the opinion that Masjidil Haram signifies the entire Haram shareef.

In surah Fath, verse 25, the Quran declares that:

هُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْهَدْيِ مَعْكُوفًا
أَنْ يَبْلُغَ مَحِلَّهُ

They are those who disbelieved and hindered you from the Sacred mosque, and the sacrificial animals were detained from reaching their place of sacrifice.

In the same surah, verse 27, the Quran declares that:

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّءْيَا بِالْحَقِّ ۗ لَتَدْخُلَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ إِنْ شَاءَ

اللَّهُ آمِنِينَ ۗ مُحَلِّقِينَ رُءُوسَكُمْ وَمُقَصِّرِينَ ۗ لَا تَخَافُونَ

Undoubtedly, Allah has proved true the true vision of His messenger. You shall no doubt, enter the sacred mosque, if Allah pleases, in security, having your heads shaven or having your hair cut short without any fear.

Prior to making the journey to Hodaybiyyah, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam had seen a dream in which he and his blessed companions were entering Mecca shareef. Some of the blessed companions had their heads shaven and some had trimmed their hair.

Respected brothers! There is tremendous significance in the Haram shareef, the precincts of the Haram shareef etc becoming a sacred place. As for the question of what is the actual boundary of the Haram shareef and what is the reason for considering it a sacred place, there are various opinions about it.

In the hadith shareef, it is mentioned that when Nabi Adam alaihis salaam was sent to the world, he displayed apprehension from those who lived on earth at that time, namely the Jinn and the Shayateen. For his safety and protection, the Almighty azza wa jall sent the Angels from the heavens who continued to protect him. These angels also positioned themselves in different corners around Mecca shareef. At every part of these four corners, an Angel stood guard. The area within these four corners were then considered to be the Haram shareef.

In another hadith shareef, it is mentioned that when Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam constructed the Kaba and established the Hajr Aswad on one corner of the Kaba, the entire area began to glow with immense brightness. The Almighty azza wa jall then nominated four corners of this area of brightness as the Haram shareef.

In another hadith shareef, it is mentioned that when the Almighty azza wa jall sent down the Kaba to Nabi Adam alaihis salaam, it was made of pure red ruby and was extremely bright. It had two doors. One towards the East and one towards the West. However, such was its brightness that it shone in all four directions. Those who lived on earth at that time when they saw this bright light

decided to come searching for its origin. They also realized that it was coming from the direction of Mekkah shareef.

Thereafter, all the Jinn and Shayateen then turned their attention towards this bright light. It was then the Almighty azza wa jall sent His Angels to guard the source of this light. These Angels then stood guard on four corners of Mecca shareef at a little distance from the Ka'bah. They also stopped all those who wanted to come near the source of this light. This is the area which became known as the Haram shareef. Later on, wherever these Angels stood at that time, Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam then placed a sign at that spot.

However, as time passed, these signs crumpled away. It was again placed by Qusay bin Kalb and later by Adnan. However, again later on the Quraish destroyed these symbols and signs and this greatly disturbed the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam. At that moment, Jibraeel Ameen appeared to the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam and gave him solace that he should not be sad and that very soon, the Quraish will again re-establish these signs.

In other words, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam was firstly informed about what was going to happen and later on, a few people among the Quraish saw someone in a dream who informed them, "The Almighty azza wa jall has given you respect and status because of the Haram shareef and the Kaba, yet you people have removed its symbols and signs. If you wish for your security and peace, then bring back those symbols and signs and establish it once again where it used to be. Consequently, those people did exactly that. Jibraeel Ameen again appeared and gave the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam the glad tidings of what had occurred.

The Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam also remarked that these people had indeed done something very noble. Jibraeel Ameen also reported that these people had performed this task with the help of Angels and had placed these signs with their own hands. After the arrival of the Muslims in Mecca shareef, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam once again made sure that all these signs were firmly established.

It was also again reaffirmed during the era of Hadrat Sayyiduna Umar radi Allahu anhu, Hadrat Sayyiduna Uthman Ghani radi Allahu anhu, then during the rule of Ameer Mu'awiyah radi Allahu anhu, then during the rule of Abdul Malik bin Marwan and Mehdi Abbasi.

The question arises is: Was the Haram a place of peace and sanctuary from the very beginning or did it become a place of sanctuary through the Dua of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam? There are certain Islamic jurists who believe that it was a place of sanctuary from the very beginning.

In the books of Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, it is reported that when the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam delivered his khutbah after the conquest of Mecca, he mentioned to those listening that, “The Almighty azza wa jall had made this city a Haram when He first created the heavens and earth. No one was allowed to kill in this city. It was never permissible (for anyone to kill anyone in this city) before me and it will not be permissible for anyone after me. It was only made permissible for me for a few moments (for someone to be killed) and thereafter, it once again became Haram. Until the day of Judgement, it is not permissible to cut any tree (in the Haram shareef), it is not permissible to frighten any animal here and nor is it permissible to retrieve any item left on the ground except for that person who recognizes the item and returns it to its rightful owner. One is not allowed to cut the grass of this place.”

At that precise moment, Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Abbas radi Allahu anhu asked, “O Prophet of Allah! Please give permission for Izkhar (which is a special type of grass found in the area), because it is widely used in houses”. The Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam replied, “I have given exception to Izkhar”.

The Ulama explain that from this hadith shareef, we clearly come to realize that the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam was given complete authority over the laws of Shariah by the Almighty azza wa jall. He was given complete permission to declare what was permissible and what was not. He was also given complete permission to make certain laws permissible for a certain person and non-permissible for others. There are many examples of this in the hadith shareef. If we had to present some of these examples, then the complete time allocated for this lecture would finish and we would still not finish presenting all the examples.

We will present only one example in this regard which would prove our case.

It is reported that once the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam purchased a certain camel from a Bedouin. However, after some time, this same Bedouin began to request that a witness be presented by the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam that he had actually purchased the camel. When the blessed companions heard about this, they approached the Bedouin and declared, “Can

the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam speak a lie?” However, the Bedouin remained adamant and kept on insisting that a witness be brought forward and if this was done, then he would withdraw his claim against the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam. At the same time, since this transaction was not concluded in front of any of the blessed companions, hence no one came forward as a witness.

At that moment, Hadrat Sayyiduna Khuzaymah bin Thabit Ansari radi Allahu anhu came forward and tried to explain to this Bedouin, however the Bedouin also gave him the same answer. Hadrat Sayyiduna Khuzaymah radi Allahu anhu then declared, “I bear witness that you had sold this camel to the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam and that he had indeed purchased the camel from you.”

Obviously, the Bedouin became silent at this open declaration. However, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam turned to Hadrat Sayyiduna Khuzaymah radi Allahu anhu and asked him, “O Khuzaymah! How can you give testimony when you were not present at that moment?” The answer of Hadrat Sayyiduna Khuzaymah radi Allahu anhu will always be remembered in history. He replied, “The purpose of my testimony is merely to authenticate the absolute truthfulness of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam. I fully understand and believe that whatever appears from the blessed tongue of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam is only truth”.

In another narration, he is reported to have declared, “O Prophet of Allah! I believe in the truth which the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam brings to us about the heavens, can I therefore disbelieve in the truth which the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam has revealed about a mere camel of a Bedouin? You have never spoken a lie and even the very essence of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam and his character is one of truth, therefore, how can there be any lie in this?”

When the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam heard this reply, he rewarded this blessed companion with a unique quality not enjoyed by anyone else. He declared, “A single testimony of Khuzaymah for and against anyone is sufficient. There would be no need for anyone else (to give testimony).”

If we look at the Quranic injunction, we see that in any matter, there is a need for two just witnesses to be present. However, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi

wa sallam clearly excluded Hadrat Sayyiduna Khuzaymah radi Allahu anhu from this law making him indeed a unique individual in Islamic history. Even the greatest of the companions did not enjoy this blessed uniqueness given to him.

