

Q.1: Please explain the eminence of holy Makkah and Ka'bah?

A. The holy Makkah is, indeed, the annals of social and religious evolution of mankind. It became a preaching centre of a particular family during the Prophethood of Abraham and during the Prophethood of Ishmael it was a settlement of some tents and huts and then it gradually developed into a religious town of Arabia. After the advent of Holy Prophet (Saiey-yidinaa Muhammad [may Allah's choicest blessings & peace be upon him]) it became the bastion of Muslim world. There is in the holy Qur-aan that the whole of Haram alongwith miles of outlying territory on all its sides has been made "Marja'-o-Maaman" (asylum, haven) for all Muslims of the world. Hundreds of thousands of Muslims visit Ka'batul Laah" (the House of God) and perform 'Umrah all the year round. Just imagine the multitude of the believers hailing from every nook and cranny that throngs it every year for Hajj. This practice is not just decades' old but is incessantly going on since the time of Prophet Abraham (i.e. for about four milleniums). The Kabah's being "Maaman" (safe and secure haven) and protected from every type of mischief and evil does not embrace only the structure of Ka'bah or the grand mosque round it but also includes the outlying territory on all its sides where even hunting is forbidden under the Command of Islaam what to speak of killing a humabeing. Even during the days of ignorance i.e. before the advent of Islaam, the Haram used to be a safe and secure haven where during the reigns of infidels and polytheists the hardened criminals would also succeed in taking refuge under the walls of Ka'bah after committing heinous crimes. One of the "Adiyah" (supplications) made by Prophet Abraham while constructing the holy Ka'bah was: "O'Allah! Make Makkah city a place of peace and security." The peace and security in Haram (holy Ka'bah), Makkah city and in its adjoining areas has no parallel. Neither robberies take place nor caravans are looted and nor people murdered but instead if a murderer enters into Haram and takes refuge, he can not be killed there. Even the polytheist Arabs maintained such sanctity of the holy Ka'bah and Makkah. The other Du'aa of Prophet Abraham was that the inhabitants of Makkah keep getting fruits and vegetables and in fact it is so. Plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables and dry fruits are available there notwithstanding the fact that the soil of Makkah is either hard-sandy or hard-stony and it also receives little rains. Besides, the Makkans are unaware of (if not then are novice in) agriculture and horticulture. In brief, the holy Makkah and Ka'bah have been the sacred and worship places of Arabs since the ancient times. It was first constructed by Prophet Adam and after its demolition Prophet Abraham and Prophet Ishmael constructed it anew. The Holy Qur-aan terms the Ka'bah first "Ma'bad" (place of worship) which reflects that the Ka'bah is more ancient than "Baitul Muqaddas". "Bakkah" is the other name of Makkah. This city is the fount of spiritual and mundane and religious and worldly blessings and benefits for believers. The eminence, sanctity and superiority of this holy city and holy house have been touched upon by the Holy Qur-aan and Prophetic sayings at places and under different titles. The Holy Prophet said: "this Ummat will remain in good so long as it upholds the sanctity of Haram and when people will abandone it they will perish." This is the very city that has the honour of being the birthplace and homeland of the "mercy" for all the worlds (the Holy Prophet). The Islaam sprang from here and it was the first centre of Islamic teachings. The effulgence of the verses of "Baiey-naat" enlightened and illumined the breasts of the believers here. This is the very city where a Governor of Christian empire and ruler of Yemen - Abraha who rushed the holy Makkah to demlish the sacred Ka'bah was himself annihilated alongwith his army. It so happened that swarm of birds suddenly appeared from the sea-side holding pebbles in their beaks and claws which they rained on Abraha's army. As the pebble hit a soldier it would pierce through his body and his limbs would begin to rot instantaneously. Thus all soldiers were annihilated. Being

perturbed and panicked by the catastrophe, Abraha fled the scene and died in Yemen immediately after reaching there. There is in narratives that Abraha ordered his army that also included elephants, a strange animal for the Arabs, to advance towards the Makkah but the elephants even that one on which Abraha was himself saddled refused to move forward despite the fact the elephant driver scolded and hit him with the mace repeatedly. Strangely the animal would march in the direction of Yemen when it was urged to. In the meanwhile, the birds blitzed and annihilated them. This incident further enhanced the eminence and greatness of the holy Ka'bah and Makkah.

Q.2: What is the eminence of holy Madinah?

