

The Miracle of Zamzam

After a while, baby Ismail began to cry for water. But there was not a single drop of water to drink. Hagar ran helplessly from one hill to another, but there was no water, nor any human being to give her water.

As the baby was crying desperately with thirst and the mother was running from one mountain to another, Allah

caused a miracle—a spring gushed forth beneath the feet of Ismail. When Hagar saw this from a distance, she shouted, “Zamzam” the sound made by rushing water in the Babylonian language.

Hagar came running and gave some fresh spring water to the thirsty child to drink. And so his life was saved. This spring later on became famous as Zamzam.

Ismail and his mother began to live in the valley and, because of the Zamzam spring, more people gradually came to settle there, slowly building up a small town, which was later called Makkah.

From time to time Ibrahim عليه السلام would visit Makkah to meet his family, especially to see his young Ismail growing up in the beautiful surroundings of nature—in a new town in a lovely valley surrounded by hills, away from the crowded cities whose inhabitants at that time were mostly idol-worshippers.

Signs of Allah

The two small hills, Safa and Marwa, symbolize patience and perseverance. One of the pilgrim’s most important activities is the *sa’y* — walking swiftly between them seven times. *Sa’y* means to struggle, or to do strenuous exercise.

It makes us remember the struggle of Hagar in the desert, rushing anxiously from hill to hill, trying to catch sight of a caravan that would have water for her dying child, and how suddenly from one hill she saw a spring gush forth near her child’s feet. Allah had provided for her and her son.

Today the two hills are fully enclosed within the Sacred Mosque, and pilgrims make the seven rounds down mosaic tiled corridors. As shown in the picture, the ailing and disabled are wheeled in chairs down an aisle between the corridors.

The walkway between the two hills, Safa and Marwa



The Sacred Zamzam

Zamzam is the name of the well in the courtyard of the Great Mosque in Makkah. Pilgrims to Makkah drink the water of Zamzam which has a special sacredness; some believe it has healing properties. The Zamzan water is a symbol for the basic truth, that when all seems lost, Allah is still present, with healing and life for the soul. After the exertion of the *tawaf* and *sa’y* most pilgrims drink Zamzam and relax at the nearby Zamzam area. Pilgrims drink Zamzam throughout their stay in Makkah and often take home small flasks and jerry cans as souvenirs for friends and relatives who are unable to make the Hajj themselves. Today, Zamzam water is pumped out in channels and provided through taps fitted in the Zamzam area, which is accessible in underground galleries reached by a flight of steps near the Kabah. Men and women have separate entrances.



◀ The Zamzam well in olden times.

The Stoning Pillars

Riding on, he reached the Jamarat, the three pillars at Mina. He cast seven pebbles at each, saying “Allahu Akbar” each time. The Prophet gave his second sermon at Mina. As in the sermon at Arafat, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ told the pilgrims to respect and care for each other, and follow God’s word in the Quran.

Afterwards the Prophet offered his sacrifices, shaved his head and took off the *ihram*—the pilgrims’ dress. That was the day of the feast—(today we remember that day as Id al-Adha).

On the same day, the Prophet rode to Makkah, performed *tawaf*, drank water at Zamzam and returned to Mina. At Mina

people came to him, asking many questions about the pilgrimage. Some said, “I delayed in doing so and so,” or “I performed something before it was due,” and so on. Over and over the Prophet told them: “No objection, no objection! Objections are only for the person who wrongfully violates the honour of his fellow-man.”

At Mina the Prophet spent three more days for the throwing of stones. In the afternoon of the third day, the Prophet moved to Makkah, where he stayed in a tent and slept briefly. Before the morning prayer, he went to the Sacred Mosque and performed the *tawaf* of Farewell.

The Prophet stayed in Makkah during Hajj for 10 days. Afterwards he left for Madinah. At a place called Dhul Halifa he rested for the night, and at sunrise entered his beloved city—Madinah, the Radiant.

When he first saw the city dwellings from a distance, words of praise poured from his lips: “Allah is most High. There is no deity save Him. He is One. No one is His partner. He is Lord of everything. All praise belongs to Him and He empowers all things. We are returning repentant, praying, prostrating ourselves, praising our Lord. Allah has kept His promise.”