Another group of the Ulama are of the opinion that this place became a place of sanctuary only after the special Dua made by Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam. They also opine that if this was a place of sanctuary from the beginning then there would be no need for him to make this special Dua which he made.

This Dua is given in verse 126 of Surah Baqarah. The Quran declares that:

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ مَنْ
أَمِنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ط

And when Ibrahim submitted "O my Lord make this City a region of peace and feed the inhabitants of it with varied fruits to such of them who believe in Allah and the Last Day.

The Ulama also opine that the Almighty azza wa jall actually gave Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam even more than he asked for. Obviously when he made dua for sustenance, this would have been only for the believers, yet the Almighty azza wa jall even promises to give to those who disbelieve for a little time also.

In brief, these Ulama are of the opinion that this place became a place of sanctuary only after the Dua made by Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam. They also substantiate their argument with the following hadith shareef.

The Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam has declared that, "Nabi Ebrahim had made Mecca a Haram and I have made Madina Tayyibah the Haram. At that place, one is not allowed to cut any tree, or to frighten any animal or to cut any grass". Hence, there is no negativity in one statement against the other.

In other words, if we say that; that from the beginning of creation, Mecca shareef was delegated as a place of sanctuary, it would mean that this is what was destined according to the Divine Wish of the Almighty azza wa jall. The Quran declares, "Have they not seen that we have made the Haram a place of sanctuary?"

During the storm which occurred during the era of Nabi Nuh alaihis salaam, the Haram was lifted from the earth and its distinguishing symbols were obliterated. However, when Nabi Ebrahim rebuilt the Kaba and made a special Dua in regard to this special place, then through this Dua, it once again became known as place of sanctuary and this is what was initially commanded.

Dear brothers! if by Masjidil Haram is meant the Holy Kaba, then what can we further explain about its excellence and status. There is no doubt that there are numerous masjids on earth which cannot even be counted, yet, there is no doubt in the fact that the first house built for the worship of the Almighty azza wa jall is this which we call Masjidil Haram. And this will always remain the special and unique quality of this place.

This is again substantiated in Surah Aale Imran, verse 96 which is:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾

Verily, the first House among all marked for worship for people is that which is in Mecca abounding in blessing and a guide of all the world.

In the hadith shareef, Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Zarr radi Allahu anhu narrates that he once asked the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam as to which masjid on earth was the first to be built. The Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam replied, "Masjidul Haram". I then asked about the masjid after this and he replied, "Masjidul Aqsa". I then asked about the number of days between each of them when they were built and he replied, "Forty years".

Some people may become confused by this report especially when they see the verse in Surah Baqarah which explains that it was Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam and his son Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam who constructed the Kaba and also made a special Dua for this place. And when we look at the hadith shareef, we will find that Masjidul Aqsa was built in the era of Nabi Sulayman alaihis salaam. This is mentioned in the Sahih Nisaa'i shareef. We also know that there was a span of nearly a thousand years between the both of them according to certain historians! How therefore, can they be merely a forty-year span between the both? The answer to this is quite simple. It must be understood that neither of them were

the original builders of both these masjids. They merely reconstructed both masjids after they had been destroyed. We also know that the original Kaba was built in the time of Nabi Adam alaihis salaam and after this, nearly forty years later, either Nabi Adam alaihis salaam or one of his offspring was responsible for the original construction of Baitul Muqaddas/Maqdis.

Another view is that it was actually the Angels who were responsible for the very first construction of the Kaba and forty years later, they were also responsible for the building of Masjidul Aqsa. Hence, when we see the Quranic verse which explains that the first house built for the worship of Allah azza wa jall was the Kaba in Mecca shareef, it would be taken in its original context. This view is also supported by two important reports.

The first is that when Nabi Adam alaihis salaam constructed the Kaba and completed the Tawaf and also performed worship at this place, the Angels made dua to Allah azza wa jall that the Hajj and Tawaf of Nabi Adam alaihis salaam be accepted and that they had performed Tawaf of this house nearly two thousand years earlier.

The Ulama also explain that the Kaba was actually built five times. The first to construct it were the Angels. After them, Nabi Adam alaihis salaam. The third time was Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam. The fourth time was during the days of ignorance when the Quraish were responsible for its construction. This was also at that time when a dispute arose about who would place the black stone of Hajr Aswad and finally this decision was made by the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam himself. The fifth person to do so was Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Zubair radi Allahu anhu.

In one report, it is mentioned that the Kaba was rebuilt nearly ten times. Firstly, by the Angels, secondly by Nabi Adam alaihis salaam, thirdly by some sons of Nabi Adam alaihis salaam, fourthly by the Amaaliqah, fifthly by Bani Jarham, sixthly by Qusay bin Kelaab, seventhly by the Quraish. This was when the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam was only twenty-five years old and he decided how the Hajre Aswad would be placed on the Kaba. Thereafter by Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Zubair radi Allahu anhu and lastly by Hajjaaj bin Yusuf. It must also be remembered that all of these were merely a reconstruction and not the actual building of the original structure which was

either built by Angels or Nabi Adam alaihis salaam. As a matter of fact, the actual construction is considered to be the five mentioned above.

One question which arises is that; why did the Angels construct the Kaba when we know that the laws of shariah are not applicable on them especially in the law of facing the Kaba and performing the Salah. This has been explained by Imam Zainul Aabideen radi Allahu anhu. He explains that at the beginning of creation when the Almighty azza wa jall declared to the Angels that He will be sending His vicegerent on earth, the Angels as a matter of concern asked the Almighty azza wa jall why would He be sending such a creation to earth who would be guilty of fasaad and also bloodshed. Obviously, this is fully explained in Surah Baqrah verse 30.

They also reminded the Almighty azza wa jall that they themselves praised Him and truly worshipped Him. However, as a reply to their objection, the Almighty azza wa jall clearly declared to them that He knew what they did not know. In other words, the Almighty azza wa jall was clearly informing them that only He knew the secret of sending this creation to earth.

It must also be remembered as a mark of respect to the Angels that they were not actually objecting to the Divine Command of the Almighty azza wa jall but merely voicing their concern. At the same time, it also appeared to them that they were finding fault in someone else. They became very embarrassed by this and holding the Divine Throne, they displayed immense humility. For three hours, they continued to make Tawaf around the Divine Throne with the intention of pleasing the Almighty azza wa jall until the Almighty azza wa jall became pleased with them. When they had completed this act of humility, the Almighty azza wa jall instructed them to build a house on earth around which people would also be able to make Tawaf so that their sins could be pardoned. He also informed the Angels that when people make Tawaf of this house, they would also be pardoned as He had pardoned the Angels. At that moment, the Angels constructed the Masjidul Haram equal to Baitul Ma'mur in width and height.

In the hadith shareef, it is mentioned that there are fifteen such houses established for the worship of Allah azza wa jall. All of them are below the Baitul Ma'mur. Seven of them are in the heavens until the Divine Throne and seven are found in

the seven earth until the Tahtus Sara. The most eminent among them is the Baitul Ma'mur. Each one of them are to be found below each other. As a matter of fact, if someone falls through the roof of one of them, he would land on the ceiling of the other. In every one of them, there are servants of Allah azza wa jall who inhabit them.

Another question which arises is that if all of them are below each other and each one of them is referred to as "Baitul Ma'mur", then which one of them is considered the actual Baitul Ma'mur? In reference to this, the hadith shareef informs us that every day seventy thousand Angels arrive there to make Ibaadah. Such is the eminence of this house, that when an Angel visits this house once, he will never get the opportunity to visit it again. It is said that the actual Baitul Ma'mur is that which is found in the seventh heaven. This is also the place where on the night of Meraj, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam saw Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam.

In another narration, it is said that the actual Baitul Ma'mur is that which is found above the seventh heaven and below the Divine Throne. Hence, if we look at the number given at the beginning which is fifteen in number, it would now make sense. In other words, there are seven in the seven heavens, seven in the seven earth and one above the seventh heaven but below the Divine Throne. This would make a total of fifteen.

