



FRIDAY SERMON

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After greeting all his disciples (and all Muslims) worldwide with the greeting of peace Hadhrat Khalifatullah (atba) read the Tashahhud, Ta'uz, Surah Al Fatiha, and then he delivered his sermon on:

THE STORY OF THE KA'ABA

Mecca, the Holy City is the busiest city in Saudi Arabia. The Holy Mosque (Masjid al Haram) is located in Mecca. It is a city in the Arabian Peninsula 350 meters above the sea. The Ka'aba is in the middle of the Sacred Mosque. This mosque is located in a space called *Bakka*.

The date of its foundation goes back to the time of Hazrat Ibrahim (as), the Prophet (*Nabi*) and the Friend (*Khalil*) of Allah. It is in this city that the Holy Prophet of Islam was born. It is also the cradle of the revelation that welcomed the light of Islam and it is there that springs the Sacred Mosque, the first installed on earth for the men by virtue as it is evident from the words of the Most High (Allah): **"The first House that was built for the people is that of Bakka (Mecca), blessed and a good direction for the universe."** (Al-Imran 3: 97)

It has been safely reported from Abu Dharr that he said, *"I asked the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) about the first mosque on earth? He said, 'The Holy Mosque' and then I said to him, 'Which one afterwards?' He said, 'The Al-Aqsa Mosque.' I told him, 'How much time has passed between the two?' He said, '40 years old.'"*

The Ka'aba towards which the Muslims of the East and West (all Muslims) turn for their prayers (to worship the Unique Lord of the Ka'aba), is approximately found at the centre of the Sacred Mosque. It has a height of 15 metres and takes the form of a large cube almost square. It was built by Hazrat Ibrahim (as) on the command of Allah the Most High. Allah the Almighty and Majestic says: **“And when We appointed for Ibrahim the place of the House (the Ka'aba) saying to Him, ‘Do not associate Me with anything; and cleanse My House for those who circle around it, for those who stand up in prayer, and for those who bow and make prostration.’”** (Al-Hajj 22: 27).

The term *“bawwa'na”* means: We directed it and made it available to it and gave it permission to build. In this regard, Allah the Almighty says: **“And when Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundation of the House, [saying], ‘O our Lord, accept this from us! For You are the Hearing, the Knowing.’”** (Al-Baqara 2: 128).

THE KA'ABA DESECRATED BY THE POLYTHEISTS AND IDOLATERS

Over the course of time, the Arabs forgot the fundamental principle of the Unicity of Allah taught by Abraham (as). They became polytheists and idolaters. They worshiped 360 idols, in the foreground of which were Hubal, Lat and Uzza. Yet the idolaters had not completely forgotten the name of the One God (*Ilah*). They had also preserved the tradition of performing the ritual circumambulations (*Tawaaf*) but they now performed them in an unhealthy and demonic way. The Ka'aba was transformed into a naturist camp. Indeed, the idolaters considered that they had to perform the sacred rite completely naked because, according to their reasoning, man was born naked and he must therefore present himself before the deities in a similar condition.

In these circumstances, the ritual circumambulations (*Tawaaf*) had taken on a festive appearance. There were those who did them while others started commercial activities. Fairs were organized. They sold a little of everything, including drinks, spices, perfumes, deities and women, and these, including the women were sometimes sold at a discount. Satan's vow was apparently fulfilled.

Can we therefore conclude that the work of Abraham (as) has been destroyed? The answer must be negative.

THE DIVINE PROTECTION ON THE KA'ABA.

Allah (swt) has been watching over the Ka'aba forever. Hazrat Ibrahim (as) had invoked Him in these terms: **“Our Lord, and send among them a Messenger from themselves who will recite to them Your signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and purify them. Indeed, You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise.”** (Al-Baqara 2: 130)

This prayer was fulfilled some 2500 years later by Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) when he was only 35 years old. He was not yet formally inspired by Allah. He inaugurated the third conclusive cycle of Ka'aba history. After the Abrahamic era, for a period of 23 years, Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) changed the course of the history of the Ka'aba. All the idolaters of Arabia became monotheists, believers in one God. These people influenced the evolution of the Sacred House in their own way.

The Ka'aba was 2500 years old and could not withstand bad weather. With the last great flood [in the times of the Holy Prophet of Islam], its walls began to crumble. The Quraishs, the descendants of Ishmael (as) wanted to rebuild them, but they were reluctant because they still remembered the episode of Abraha.

Thirty-five years ago, in the year 570, about two months before the birth of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), Abraha Ashram, the Abyssinian governor of Yemen, had come to Mecca with a large army of elephants to demolish the Ka'aba with the intention to rebuild it in Yemen in order to benefit commercially from the pilgrimage which was rather the great fair of the time in this part of the world.