The Prophet died two months after performing his Hajj.

A close-up view of *Jamrah* or the stoning pillar, in olden times.



Resting at Muzdalifa

This open plain lies roughly half-way between Arafat and Mina. Here, until midnight, the massive crowd of pilgrims pray and rest, and each gathers tiny stones for the visit to Mina.

The ancient town of Mina is where Ibrahim was tempted by Satan, as he was on his way to carry out Allah’s order to sacrifice his son, Ismail. Satan tried to persuade Ibrahim to disobey God’s command, but Ibrahim would not be swayed. There are three stone pillars (*jamarat*) in Mina representing the devil, and pilgrims celebrate Ibrahim’s great faith by throwing seven stones at each of them.

The *Jamrah* or the stoning pillar in present times, where pilgrims carry out the rites of stoning. ▶



The Sacred Mosque of Makkah

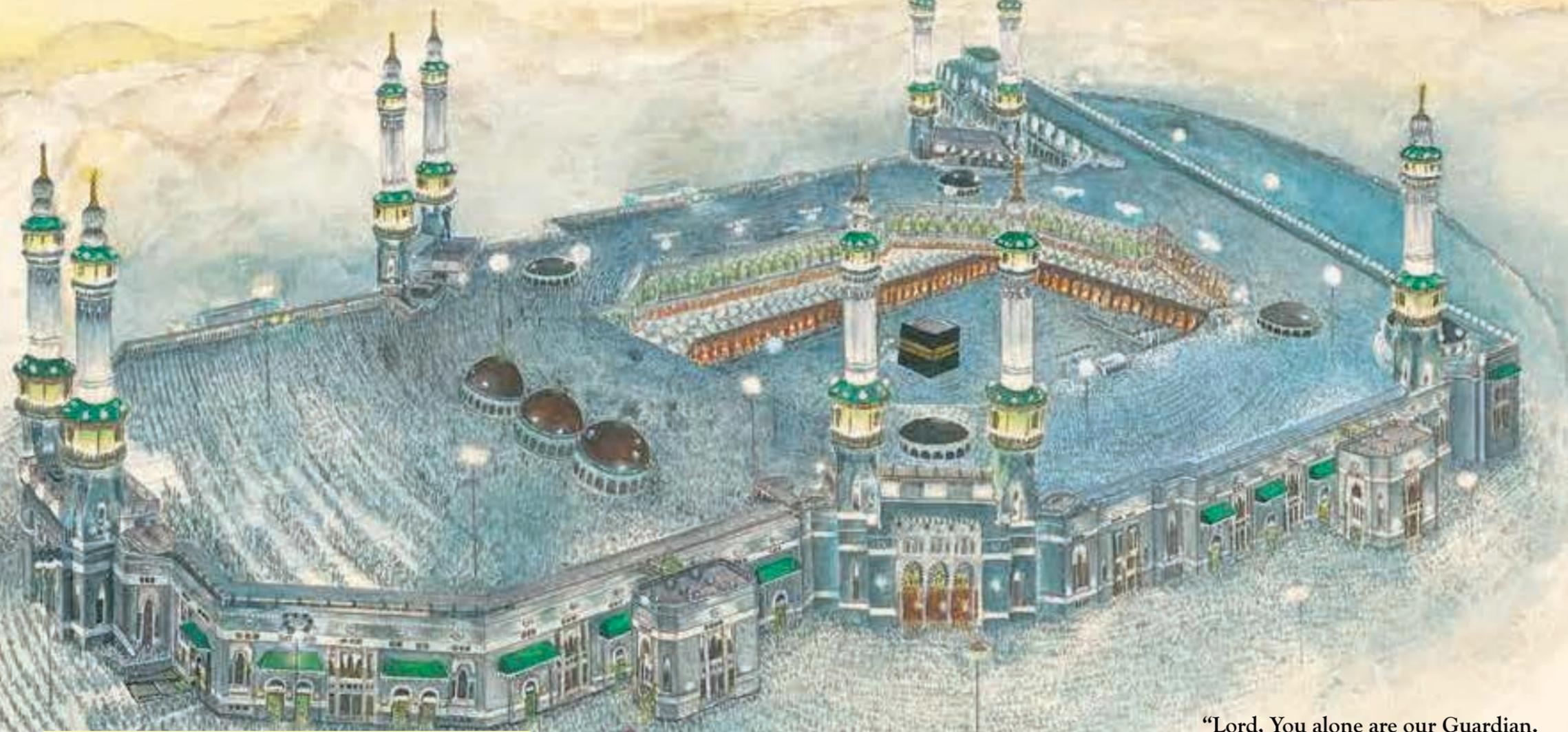
The Sacred Mosque of Makkah has been made larger over the years. Now the spring of Zamzam and the Safa and Marwa hills are enclosed within its walls, and there is enough space for one million pilgrims at a time. During Hajj this