It is reported that Nabi Adam alaihis salaam reconstructed the Masjidil Haram two thousand years after the Angels had constructed it. Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Abbas radi Allahu anhu explains that, "When the Almighty azza wa jall had sent Nabi Adam alaihis to earth, then he asked the Almighty azza wa jall as to why he could no longer hear the voices of the Angels. The Almighty azza wa jall declared that it was through his own action that he was not able to hear the voices of the Angels. It is said that he wept so much that it would be hard to describe. The Almighty azza wa jall then commanded him to build a house for Him and that he should remember his Creator as he walked around this house and as he had seen the Angels do around the Divine Throne of the Almighty azza wa jall.

Nabi Adam alaihis salaam then travelled from Sri Lanka and whichever place he travelled through, those places became populated until he reached Mecca shareef.

When he arrived there, he reconstructed the Kaba on the same foundation which was originally built by the Angels. He was also assisted by Jibraeel Ameen at the Divine Command of the Almighty azza wa jall and who moved away the sand so that the original foundation could be seen by Nabi Adam alaihis salaam. Other Angels also assisted him by bringing stones from five different mountains. At one time, the Angels brought such huge boulders which even thirty people put together could not carry. In this way, Nabi Adam alaihis salaam was able to complete the construction of the Masjidul Haram. He then performed salah at this place and also made Tawaf around the Kaba. This building continued to exist for a very long time. However, when the storm appeared during the era of Nabi Nuh alaihis salaam, the entire construction was raised upwards and no sign or symbol remained on earth.

As to the question of the five mountains from where the stones were taken from and why five specifically? The names of the mountains are: Lubnan, Tur Zeta, Tur Sina, Juda and Hira. Tur Zeta and Tur Sina are to be found in Syria. Lebnaan and Hira are to be found in the Haram shareef and Judah is that place or that island where the actual ship of Nabi Nuh alaihis salaam came to a stop after the flood waters had subsided.

As to the question of why five mountains, the Ulama explain that since the Kabah was established for Salah and there are five Salah in a day, hence five mountains. At the same time, there are also five pillars in Islam which are the Kalimah, Salah, Zakah, fasting and hajj for those who can afford going for hajj.

In the hadith shareef it is mentioned that after the flood in the time of Nabi Nuh alaihis salaam, people were still able to make out a little of where the Kaba stood through a small heap of red stone. However, the actual and proper foundation was not known to anyone. People used to still arrive here from all parts of the world and make Dua and their Dua were certainly accepted.

Dear Brothers! We must also understand that every part of the Haram shareef is a blessed area where the Duas are always accepted. After all, if dua is not accepted at this place, where on earth will it be accepted? However, there are certain parts in the Haram shareef which are more well-known than others. Among them is the Hajre Aswad or the Black stone. It has also been referred to as the "Hand of Allah azza wa jall" or the Right Side of Allah azza wa jall. Whosoever manages to

kiss the black stone, on the day of Judgement, it will testify on behalf of that person.

Imam Qadi Ayyaz rehmatullah alaihi explains in the Shifa shareef that whoever makes Dua near the black stone, the Almighty azza wa jall would certainly accept his dua.

In the hadith shareef it is mentioned that who touches the black stone, he has certainly touched the hand of mercy.

Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Umar radi Allahu anhu narrates that he heard the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam declare that, "The rukn and the maqaam (in other words, the black stone and the rukne yamani) are two precious stones from Jannah. The Almighty azza wa jall has restricted its true brightness otherwise, it would have brightened every space in between the heavens and earth".

There is no doubt that the Almighty azza wa jall has blessed certain stones above others as He has blessed certain days over others. He has blessed certain cities over others. He has blessed certain days over others and in like manner, He has raised the status of certain Prophets above others. In Surah Baqarah, verse 253, the Quran declares that: "These are messengers! That in them We caused one to excel upon the other"

A wise person has explained that even though the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam is considered to be among mankind, yet like the Musk which appears from the blood of a gazelle, it can no longer be called blood. Hence, even though he is from among mankind, but his uniqueness makes him a most special category of creation. As a matter of fact, just like it is an insult to call Musk blood, in like manner to even use a term like "man" to describe the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam is actually an insult to his great being. In like manner, even though the black stone is a stone, but due to its uniqueness, it is completely unlike stone. Such is one of its special attributes in that if a sick person touches it, he or she will become cured.

In one hadith shareef it is mentioned that when the black stone arrived from Jannah it was whiter than milk. The sins of mankind have made it black. In one narration it was whiter than silver and even whiter than a pearl. The Ulama have

explained that its present black colour is actually a lesson to mankind so that they can better understand the result of sin and transgression especially when people generally know and understand that a stone is a hard object and does not absorb anything. There is a famous statement that even though stone is so hard that it cannot be damaged or disfigured in any way, yet the sin of man is so powerful that it can actually influence the state of a stone.

If this is the state of a stone, imagine how the heart of a person can be influenced and changed. In one hadith shareef, the heart has been described as a leaf which lies on the ground and can be carried here and there with the wind. This is how delicate the heart really is. If this is the state of the heart, imagine the effect of sin on this delicate object. One should certainly ponder upon this.

In one hadith shareef, the Hajre Aswad has been considered as the Right Side of the Divine Creator and whosoever has touched this, they have made a Bayet between themselves and the Almighty azza wa jall and His beloved Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam or have taken spiritual allegiance. In other words, the Almighty azza wa jall has taken a promise with them, that He will certainly allow them to enter Jannah as when a person approaches a King and kisses his right hand. In this context, it has been considered as the Right Hand of the Almighty azza wa jall.

The conversation between Hadrat Sayyiduna Umar and Hadrat Sayyiduna Ali radi Allahu anhuma about the Black Stone!

We should also bear in mind the following conversation which transpired between these two eminent Ashaab. In the Sahih Bukhari shareef and the Sahih Muslim shareef, it is reported that once Hadrat Sayyiduna Umar radi Allahu anhu approached the Black stone and kissed it. He then declared, "I know that you are merely a stone which can neither give good nor cause harm. If I had not seen the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam kiss you, then I would not have kissed you". He then read the 21st verse in Surah Al Ahzab which is: "Undoubtedly, you have the best in the following of the Messenger, for him who hopes for Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much".

At that moment however, Hadrat Sayyiduna Ali radi Allahu anhu replied, "No! O Ameerul Mo'mineen! It is not true that it does not do good. As a matter of

fact, it will do good and will certainly do good. I heard the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam declare that, 'On the day of Judgement, the Black stone would be brought forward and it will possess a tongue. Whoever had kissed it believing in Tauheed and Islam, it will bear witness for that person.'

The Ulama are of the opinion that the only reason that Hadrat Sayyiduna Umar radi Allahu anhu made this statement is that so people at that early stage in Islam do not begin to think that Islam also gives permission to worship a stone or to show undue respect and decorum for a mere stone. Bearing in mind that in that period, there were also people that continued to worship stone. Hence, he made it clear that his action was based on what he had seen the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam actually do. In other words, he was reminding us of a Sunnah of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam. There are some ignorant people who say that since a stone can become black with sin, surely it can become white with people's good deeds as well. They should remember that black is something which accepts other colours and remains black, however, white is something which does not do so. At the same time, this stone has become black because of the sins of people and accepts this without placing this on something else or changing the colour of something.

There are also such amazing and unique qualities of the Hajre Aswad that one is truly amazed. One of the amazing qualities is that it does not sink when placed in water but floats above the water. If it is placed in fire, it does not become hot but remains the same temperature. At the same time, in different parts of history, many people have tried to capture the Hajre Aswad and take it to their centres or cities and some have even tried to hide it so that no one could find it. Among these people were the Bani Jarham, the Amaaliqah, the Bani Khuzaa'i and the Qaraamitah. All of them have tried to steal the Black Stone, however, through the Divine Greatness of the Almighty azza wa jall it always returned back to the Kaba.