As soon as they arrived in the suburbs of Mecca, they had confiscated all the camels. The Meccans could not resist such a powerful army of the Abyssinians. They had all escaped from Mecca to seek refuge on the surrounding mountains, except for their leader, Abdul Mutallib, who was to become the grandfather of the prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Abdul Mutallib went to meet Abraha in the suburbs of Mecca.

On seeing him, Abraha believed that he had come to implore his clemency so as not to destroy the Ka'aba. This was not the case. Abdul Mutallib had come only to ask for the return of the looted camels. Seeing him (Abraha) perplexed, Abdul

Mutallib told him: *“The camels belong to us. As for the Ka’aba, it has its Master who will take care of it.”*

The great army of Abraha had already penetrated the sacred space of the Ka’aba. It had to make a forced stopover in a valley (*Wadi-e-Muhassar*) in Mina since the elephants did not want to move. Then Allah, the Guardian of the Ka’aba, sent an army of birds that dropped on them small stones of *Sijjil* (clay). Abraha and his army were all annihilated.

“Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the people of the Elephant? Has He not made their trick completely vain? And sent birds flying towards them throwing stones of clay at them? And He made them like a chewed straw.” (Al-Fil 105: 2-6).

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE KA’ABA

What was the magic, the power of these stones? Allah alone knows about it and is aware of this secret. It is for this reason that the Quraishs hesitated to demolish the Ka’aba. Finally one of their leaders, Walid Bin Mughira, told them, *“Our intention is not like Abraha. As for us, we only want to rebuild the building that the flood has damaged.”* Convinced, they decided to raise money to finance the project but they did not accept money which from a prohibited transaction. This attitude is very commendable and represents the change that was going to take place. Muhammad (pbuh), a model citizen, participated actively in the reconstruction of the Sacred House. He was carrying large stones on his neck at Mount Abu Qubays. The construction was fast.

However, a controversy arose when came the time to place the Black Stone in its rightful place. The different tribes quarrelled among themselves. Each group wanted to have the honour of being able to lift and move the Black Stone to the corner where it was supposed to be. The quarrel was merciless and the leaders of each tribe were about to kill each other.

This disagreement continued for a few days and no solution was found. Finally, Abu Umayya al-Makhzumi, one of their oldest leaders, suggested, *“O my brothers! You want to please your gods, but at the same time you want to kill each other. The first person who enters through the As-Safa gate will settle the dispute.”*

All accepted this proposal and waited. The suspense was very great. Suddenly someone entered. All together cried out: Muhammad *Al-Amin* (pbuh), the trustworthy man. All were satisfied and relieved when they saw him. Informed of the quarrel, Muhammad (pbuh) satisfied everybody at once. He asked them to bring a large cloth on which he placed the Black Stone and asked a representative of each tribe to hold a piece of cloth by the edge to carry the stone. All together they raised the fabric to the height where the stone was to be laid. Muhammad (pbuh) took it to place it himself. This gesture of Muhammad (pbuh) is similar to that made by the prophet Ibrahim (as) and this is the proof of the continuity and synthesis of the prophetic mission.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BLACK STONE

According to Ibn Abbas (ra) the Messenger of God (pbuh) said: *“The Black Stone descended from Paradise whiter than milk, then the sins of humans blackened it.”* (Tirmidhi, Ahmad)

Atheists formulated criticisms of the Hadith I just quoted, saying: *How was the Stone blackened by the sins of idolaters and was then not purified (whitened) by the acts of obedience of the partisans of faith in the absolute uniqueness of Allah?*

My reply : If Allah had wanted it, it would have been the case, but Allah has made that, usually, the black colours and does not let itself be coloured, which is the opposite of the white. Moreover, this colour which is now its identity is a reminder to humanity that it must abandon evil in all forms and reform. If the pilgrimage (Umrah and Hajj) is a source of purification for believers, then in all its rites, there is a lesson to be learned. The main aim is the complete purification of the human being and all the symbols on the pilgrimage are reminders for them that they must leave behind their previous lives, especially if they were marked by sins.

Touching the stone or kissing it or indicating/ waving at it are the first acts of the person who wants to circle around the Ka’aba as part of a major or minor pilgrimage or as a supererogatory religious act. According to Jabir Ibn Abdullah (ra): *“When the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) arrived at Mecca, he presented himself to the Stone and touched it. Then he went to his right, hastened his steps for three*

turns, and then walked [normally for the remaining four turns] four times.” (Muslim).

It is reported that Umar (ra) presented himself at the Stone and kissed him, saying, *“I know you are a stone and you cannot bring benefit or harm. If I had not seen the Prophet kiss you, I would not have done it.”* (Bukhari, Muslim).

So, if the Pilgrim cannot kiss it, he can touch it with his hand or wave/ point to it with a thing [like a staff/ stick] and kiss it.