magnificent structure itself seems to float on the ocean of pilgrims that surrounds it as far as the eye can see.

As the pilgrims of different races, speaking different languages, return to their homes, they carry with them

wonderful memories of the great men of the past—the Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his Companions and their wives, the great Caliphs, the respected scholars and thinkers of Islam—all who have undertaken the Hajj before them. They will always remember that great coming together, where rich and

poor, black and white, young and old, met as equals. They go back, their faces shining with hope and joy, for they have carried out God’s command—the same command that He gave to mankind many centuries ago to go on the pilgrimage. This was so that people could not only seek pardon for their sins, but could also turn into better human beings. When they return, it is with the prayer that God may be pleased with their Hajj.



The Sacred Mosque now encompasses fully 4,300,000 square meters (about 100 acres), including the rooftop prayer areas and the open plazas surrounding the mosque. Although it comfortably holds around 2.5 millions worshippers, during Hajj and Ramadan more than twice as many pack into it and fill its adjoining plazas.

“Lord, You alone are our Guardian. Forgive us and have mercy on us: You are the noblest of those who forgive. Ordain for us what is good, both in this life and in the Hereafter. To You alone we turn.”
(Al-A'raf 7:155-156)

The Supreme Act of Worship

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ calls Hajj, the journey to God, the “supreme act of worship.” It is a way for Muslims to renew their religious enthusiasm and their faith in Allah. After this, the greatest act of the pilgrims’ life, they become like new human beings.

In spirit, it combines all the other acts of worship, helping us to remember Allah and make sacrifices for His sake. On this we have to expend time, money and energy. But Hajj is not just going to and from Makkah. Hajj shows how close we can get to Allah in this life. While other acts of worship are about remembering God, Hajj is about reaching Him. Generally, when we worship God, we cannot see Him, but during Hajj, we come face to face with Him. When pilgrims stand before the House of God, it is like standing before God Himself. Then they are moved to walk around God’s House, like a butterfly circling a flower.

The plain of Arafat, where the pilgrims spend one day, is like a picture of Judgement Day. The Quran says, “When the trumpet is blown, behold, from the graves they rush forth to their Lord.” (*Surah Ya Sin, 36:51*). And indeed, thousands and thousands of God’s servants flock in from all sides to witness the event. And what a great sight it is! All are dressed in the same, simple attire and all recite the same words: “Here we are at Your service, Lord.”

Just as the Sacred Mosque in Makkah is the holiest, so is the worship that is performed there—as part of the pilgrimage—the most important. It is not just the pilgrims’ duties during Hajj that make it important, but the spirit in which they carry them out.

Prayers from the Quran and the Hadith



"When My servants question you about Me, tell them that I am near. I answer the prayer of every suppliant who calls to Me; therefore let them respond to Me, and believe in Me, that they may be rightly guided." (Surah al-Baqarh 2: 186)

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ نَهَوْنَا أَنْ نَعْمَلَ وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا أَوْرَاقَنَا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِلْنَا مَا لَنَا طَاقَةً نَأْتِيهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْنَا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

Our Lord, take us not to task if we forget, or lapse into error. Our Lord, charge us not with the burden You laid upon those before us. Our Lord, do not burden us beyond what we have the strength to bear. And pardon us, and forgive us our sins, and have mercy on us, You alone are our Protector. And help us against people who deny the truth. (2:286)

رَبَّنَا إِنَّا أَسْأَلُكَ سَمْعًا وَمَنَادًا يَا بَدِئَ الْإِيمَانِ أَنْ مَا اسْتَوَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ فَمَا مَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاعْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَقَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ ○ رَبَّنَا وَآيَاتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْوَعْدَ ○