The last person who tried to steal it was an individual named Sulayman bin Hasan Qaramati. In the year 317 hijri. He took it to Kufa and installed it in a wall of the Jamia Masjid. He also had the impression that as of today, the Hajj would be performed at this place. However, a few years later, Fadl bin Manzar brought it

back to the Kaba. Another amazing thing is that when this despicable person first took it away from the Kaba, on the journey, nearly forty healthy camels died. As the camel travelled a little, it died. They then placed it on another camel and again a few miles later, that camel also died. Yet, when the Hajre Aswad was brought back to the Kaba, it only took one camel to bring it back. It is said that even the camel was not that healthy, however, when it arrived in Mecca, it looked fit and healthy.

As the Hajre Aswad holds a special place in the Kaba, in like manner, the Rukne Yamaani also holds a special place as well. The Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam has stated that, "When I walk past the Rukne Yamaani, I see an Angel who continues to utter "Ameen Ameen". Therefore, you people should make an effort that when you pass this place, you should make Dua to Allah azza wa jall that you are given good in this world and the next and that you are saved from the fire of Hell".

Hadrat Abdullah ibn Umar radi Allahu anhuma also explains that there are two Angels stationed at the Rukne Yamaani who utter "Ameen" when people make Dua. It is also reported that there are many other Angels also stationed at the Hajre Aswad. Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Hurayrah radi Allahu anhu mentions that at the Rukne Yamaani, there are seventy Angels who proclaim 'Ameen' when people make Dua. There is also no confusion in these different reports. The numbers mentioned could mean that at different times there are different Angels at this special place and that there are two of them who have been given the task to utter the Ameen after the dua of each person.

The number seventy could also signify that the Dua of a person is certainly accepted at this special place. In another hadith shareef it is mentioned that whosoever places his hand on the Rukne Yamaani and makes Dua, his Dua is certainly accepted because in between the Hajre Aswad and the Rukne Yamaani, there are said to be seventy thousand angels stationed there. Hadrat Imam Hasan Basri radi Allahu anhu also narrates from the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam that in between the Hajre Aswad and the Rukne Yamaani, there are said to be seventy Prophets who are buried here. May Allah azza wa jall through the

wasila of His beloved Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam accept our Duas through them. Ameen.

In summary, after Nabi Nuh alaihis salaam had passed away, different Prophets appeared in the Haram shareef and performed their Hajj. Yet, they were not sure of the actual place where the Kaba stood. This special grace was given to Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam who was given clear indication of where the actual Kaba stood. In surah Hajj, verse 26, the Quran declares that:

"And when We informed Abraham the right place of the House,"

This is where Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam and Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam reconstructed the Kaba for a third time. It is said that when Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam was commanded to build a house for the worship of Allah azza wa jall, he informed his son, Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam about this Divine Instruction. When he was asked where the actual Kaba was, he pointed to a heap of sand. They then began to dig so that they could see the actual foundation. Both of them also continued to make dua that this effort of theirs is accepted in the Divine Court of Allah azza wa jall.

When the foundation was dug, Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam carried the stones on his back and Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam busied himself with the actual construction. However, as the Kaba got higher, Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam found it difficult to reach for the stones which were being given to him. Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam with the purpose of helping his father, then placed a piece of rock at the feet of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam and that rock today is found at Maqaam-e-Ebrahim. Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam then stood on this rock and continued to build the Kaba. As a miracle, this same rock then captured the blessed foot print of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam.

The Ulama also explain that no Prophet has been given so many miracles as the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam. The miracle of this foot print of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam is to be found in the Quran, while where ever the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam walked, many rocks and stones captured his blessed foot print. There are many of these amazing foot prints of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam to be found in various parts of the world. Even in India, there are many to be found. Even in the mazaar where I am

lecturing, this miracle is to be found. On the 12th of Rabi ul Awal, this miracle as well as many other blessed relics are also shown to people who come from all over.

At the same time, there are some sceptics who go around making silly statements like how can we actually prove that this is the actual foot print of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam? The first answer is that we need to look in the Bukhari shareef which explains how this actually took place. The second answer is based on simple logic. You say that you are the son of a certain person. You also try to prove beyond a shadow of doubt that he is genuinely your father. At the same time, you claim for whatever wealth he leaves behind and also make it public that you are his true inheritor. However, we ask you, what proof do you have that you are actually his son? The only answer you will give is that you have heard this from various people and this is how you know that he is your father.

In like manner, this is also our answer. We have heard this from various sources over the years. Wherever you find this holy relic, people have heard it from those before them on how it came to be there in the first place. Hence, these reports are based on fact and one should not try to dishearten Muslims by creating rumour and baseless allegations. These blessed relics should be honoured and respected and this is what the Almighty azza wa jall and His beloved Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam expect from us.

There is a famous story of a female Sayyedah who was very poor. In a state of extreme hunger, she once approached a rich person for assistance. She also informed him that she was a Sayyedah, meaning that she was from the family of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam and that she would appreciate any help given to her. When the rich person heard this, he asked her what proof she had that she was a Sayyedah. What proof could such a poor person give at this extreme time of need? This was a strange town and she knew no one in this town. Silently, she left this rich person and returned.

One important thing to be borne in mind is that even though this rich person had behaved in this manner, he was also known as a very generous person in the town. And there is a famous statement which explains that a generous person is indeed a beloved of Allah azza wa jall. At the same time, it was the Divine Wish

of the Almighty azza wa jall to guide this person and this incident was going to be a lesson for him.

While he slept, he saw that the day of Judgement was about to commence and everyone was travelling in one direction. At the beginning of this large crowd, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam sat in great splendour. As each person arrived in front of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam, he asked them who they were and they replied that they were his Ummati. The Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam then instructed that person to enter Jannah. When the time came for this rich person and he was asked who he was, he replied that he was also a Ummati of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam. When he said this, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam asked him, "What proof do you have?" The question was asked in the same tone as he had asked the Sayyedah female. He immediately awoke from his dream greatly embarrassed and went in search of this Sayyedah female. When he finally found her, he pleaded for her forgiveness and made sure that he served her well.

The point is that the stone which was presented by Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam became known as Maqaam-e-Ebrahim. In another report narrated by Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Abbas radi Allahu anhu and Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Masud radi Allahu anhu it is mentioned that when Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam left his wife and child in this barren land with a little grain and a small container of water, his wife asked him in whose care he was leaving them, he replied that he was leaving them in the care of Allah azza wa jall. When his wife Hadrat Hajirah radi Allahu anha heard this, she was satisfied and declared that the Almighty azza wa jall would certainly never allow them to be harmed. When the water was finished and the young child became thirsty, as a concerned mother, she went looking for water.

She went to Mount Safa and then returned to her baby to see that he was safe and then went to Mount Marwa. She did this seven times. This act of Hadrat Hajirah radi Allahu anha was so loved by the Almighty azza wa jall that he later made this act of going to and from Safa and Marwah as something which was necessary upon every person coming to perform the Hajj. The intent was also to make people aware of the sacrifice of this mother.

In the meantime, Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam began to rub his heels on the ground as a baby normally does when he is very thirsty. At that moment, the Almighty azza wa jall sent Jibraeel Ameen to earth. Jibraeel Ameen then kicked the ground and suddenly a spring appeared. When Hadrat Hajirah radi Allahu anha saw this, she was very pleased and also concerned that perhaps the water might continue to flow and become dry, hence she remarked twice, 'zam zam' which signifies telling something to slow down or decrease. She also placed a few stones around the area so that it could remain within this area.

In the hadith shareef, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam has stated that if she had not said this or had not placed a few stones around this area, it would have been sufficient to water the entire earth. However, whatever happened was what was destined to happen. As to the question of what is Zam Zam, what is the status of its eminence and its excellence. This I would explain next year.