In another Hadith, Abu Tufayl (ra) said, *“I saw the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) perform Tawaf around the House, touching the corner (where the Black Stone is) with a crooked staff which he had with him, then kissing the staff.”* (Muslim)

According to Ibn Abbas (ra), the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) performed Tawaf on his camel, and every time he came to the corner (where the Black Stone is) he would point to it and say Allahu Akbar. (Bukhari)

Touching the Stone and the Yemeni Corner of the Ka’aba is one of the means by which Allah the Most High expiates sins. Ibn Umar (ra) said: *“I have heard the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) say, ‘Touching them is a way to atone for sins.’”* (Tirmidhi).

The Black Stone makes those with an interior view meditate. Indeed, if sins leave traces on the hard stone, they leave deeper traces on the heart. And thus we must avoid making sins.

Muslims are not allowed to harm other Muslims near the Stone by hitting or fighting against them, for the Prophet (pbuh) has affirmed that the Stone will testify in favour of those who have touched him justly and against those who have touched him after having harmed the servants of Allah.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE KA’ABA

After the conquest of Mecca in the year 8 of the Hegira, prophet Muhammad (pbuh) did not alter the building of the Ka’aba. He destroyed all the idols inside. The Ka’aba is preserved from any defilement.

It is without a doubt that the Ka'aba is the most honoured building on the planet and the Muslims will not stop asking Allah to increase its honour. Every year more than ten millions of pilgrims, seeing it for the first time, utter the following formula: *"Lord increases this Temple's honour, and its veneration [value and sanctity]. May it receive a surplus of majesty and greatness from all who perform the great or the small pilgrimage (Hajj or Umrah)."*

This is why the Ka'aba has the most expensive door in the world. This door contains 280 kilograms made of 99% pure gold and is worth more than 80 million Mauritian rupees. It contains calligraphy of Quranic verses. In reality, the door of the Ka'aba is composed of two doors; one facing inward and one facing out. It is 2.25 meters above the ground.

The Ka'aba is permanently covered with a black silk fabric covering an area of 650 square metres. This fabric contains patterns of Quranic verses also embroidered in pure gold. A special industry exists for its manufacture. This factory is located on the old highway from Jeddah to Mecca. It employs about 250 skilled workers. Each is specialized in a discipline: weaving, embroidery, calligraphy etc. The plant operates continuously so that it can annually produce a new cover (*Kiswa*).

The Ka'aba building is not exactly cubic. It is rather quadrangular because it is thirteen metres long, twelve metres wide and fifteen metres high. It is not the walls of the Ka'aba which are oriented towards the cardinal points but rather its four angles (*Arkan*).

The interior of the Ka'aba looks like an empty room with a giant copy of the Qur'an on a stand. The wall is clad in marble.

In the year 683 of the Christian era, Abdullah Ibn Az-Zubair rebelled against the caliph Yazeed, the son of Muawiyya. In 693, Al Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf conquered Mecca and killed Abdullah Ibn Az-Zubair. With the agreement of the caliph of the time, Abdul Malik, he demolished the Ka'aba and rebuilt it according to the model of the Quraishs, the model built by the prophet Muhammad (pbuh). In the year 1630, the north-western wall of the Ka'aba was damaged by a large flood. Sultan Muraad ordered its demolition and had it rebuilt in accordance with the Quraishi

pattern and using the original stones. Since then nobody has changed its model drastically. Only minor renovations took place. It is this Ka'aba that exists today.

The Ka'aba has several names such as Baitullah (House of God), *Bait-ul-Haram* (Honoured House), *Baitul Atiq* (Ancient House), *Al-Aqdas* (Holy of Holies), *Al-Muqadassa* (the Sacred Heart) etc.

The Ka'aba has a privileged status because it is for sure: **The first House that was built for the people is that of Bakka (Mecca), blessed and a good direction for the universe.**" (Al-Imran 3: 97)

Moreover, Allah says: **"There are clear signs in it; it is the place where Abraham stood to pray; whoever enters it is safe. Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to God by people who are able to undertake it. Those who reject this [should know that] God has no need of anyone."** (Al-Imran 3: 98)

Finally, the Ka'aba has a dual terrestrial and celestial aspect. Man wherever he is, at sea or on land or in the air must turn towards its direction (the *Qibla*) to fulfil his daily prayers.

May Allah count us among those who work hard for the protection of the Holy Mosque (*Masjid al-Haram*) and may Allah open our path for the fulfilment of the fifth pillar of Islam, the Hajj in all peace and piety. *Insha-Allah*.

I wish you all in advance, an [Eid-ul-Adha Mubarak](#). May Allah protect the symbols of Islam and the Muslims forever and preserve their faith against the throes of Satan and his army. *Insha-Allah, Ameen*.