Our Lord, we have heard the call of one calling us to the true faith, saying, "Believe in the Lord!" And we believed. Our Lord, forgive us our sins and remove from us our bad deeds, and take our souls to Yourself with the righteous. Our Lord, grant us what You have promised us through Your Messengers, and save us from disgrace on the Day of Resurrection; You will never break Your promise! (3:190-194)

رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأُدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي الْعَابِدِينَ ○

Inspire me, Lord, that I may forever be grateful for the blessings You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do good works that will please You and include me through Your mercy amongst Your righteous servants. (27:19)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ○

Allah, I ask You for well-being in this life and the Hereafter. (Related by al-Tirmidhi.)

رَبَّنَا آفِرْ عَيْنَانَا صَبْرًا وَتَوَقَّنَا مُسْتَلِيمِينَ ○

Lord, give us patience and let us die in submission. (7:126)

أَنْتَ وَلِيُّنَا فَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْغَافِرِينَ ○

وَاصْكُتْ لَنَا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَإِنَّا هُدْنَا إِلَيْكَ ○

Lord, You alone are our Guardian. Forgive us and have mercy on us: You are the noblest of those who forgive. Ordain for us what is good, both in this life and in the Hereafter. To You alone we turn. (7:155-156)

رَبَّنَا إِنَّا أَمَّا فِي نِعْمَتِكَ وَرَحْمَتِكَ وَأَمَّا فِي نِقْمَتِكَ وَإِنَّا بِكَ لَشَاكِرُونَ ○

Our Lord! Send upon us Your mercy, and show us the solution to our problem in the right way. (18:10)

وَقُلْ رَبِّ ادْخُلْنِي مَدْخَلَ صِدْقٍ وَأَخْرِجْنِي مَخْرَجَ صِدْقٍ وَأَجْعَلْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ سُلْطَانًا نَصِيرًا ○

Lord, grant me a goodly entrance and a goodly exit, and sustain me with Your power. (17:80)

رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ○

وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَنْ يَحْضُرُونِ ○

Lord, I seek refuge in You from the promptings of all evil impulses. Lord, I seek refuge with You from their presence. (23:98-99)

رَبَّنَا ءَامَنَّا بِأَعْفِرْنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ○

Our lord, we believe; therefore forgive us, and have mercy on us, for You are the best of the merciful. (23:109)

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

Say 'My prayer, my worship, my living, my dying are for Allah alone, the lord of all Being.' (6:162)

قَالَ رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ○

Lord, we have wronged our souls. Pardon us and have mercy on us, or we shall surely be among the lost. (7:23)

اللَّهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ لِي دِينِي الَّذِي هُوَ عِصْمَةُ أَمْرِي، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي دُنْيَايَ الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَاشِي، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي آخِرَتِي الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَادِي، وَاجْعَلْ الْحَيَاةَ زِيَادَةً لِي فِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ، وَاجْعَلْ الْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لِي مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ ○

Lord, give us joy in our spouses and children and make us foremost among those who are conscious of You. (25:74)

رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ ○

Lord, I stand in dire need of any good which You may bestow upon me! (28:24)

رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي بُدِئْتُ بِكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ○

Inspire me, my Lord that I may be thankful for Your blessing bestowed on me and my parents, and that I may do good works that will please You. Grant me good descendants. To You I turn and to You I surrender myself. (46:15)

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ○

وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

Forgive us Lord, and forgive our brothers who embraced the Faith before us. Do not put in our hearts any malice towards the faithful. Lord, You are Compassionate and Merciful. (59:10)

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and the lack of moderation in our doings. Make our steps firm, and help us against those who deny the faith. (3:147)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدَىٰ، وَالْقِيَامَ، وَالْعَفَافَ وَالْغِنَى ○

O Allah, I ask You for guidance, piety, uprightness and prosperity. (Related by Muslim.)