It will be explained that wherever the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam was brought from on the night of Meraj, he was firstly placed in front of Zam Zam. His blessed chest was then opened and whatever was destined to be removed from his chest was removed and his chest was again sown. Before this was done, knowledge and wisdom was also placed inside his chest. Later in life, the sign of his blessed chest been sown was also clearly seen. In that lecture also, it will become apparent as to which water is considered as the most excellent of water and between the Zam Zam and the fountain of Kauther, which is more excellent.

Dear brothers! The blessed chest of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam was opened four times. The first time when he was very young. It must also be borne in mind that a child by nature is prone to play and sport, yet, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam was never found in sport or play even though he was still a small child. No one could ever point a finger at the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam that he ever committed an unbecoming act while he was still young. As a matter of fact, even his enemies admitted to this.

Once there was a gathering of Christians and some of them began to mock the fact that the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam had many wives. They also mentioned that this was done so that he could satisfy his human lust and for no

other purpose. However, one of their companions stood up and declared, "I understand that you people are uttering these things simply because you consider him to be your religious enemy and because of the differences between your religion and his" They all admitted that this was indeed the reason that they were making these remarks.

He then declared, "If this is the case, then listen, I am now admitting in front of all of you that I now believe in him, I am now accepting Islam and I also bear testimony that he is indeed the true Prophet. There is no doubt being young is sometimes also referred to as days of madness. Those who are without shame, when they are young, these are days which they consider as days of enjoyment. However, this Prophet spent the first twenty-five years of his life as a pure soul. No one can ever point a finger at him or accuse him that he even looked at another female. When the time came for him to be married, he married someone older than him even though there were no shortage of females that were his own age. One of the reasons for marrying this noble lady was because she could also help him spread his mission. As long as she lived, he never married any other lady. If we look at the noble ladies he married as he grew older, this itself is a miracle"

The next time the blessed chest was opened was just before he could publicly proclaim his Prophet hood so that his chest could be able to carry immense weight of the Divine Word which was about to be revealed to him. In Surah Muzammil, verse 5, the Quran declares that:

إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ﴿٥﴾

Undoubtedly, soon We shall be casting on you a weighty word.

If we want to understand this mighty weight in the form of the Quran which was about to be revealed, we will understand it better from the words of Hadrat Sayyiduna Ali radi Allahu anhu who is world famous for his bravery and his strength. This is that blessed companion who was able to pull out the door of the Khyber fort by himself and later on, many blessed companions put together could not even carry it themselves to move it on one side! This blessed companion narrates that one day the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam was resting

his blessed head on the thigh of Hadrat Sayyiduna Ali radi Allahu anhu and resting when the Divine revelation began. Hadrat Sayyiduna Ali radi Allahu anhu narrates that it was as if a mountain had been placed on his thigh and he genuinely felt that very soon his thigh would be crushed with this weight. In the hadith shareef, it is mentioned that when revelation came, the complexion of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam actually changed and even in the coldest of moments, beads of perspiration appeared on his blessed forehead.

The next occasion for this blessed chest to be opened was just before the Meraj so that once again, his blessed being could have the power to be able to see his Creator with his naked eyes and be able to hear the Divine Command directly from the Almighty azza wa jall. Remember that this is that Quran which we have been told that if it was revealed on a mountain, the mountain would crumble into dust with the fear of Allah azza wa jall. This is also that Divine Command which when it appeared to Nabi Moosa alaihis salaam, he fell unconscious.

We now return to our topic. A little while later a tribe called the Bani Jarham was passing close by Mecca when they saw a flock of birds hovering in the sky. They understood that this meant there was water nearby. However, the older people in the tribe mentioned that during all these years, they had never seen water in this area. However, since the signs were quite strong, they decided to investigate as it could cause no harm to do so. When they arrived there, they were pleasantly surprised to see that in fact there was a spring of water present which had very strange qualities in that; not only could it quench the thirst of someone but it could also satisfy the hunger of a person. Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Zarr radi Allahu anhu also narrates that once they arrived in Mecca shareef and stayed there for fourteen days and they had nothing to eat. Yet, by merely continuing to drink the Zam Zam, they experienced no hunger or thirst whatsoever. As a matter of fact, they felt that they had become stronger and more fit.

Anyway, when the Bani Jarham arrived there, they found two people who looked like Angels and who were mother and son. They also understood that this spring belonged to these people. They then requested that they be allowed to stay and also mentioned that they would not make any claim against the water. Hadrat Hajirah radi Allahu anha and Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam agreed to this instead of living alone in this environment. Consequentiality, the young Nabi Ismail alaihis

salaam began to live with this tribe and also learnt their language which was Arabic bearing in mind that the language of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam was Ibraani or Syriac. As he gained maturity, he also married a girl in this tribe.

A few days later, his blessed father decided to visit him. At that moment, Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam was not at home as he had gone out hunting and Hadrat Hajirah radi Allahu anha had also passed away. The only person at home was the wife of Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam. As a concerned father, he asked her how she was and she displayed immense dislike at the way they were living. She explained that, "they were not actually living but merely passing away the days. At times, they had nothing to eat and did not even possess a proper house. If his son did find something while hunting, they had that to eat or else, they remained hungry."

She also complained about many other things as well. As Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam left this place, he informed her, "When he arrives, tell him that Hadrat Ebrahim had visited him and also tell him that the entrance to this house is not good and that he should change it." When Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam arrived at home, his wife informed him about what had happened and who had visited him. Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam replied, "That was my father and you had complained about many things to him which he did not like, therefore, I have no choice but to divorce you." After divorcing this woman, the Bani Jarham did not want to lose a person from such a noble family as a son in law and decided that he choose another wife from their tribe which he did. It is said that this wife was extremely gratuitous and kind mannered.

A few days later, Nabi Ebrahim alaihis again visited his son and asked the same questions to the new wife. However, she displayed immense happiness and satisfaction with the manner in which they lived. She also did not complain about anything. He informed her before leaving that she should notify his son that he was happy with the entrance of his house and that he should not change it. She also asked that he allows her to wash his feet and he told her that he had promised his wife that he would not alight from his horse, therefore he could not break his promise. She then asked him to place his blessed feet on a stone which she placed under his feet. In this manner, his footprint also appeared on this piece of rock.

The third opinion is that when the Almighty azza wa jall commanded Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam to stand and call people for Hajj, he stood on a piece of rock. The rock then captured his footprint. In which circumstances this rock captured the foot print of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam is something which is debated among the Ulama. However, one thing is for sure is that it is indeed the blessed footprint of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam and this has been kept in the blessed precincts of the Kaba for hundreds of years. The Almighty azza wa jall has also described this as one of His Divine Signs. Over the years, whenever floods appeared in the Haram shareef, this rock also moved, hence, it later became firmly established in the wall of the Haram shareef.

Even during the era of Hadrat Sayyiduna Umar radi Allahu anhu there was a huge flood and this stone also moved away from its original position. After careful investigation and comparing the written reports of certain people, this stone was again placed in its original position as it was placed during the era of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam. It must also be remembered that it was Hadrat Sayyiduna Umar radi Allahu anhu who had advised the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam that Maqaam-e-Ebrahim should be made a Musallah. The same day, even before sunset, the Quranic verse was revealed wherein the Muslims are advised to make this place a Musallah. This is also the place where the Tawaf commences and one is advised to also perform two rakah of salah at this very spot or near this spot.

It is reported that during the construction of the Kaba by Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam and Nabi Ismail, the King famously known as Zul Qarnain also travelled through this area. He is also mentioned in the Quran. It is said that the era of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam, Zul Qarnain and Nimrud was the same. There is dispute about whether he was a Prophet, however there is statement by Hadrat Sayyiduna Ali radi Allahu anhu that he was merely a pious person who used to love the Almighty azza wa jall and the Almighty azza wa jall had made him His friend. Another report explains that he was a very just ruler and even the various opinions of the Mufasssireen also allude to this. It is said that there were four people who once ruled the world. Two of them are Muslims and two of them

were disbelievers. The two Muslims are Nabi Sulayman alaihis salaam and Zul Qarnain and the two disbelievers are Nimrud and Bakht Nusr.