A. The eminence of holy Madinah is:

1. That the hallowed tomb of the Holy Prophet is there which every Muslim yearns to visit.
2. That it is being guarded by the Angels. Neither Dajjal can enter into it nor can plague invade it.
3. It is superior to all settlements in term of Divine blessings and favours.
4. It cleans and purifies people as blacksmith's furnace removes dross from iron.
5. Whoever deceives inhabitants of Madinah will dissolve like salt in water i.e. ruin.
6. Whoever intimidates inhabitants of Madinah will himself be overtaken by fear.
7. Whoever oppresses or intimidates inhabitants of Madinah will himself fall in with horror and will face the curse of Allah, of His Angels and of all mankind. Besides, neither his "Fard" will be accepted nor Nafil.
8. It is the place which Allah Almighty Himself chose for His beloved Prophet to migrate to.
9. Whoever faces the hardships (if any) in Madinah with patience the Holy Prophet will intercede for him on the Doomsday.
10. Whoever dies in Madinah will be entitled to the Holy Prophet's Shafaa'at (intercession) and will be forgiven.
11. The Holy Prophet prayed for Madinah thus:
  - a. O'Allah! Bless our dates for us.
  - b. O'Allah! Bless our "Sa'a" and "Mud" (two measures of weight).
  - c. O'Allah! Send down Your blessings and favours in our Madinah.
  - d. O'Allah! Undoubtedly, Abraham is Your servant, Your friend and Your Prophet and undoubtedly, I am Your servant and Your Prophet. He prayed to You for Makkah and I pray to You for Madinah. Bless Madinah as You did bless the Makkah but even equally more (i.e. doubly bless it).
  - e. O'Allah! Make Madinah a favourite place for us as is Makkah dear to us but even more than it, correct the ecological condition of Madinah for us, bless its "Sa'a" and "Mud" and drive out fever

from here to Hajafah. (This Du'aa was made by the Holy Prophet when his companions (after migration to Madinah) did not find its climate suitable as it was then the home of endemics and plagues. That's why it was called "Yasrab" (the settlement of uncongenial/unsuitable climate). After migration of the Holy Prophet to this place it was no more "Yasrab" but "Taibah" (pure, clean).

Q.3: What are the excellences of visiting the hallowed Mausoleum of the Holy Prophet?

A. It is really the great kind and grace of Allah Almighty that He blesses the pilgrim with the visit of the sacred Madinah and makes him the guest of His Darling Elect (Saiey-yidinaa Muhammad [may Allah's choicest blessings & peace be upon him]) and gives him the glad tidings (through the tongue of the Holy Prophet) of the success, pardon, forgiveness and intercession in this world even the next world. The Holy Prophet said: "whoever visits my (hallowed) tomb will become worthy of my "Shafaa'at" (intercession), "the one who performs Hajj and visits my (holy) tomb will be like him who visited me in my lifetime" and "whoever visits me after my (apparent departure from the mortal world) death has met me as it were during my lifetime and that whoever dies in holy Makkah or holy Madinah will be raised with those who will be in peace on the Doomsday." Unfortunate and wretched are those indeed who shilly shally to visit the sacred tomb of the Holy Prophet despite such good tidings. There is in a Hadees for such unfortunate ones: whoever performs Hajj and fails to visit me, does a great wrong to me. The Holy Quraan itself calls the believers to visit the Holy Prophet and will keep doing so till the Day of Judgement, and motivates them in these words: "Walao Annahum Izzalamooo Anflisahum Jaaa-ooka Fastaghfarul Laaha wastagh-fara Lahomur Rasoolu Lawaja-dul Laaha Tawwaabar Raheemaa" (and if when they oppress their souls then [O' beloved] they should come to you and beg forgiveness of Allah and should the Messenger intercede for them, then surely they would find Allah the Most Relenting, the Most Merciful). The religious scholars are of the firm opinion that this Quranic verse is equally applicable to the life time and (seeming) death of the Holy Prophet and visiting the hallowed tomb of the Holy Prophet is "Waajib" (essential act). Imaam Qaazi 'Ayaaz maintains in his "Shifaa Shareef" that undertaking journey to visit the sacred tomb of the Holy Prophet is Waajib. Visiting his hallowed grave is, in fact, holding him in high esteem and having great reverence for the Holy Prophet is incumbent (Waajib) on every believer. That's why, Imaam Qastalaani says: "whoever avoids visiting the sacred tomb of the Holy Prophet inspite of having strenght and money, does him great unkindness", as reported in a Hadees afore-mentioned. Some misguided people try to prevent believers from visiting the great mausoleum of the Holy Prophet. Beware! Do not heed them and do visit to grace oneself with the glad tidings of success, pardon, forgiveness and his intercession.