اللَّهُمَّ أَكْثِرْ مَا لِي، وَوَلَدِي، وَتَارِكًا لِي فِيمَا أُعْطِيْتَنِي [وَاطْلُ حَيَاتِي عَلَى طَاعَتِكَ وَأَحْسِنْ عَمَلِي] وَاعْفِرْ لِي ○

O Allah, increase my wealth, my children and bless me in what You have granted me. Make my life longer upon your obedience, make my deeds the best and forgive me. (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْعَجْزِ، وَالْكَسَلِ، وَالْجُبْنِ، وَالْبُخْلِ، وَالْهَرَمِ وَعَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ، اللَّهُمَّ آتِنَا نَفْسًا تَقْوَاهَا، وَزَكَاهَا أَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْ زَكَاهَا. أَنْتَ وَلِيُّهَا وَمَوْلَاهَا. اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ، وَمِنْ قَلْبٍ لَا يَخْشَعُ، وَمِنْ نَفْسٍ لَا تَشْبَعُ، وَمِنْ دَعْوَةٍ لَا يُسْتَجَابُ لَهَا ○

O Allah, I seek refuge in You from weakness, laziness, cowardliness, meanness, senility and the punishment of the grave. O Allah, give my soul sufficient piety to fear You, and purify it, as You are the best one who can purify it. You are its Patron and Master. O Allah, I seek refuge in You from knowledge which is of no benefit, a heart which has no fear, an appetite which is insatiable and a supplication which is not answered. (Related by Muslim.)

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي سَبِيلَكَ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالسُّبْحَانَ ○

O Allah, guide me and keep me to what is right. O Allah, I ask You for guidance and to keep me on the right path. (Related by Muslim.)

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Amin, Mohammed. <i>Pilgrimage to Makkah</i> , Nairobi, Camerapix, 1978.	London, Stacey International, 1989.	Heinemann Educational, 1996.
Frika, Abdelaziz and Guellouz Ezzedine. <i>Makkah: The Muslim Pilgrimage</i> , London, Paddington Press, 1979.	Kadi, Hamza. <i>Makkah and Madinah Today</i> , Les Editions, j.a. Paris, 1980.	Nawwab, Ni'mah Isamil. "Hajj: The Journey of a Lifetime," <i>Aramco World</i> , July-August 1992.
Glassè, Cyril. <i>Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> ,	Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. <i>Haqiqat-e-Hajj</i> , New Delhi, Al-Risala, 1986.	Nomachi, Ali Kazuyoshi and Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. <i>Makkah: The Blessed, Madinah: The Radiant-The</i>

اللَّهُمَّ أَكْثِرْ مَا لِي، وَوَلَدِي، وَتَارِكًا لِي فِيمَا أُعْطِيْتَنِي [وَاطْلُ حَيَاتِي عَلَى طَاعَتِكَ وَأَحْسِنْ عَمَلِي] وَاعْفِرْ لِي ○

O Allah, increase my wealth, my children and bless me in what You have granted me. Make my life longer upon your obedience, make my deeds the best and forgive me. (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ الْحَلِيمُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ، وَرَبُّ الْأَرْضِ، وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ ○

There is no deity which has the right to be worshipped except Allah alone, the Mighty, the Wise. There is no deity which has the right to be worshipped except Allah alone, Lord of the Mighty throne. There is no deity which has the right to be worshipped except Allah alone, Lord of the Heavens, the earth and the Noble Throne. (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

اللَّهُمَّ رَحْمَتَكَ أَرْجُو فَلَا تَكْلِبْنِي إِلَىٰ نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ ○

O Allah, I hope for Your mercy, so do not leave me to myself even for an instant. Set all of my affairs in order. There is no deity which has the right to be worshipped except You alone. (Related by Abu Da'ud and Ahmad.)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ زَوَالِ نِعْمَتِكَ، وَتَحَوُّلِ عَافِيَتِكَ، وَفَجَاءَةِ نَفْسِكَ، وَجَمِيعِ سَخَطِكَ ○

O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the absence of Your favours, a change in Your granting me well-being, a sudden vengeance wrought by You and all that displeases You. (Related by Muslim.)

Holiest Cities of Islam, Hong Kong, Odyssey Books, 1997.

Stewart, Desmond and Amin, Mohamed. *Makkah*, New York, Newsweek, 1980.

The Two Holy Mosques, London, Saudi Arabia Information Centre, 1993.