There is a fifth person also mentioned in history called Humairi who initially wanted to destroy the Kaba but changed his mind after he was given guidance by the Almighty azza wa jall. He was also someone who believed in the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam many years before the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam even appeared in the world. Before he passed away, he wrote a letter to the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam. There are also two other people who would rule the world in their time, the first is Imam Mehdi and the second is Nabi Esa alaihis salaam.

Zul Qarnain was blessed with a long life indeed. In one report it is mentioned that he lived until the age of 1600. Therefore, even though he lived in the time of Nimrud, he lived long after that and ruled the world many years after that. During the time of Zul Qarnain, the Kaba had no door. The person who built a door for the Kaba was Asad Humairi. He was also the person who placed a lock on this door and also covered the Kaba with a cloth. Prior to this, the Kaba was not covered with a cloth.

His story is also very strange. It is said that one day, he decided to travel the earth and decided to first travel to Rome. As he arrived in each city, he chose the wise and learned people to join him and in his army itself, he had nearly a hundred thousand such people. Wherever he went, people showed great respect for him. However, when he arrived at the Kaba, no such respect was shown to him. He then called his advisers and asked them about the behaviour of these people. He was informed that the Arabs are illiterate people and are not educated about decorum that should be accorded to eminent leaders. He was also informed that there was a special house in this city which is called the House of Allah azza wa jall. He was told that they only respect this house and no one else. When he heard this, he became angrier and wanted to immediately destroy the Kaba, kill all the men and take their females as slaves.

However, it was the Divine Wish of the Almighty azza wa jall to guide this person and so He created a reason for his guidance. When this person developed the idea to destroy the Kaba, he developed a severe headache. A foul smelling liquid also appeared from his nose, eyes and mouth which was so bad that people could not sit near him for one second. He advised all the wise and learned people in his army to treat him but none of them were prepared to come near him. They also informed him that they could only treat illness which was worldly illness and the sickness which he had; seemed to be illness that came from the heavens. They then informed him that they were helpless and everyone moved away from him.

That same night, a very learned person named Balyaan approached him very secretly and told him that he wanted to reveal something to the King. He asked the King whether he had intended to destroy the Kaba, the King replied that he had indeed. Balyaan remarked that, "This is the reason that this illness and disease has overtaken you. The Owner of this house is certainly aware of what is in people's hearts and is always aware of their intention". He suggested that the King desist from this intention and that he should treat the people of this city with kindness and that if he did so, his illness would disappear. The moment the King changed his mind, he was immediately cured while this learned person was still sitting next to the King. He also became a believer and as a mark of gratitude, he placed seven pieces of extremely expensive material over the Kaba. This is the first person in history to place a cloth over the Kaba. Thereafter, this same King with his entourage then travelled to Madina shareef.

It was a city in which no one lived at that time in history. He then camped in this city and four hundred of his followers took an oath that they will live here for the rest of their lives and not move from this city. On further inquiry from the King, they also informed him that years from now, this would be that blessed city in which the last and final Prophet would migrate to. This is also the Prophet which they had read about in the Torah and that they wanted the opportunity to meet him and also accept his message and if this was not possible in their time, then at least their children would be able to see this great Prophet.

When the King heard this, he wanted to also remain with them but his duties as a King did not allow him to do so. However, before leaving, he built four hundred houses for those who wished to remain and also arranged many other benefits for them.

He then wrote a personal letter to the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam which had a gold seal on it and handed it over to the same wise person who had given him advice on how his illness could be removed. He also informed him that he should hand it personally to the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam and if the final Prophet did not arrive in his time, he was to pass this on to one of his children and so on and so forth. This letter also informed the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam that this person had brought Imaan on him and that he also wished for the intercession of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam on the day of Judgement and at this moment, he was also a follower of the religion of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam. He then returned to India where he died and most of the Ansaar found in Madina shareef are the children of these four hundred wise and pious people from that era. The difference in time between his death and the arrival of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam is nearly a thousand years.

Later on, when news of the Holy Prophet's salal laahu alaihi wa sallam arrival became famous in Mecca shareef, the people in Madina shareef sent a person to Mecca shareef named Abu Layla to hand over this letter to the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam. At that time, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam was sitting among the Bani Sulaim when he saw this person approaching him. He immediately asked him whether his name was Abu Layla, the person replied that this was his name. Without any further word, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam asked him, "You have the letter in your possession written by Humairi?" This person was also shocked at how the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam firstly knew his name and secondly knew exactly what he had in his hand! This letter was then handed over to Hadrat Sayyiduna Ali radi Allahu anhu who read it to everyone. The Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam then declared thrice, "Welcome, my pious brother".

He then informed Abu Layla that he should tell the people in Madina shareef that very soon he will be arriving in that city. Everyone is aware of the story of his blessed migration and that when he arrived in Madina shareef, it was the wish of everyone that he stays with them. However, the camel stopped at the house Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Ayub Ansari radi Allahu anhu. This is where he stayed and Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Ayub Ansari radi Allahu anhu is the offspring of the same wise and pious person who had informed the King earlier on, on how to remove his illness.

This is also one of the reasons that the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam had warned us about insulting Humairi because he was the first person to beautify the Kaba during the days of ignorance and was the first person to establish a door in the Kaba. Later on, this became a habit of people and whenever any cloth over the Kaba became old, it was replaced by a new piece of cloth. During the time of the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam this cloth was also changed and also during the era of Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Hadrat Sayyiduna Umar, Hadrat Sayyiduna Uthman, Hadrat Sayyiduna Mu'awiyah and Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Zubair radi Allahu anhum. In the year 462 a.h., Sultan Mahmud bin Sabuktageen placed a yellow silk cloth over the Kaba.

Some people are of the opinion that the black cloth over the Kaba represents sadness and weeping. However, I like to explain what Ala Hadrat radi Allahu anhu has mentioned which is that the black cloth over the Kaba represents the fact that it still weeps at the fact the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam has left this city and the green dome over his blessed grave signifies the happiness of Madina shareef.

Some ignoramus is of the opinion that it is shirk to place a cloth over the grave of a pious person. When I asked someone this once, he replied that this is shirk because this is only applicable on the Kaba. I explained to him that the meaning of shirk is when one performs an act which is unique to Allah azza wa jall and Allah azza wa jall is pure from placing a cloth over Himself. How therefore can we consider this shirk? He then said to me that this is unique to the Kaba only and nowhere else. I then asked him to show me one proof from the Quran where

Muslims are commanded to place a cloth over the Kaba. When do Muslims place a cloth over the house of someone anyway?

To place a cloth over a house and place a piece of material over a grave is two different things. A piece of material is worn by someone while he is alive and we place a piece of material over a pious person's grave as a mark of respect. As for the cloth over the Kaba, this is something which began even during the days of ignorance which was not something mandated by the Almighty azza wa jall specifically. It was merely an act to show respect to an object. All of these acts of beautifying the Kaba with gold etc. by people thereafter, it was merely an act to show respect and love for a holy relic in Islam. Yet, nowhere, have we been commanded to do this by the Almighty azza wa jall. Muslims do this out of respect, therefore, how can you condemn this act of the Muslims. In like manner, a piece of material is placed over the grave of a pious person out of respect, how can you therefore condemn this?

As we have mentioned the Kaba was rebuilt for a third time by Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam and Nabi Ismail alaihis salaam. The fourth time the Kaba was rebuilt by the Quraish. The reason for this was because a large part of the walls was burnt when a lady who was applying loban accidentally dropped a few pieces of coal. After that also, a huge flood appeared and again the walls were greatly damaged.

The Quraish also had the fear that no one in their midst was prepared to break down the remaining part of the structure because they felt that the person would be instantly Divinely punished. At the same time, they also had the worry that they would not be able to acquire the timber to rebuild. It so happened that at that moment a ship carrying special timber from Rome was travelling through and had broken down in the port of Jeddah. In the hadith shareef, there is also special mention of Jeddah and its significance. The grave of Hadrat Hawwa radi Allahu anha is also in Jeddah. When the traders in that ship realized that they could not do anything with the timber on board, they decided to sell it to those nearby. The timber was also excluded from the ten percent duty or Ushr which

was normally charged for all goods arriving in Mecca shareef. Finally, they built up the strength to drop the old structure and rebuilt the new one.

It must also be borne in mind that at this instance, the Holy Prophet salal laahu alaihi wa sallam who was thirty-five years old, also took part in the reconstruction. He also carried stones on his back. After it was built, the issue of placing the Black Stone is quite well known to everyone and how it was decided that it would be placed. On the fifth occasion, the Kaba was rebuilt under the instructions of Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Zubair radi Allahu anhu. At that time in history, a person named Hasen bin Numair attacked the Kaba under the instruction of Yazeed because eminent companions had taken refuge inside the Haram shareef. This person had placed a large sling which rained down stones on the Haram shareef and a large part of the Kaba had been destroyed. However, when news spread that Yazeed had died, these people left Mecca and returned to Damascus.

Another incident was that someone had lit a fire near the Kaba and a few sparks had burnt the cloth of the Kaba causing a great damage. It was decided that the Kaba be torn down and a new structure be built. It was also debated whether one door be in place or two doors and whether this door should be on the ground level as it was during the time of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam. They also debated whether it should be built on the exact measurement as it was during the time of Nabi Ebrahim alaihis salaam etc. Eventually, it was decided that it be broken down and rebuilt. The first person to take this action of breaking the walls was Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Zubair radi Allahu anhu because many around him were afraid of the consequences. However, when they saw that nothing happened to him, they also joined him to bring the damaged walls down.

Hadrat Abdullah ibn Abbas radi Allahu anhu was under the impression that wherever the walls were damaged, they should be repaired. However, Hadrat Abdullah ibn Zubair radi Allahu anhu replied that this would not be proper because it looked like someone would be sowing stitches on the clothing of his parents instead of giving them a new set of clothing. They then started to reconstruct the Kaba as per the original foundation during the time of Nabi

Ebrahim alaihis salaam. The reconstruction began in 64 hijri. When time came to place the Hajre Aswad, this was placed by him, his son Hamza and another individual. They also encased it in silver. In brief, this construction was completed on the 27th of Rabab 65 a.h. After the construction, he also advised people to make their own individual sacrifices as a mark of gratitude and placed a silk cloth over the Kaba. People were then urged to come and perform their Umrah from Tan'eem. It is reported that on the day of completion and many days after this, the Quraish fed people every day as a mark of gratitude.

After the construction of the Kaba, Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Zubair radi Allahu anhu was later martyred. Hajjaaj who was the governor at that time also sent a message to Abdul Malik bin Marwan that Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Zubair radi Allahu anhu had in fact added another door to the Kaba. Hajjaaj then broke a part of the wall and again established the Hateem outside the Kaba. He then raised one door and closed the other door. When Abdul Malik later realized that Hajjaaj had gone against the actual plan, he greatly insulted him. Later on, Harun Rashid also asked a Fatwah from Hadrat Imam Malik radi Allahu anhu that he once again break the Kaba and have it rebuilt. However, the great Imam refused to accept this and also made it clear that the Kaba should not become a play object in the hands of rulers.

Therefore, the present Kaba and its actual structure is the same as was established by Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Zubair radi Allahu anhu. This is also a testimony to the Kaba that over the years, so many structures have come and gone and yet it still remains. There are certain leaders who have added a few things over the years, yet, this was only on that part which was initially broken by Hujjaj.

As for the question of why the Masjidul Haram is called the "Kaba" is because its actual building is called the Murabba' or "square building". Another reason is that it is considered a high and elevated building and according to the Arabs of that period and in Arabic, a high place was called a "Ka'ab". At the same time a young maiden is called such; due to her high chest or it could also signify that the reason it is called this is because it is a unique house which is unlike other houses. Hence, at the beginning, people used to always make their houses circular

in shape and never four sided so that it does not resemble the Kaba. This was done out of respect for the Kaba.

The first person at that time to construct his house in this four-sided manner was a person named Humaid bin Zubair. Hence, the Arabs used to have this saying among themselves which was, "Humaid has made his house square like the Kaba, if he had done this as an indication of following the Kaba, then he will live long, or else, his death would be very soon." At that time also, Shaybah bin Uthman used to climb on his ceiling and look to see which house was higher than the Kaba and if he saw any house higher, he instructed that that house be demolished. This was always the practice of those who lived within the vicinity of the Kaba that they never allowed their houses to be higher than the Kaba. One of the reasons was that they felt it would carry a great curse and secondly, their houses or buildings would not last very long.

When Hadrat Sayyiduna Umar radi Allahu anhu entered Mecca shareef and noticed a few houses which were higher than the Kaba, he immediately instructed that they be demolished and also made it clear that no houses should be higher than the Kaba as this was against the status and respect for the Kaba. In the present age, this respect is not displayed by anyone. Which is why it is said that as time goes, the respect in people's hearts will begin to decrease. What is surprising, the respect displayed in the days of ignorance by people who were not even Muslims is not even displayed by people in the present age who actually consider themselves Muslims or keepers of the Haramain, namely the Saudi Wahabi regime!

The reason for the name Baitul Haram

Another name for the Kaba is Baitul Haram because the Almighty azza wa jall has declared it to be a very sacred and holy place. We know that it is Haram to kill anyone within its precincts, to cut any grass or to frighten any animal etc. Another reason for its great status is that it has been called "Baitullah" or the House of Allah. Even though, we know that everything in creation belongs to Allah azza wa jall, yet, He has specifically related this House to Himself and has

commanded that His House should be kept pure and clean for those who make the Tawaf and stay in Mecca shareef.

Such is the excellence of ibaadah in this house that a person may spend his entire life performing salah, yet he will never be called a Namaazi. He may spend his entire life keeping fast or giving zakah etc, yet he will never be known as a Saa'im or a Muzakki. Yet, if a person performs only one single Hajj, he is called Haaji. As matter of fact, this even becomes the name of a person. How many people are unaware of the name of a certain person, yet, they only know him as "Haji sahib"!

It is also known as Baitul Ateeq because the Almighty azza wa jall has kept it protected from tyrants and oppressors. Whoever has intended over the years to destroy it, the Almighty azza wa jall has destroyed them. The story of the Ashaabe Feel is well known to everyone. The meaning of Ateeq could also signify something which is very ancient and hence, this is considered as the most ancient of houses which was established for the worship of the Almighty azza wa jall. At the same time, it could also signify the uniqueness of its name and title. Although there are many masjids in the world, yet, not one of them is called Baitullah. This is only reserved for the Kaba. Another reason could be that during the time of Nabi Nuh alaihis sallam when everything was submerged under water, only this house was taken away to the heavens. Hence, Ateeq in this regard could signify something highly respected. This could be one of the reasons that it has been referred to as Baitul Ateeq. It could also mean that the person visiting this house has been saved from the fire of Hell.

In the hadith shareef, it is also mentioned that a person who leaves his house for the purpose and with the intention of performing the Hajj and Umrah, he is in the Divine Protection of the Almighty azza wa jall. If he returns, he returns with immense reward and if he passes away, he enters Jannah. Another hadith shareef tells us that, "The reward for an accepted Hajj is nothing but Jannah." There is also immense reward for the act of making Tawaf. There are numerous ahadith explaining the excellence of this. In one hadith shareef it is explained that the person who makes the Tawaf of the Kaba, performs two rakah at the Maqaam-

e-Ebrahim and drinks the Zam Zam, his sins will be pardoned no matter how many sins he has.

Another point which was of concern to me is that the Tawaf begins from the Hajr-e-Aswad and therefore, during the entire process of the Tawaf, the left hand side of the person faces the Kaba, yet, we all know the excellence of the right side. However, when I saw a couplet written by Ala Hadrat May Allah have mercy on him, I immediately understood. The reason is that the heart of the Muslim is considered as the Arsh of Allah azza wa jall and the Kaba is considered as the House of Allah azza wa jall. Hence, both of these things are facing each other, the heart of the person which is on his left side and the Kaba.

Another excellence of the Kaba is that it is reported that the Almighty azza wa jall looks at this place every day nearly a hundred and twenty times with His Special Grace and Mercy. Sixty times at those making Tawaf, forty times at those making salah and twenty times on those who are merely sitting and looking at the Kaba. In the hadith shareef it is mentioned that a person who looks at the Kaba with Imaan and with the intention of getting reward, he is included among those people who will be protected from the trials of the day of Judgement or Mehshar. Another name for this is "Mubaarak" because there is untold Divine Reward which one attains from this place, hence, the most amount of reward is allocated at this place for someone making ibaadah.

In the Sahih Bukhari shareef and the Sahih Muslim shareef, a hadith shareef is mentioned wherein it is explained that the Holy Prophet Peace be upon him has stated that, "The performance of salah in my masjid is a thousand times greater than any other masjid except the Masjid-e-Haram". In the musnad of Imam Ahmed May Allah have mercy on him it is further narrated that he had declared that, "The performance of salah in the Masjid-e-Haram is a hundred thousand times more superior than of salah performed in my masjid." Another point to bear in mind that the Dajjal will be able to enter every city except Mecca shareef and Madina shareef. When he tries to enter these two holy cities, he will be turned away by the Angels.

Hadrat Hasan Basri May Allah have mercy on him also advised his friends to live in Mecca shareef because this is the most supreme of cities and also a beloved city of Allah azza wa jall. In the hadith shareef, it is mentioned that whoever dies in Mecca shareef, it is as if he has died in the heavens which is on earth. In one hadith shareef, it is mentioned that whosoever displays patience at the heat in Mecca shareef for one second, the Almighty azza wa jall will distance him nearly a hundred years away from the fire of Hell. Every good act or deed performed in Mecca shareef carries a hundred thousand rewards. In Sahih Tirmidi shareef, it is mentioned that once the Holy Prophet Peace be upon him while on a camel facing Mecca shareef declared, "By Allah! You are the most beloved of cities with Allah azza wa jall and the best of cities with Allah azza wa jall. If my people had not removed me from here, I would have never liked leaving."

Respect for the Kaba as we have said was even displayed by people during the days of ignorance. Besides people, even the animals displayed respect for this place. We see plenty of pigeons flying over head, yet none of them fly over the Kaba. We see on many occasions a large group of pigeons flying towards the Kaba, yet, as they approach the Kaba, they divide into two groups flying on either side of the Kaba. The Ulama also explain that whenever any pigeon becomes ill, it seeks solace in the Kaba. It has also been seen in the old days that even when a lion is chasing a deer or gazelle, the minute this deer or gazelle enters the Haram shareef, the lion breaks away and turns back. Anyone who wishes to destroy the Kaba will certainly face great calamity as we have read about Abraha and his elephants in the Holy Quran. Another interesting point to note is that there has never been less than six hundred thousand people coming for Hajj. If there is less than this number, the Almighty azza wa jall fulfils this number with Angels. The Almighty azza wa jall has also made a Divine Promise to the Kaba that every year, there will be no less than six hundred thousand people coming for Hajj!

Another amazing thing is that if we count the stones or pebbles which are thrown at the Jamaraat and add them to the number of people which the Almighty azza wa jall has promised will come every year and then multiply it with the number of years since Hajj first began, it will amaze the mind. Let's take a hundred years only and add this. Bearing also in mind that this is done for three days. Let's add

only seven stones per person and not the entire three days. We will see that it would make a staggering number of 420 million stones. Within a hundred years, the number of stones thrown at the Jamarat would have created a mountain. Yet, this is not the case. Until the present day, the Hajis are able to find stones easily wherever they go. In the hadith shareef it is mentioned that it is the Angels who are given the responsibility to disperse these stones after the stones are thrown.

Hajis should also notice another miracle which is that if they have the opportunity to being at the place where the Qurbani is been performed and the carcasses are left on one side, they will notice that no birds even approach these carcasses. Yet, if on any other day, a piece of meat is left on one side, a crow or any bird of prey will notice it immediately and also come for this piece of flesh. At the same time, during the days of Hajj, no flies are to be seen anywhere even if a person consumes honey openly. This is also seen at the place where the Qurbani is performed. Yet, after the Hajj has been completed, you will not be able to count the flies that suddenly appear and it becomes difficult to eat anything in public. At the same time, we will see that for some amazing reason, there is always a place available for a person to perform his ibaadah in the Haram or in Mina no matter how many people are present. No one seems to leave this place without performing his personal ibaadah.

Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Hurayrah May Allah have mercy on him narrates that once he asked the Holy Prophet Peace be upon him, "O Prophet of Allah! the issue of Mina is very strange indeed. When we notice it, it seems very small, yet when the Hujjaj arrive, it seems extremely large and expansive" The Holy Prophet Peace be upon him replied, "Mina is like the womb of a lady. This is also very small, yet during the days of pregnancy, it also increases in size." The Ulama have explained that there are many mosquitoes in Mina, however, during the days of Hajj, it suddenly decreases and those which remain, do not trouble people.

Besides the Rukn-e-Yamaani and the Hajre Aswad, another two places which are considered as special places where the Dua of a person is accepted are the "Multazim" which is situated in between the Hajre Aswad and the door of the Kaba. Many people also hold on to this place and make Dua. Imam Qadi Ayaz

May Allah have mercy on him has also presented a report which has ten narrators which lead to the Holy Prophet Peace be upon him and each one of them have declared that all of their Duas have been accepted at this special place. Among these people who narrated this are such eminent people as Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Abbas May Allah have mercy on him, Hadrat Amar bin Dinaar May Allah have mercy on him, Imam Sufyan bin Ayniyah May Allah have mercy on him etc.

Shuba narrates that he also saw for himself the power of making Dua at this place. "At the outskirts of the Kaba, the five of us once sat together. The other four were Hadrat Abdullah ibn Umar May Allah have mercy on him, Hadrat Abdullah ibn Zubair May Allah have mercy on him, Hadrat Mus'ab bin Zubair May Allah have mercy on him and Abdul Malik bin Marwan. All of them then decided that each one of them should hold the Rukn-e-Yamaani and make a special dua. It was then decided that Abdullah ibn Zubair should go first because he was the eldest and the last to make Hijrah.

He made the following Dua, "O Allah azza wa jall! I make dua to You with the wasila of the Holy Prophet Peace be upon him that I should not die until I do not become a guardian of the Hujjaaj and people do not greet me with the title of leader of the Muslims". The next person to stand up was his brother Mus'ab May Allah have mercy on him who made dua, "O Allah azza wa jall! You are the Lord of everyone and have Power over all things. Please do not allow death to come to me until I do not become the governor of Iraq and until I do not marry Sakinah binte Imam Husain May Allah have mercy on him." After him, Abdul Malik bin Marwan stood up and made Dua, "O the Owner of the heaven and earth! My request to You is that death should not approach me until I become the ruler of the East and West and whoever opposes me, his head should be placed in front of me." Finally, Hadrat Abdullah ibn Umar May Allah have mercy on him made Dua holding the Rukn-e-Yamaani, "O Allah azza wa jall! Death should not come to me until I do not receive the glad tidings of Jannah." The narrator explains that he saw the result of the first three with his own eyes, and heard from others about Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Umar May Allah have mercy on him.

