

Makkah Al-Mukarramah

The mother of all cities. The safe haven. Makkah.

In it, the first House (of worship) was established, the first mosque on this Earth. It is the place in which the holy revelation originated, the direction of prayer for Muslims, the object of their heart's desire. From its houses began the call to monotheism in secrecy. And from atop one of its mountains, our honorable Messenger declared clearly the eternal message of monotheism when Allah -may He be exalted and glorified- commanded him.

In Makkah the believer stands humbled and submissive. A city made sanctified by Allah the day He created the heavens and the earth. It has been made sacred by God's sanctity until the Day of Resurrection. No plant in it can be uprooted nor a hunted animal chased away, for whoever intends to transgress within it [Makkah], Allah will make them experience a painful punishment.

There are five stations from which to enter its sanctum; whoever comes from them intending Hajj or Umrah, they will begin their journey from one of them: *Dhul Hulayfah* for those arriving from Al Madinah Al Munawwarah; *Al Juhfah* for those from Al Sham (Levant) and *Qarn al-Manāzil* for those arriving from Najd; *Dhāt 'Irq* for those from Iraq; *Yalamlam* for those coming from Yemen.

Thousands of years ago, Abraham -peace be upon him- raised the foundations of its venerable Ka'bah, and throughout its long history, it was rebuilt a number of times until it attained its current form.

Its construction has a history filled with nobility, and taking care of it has been the aspiration of the leaders and rulers from the Islamic ummah throughout time: its covering, its door, its *mīzāb* (drain), its keys and its stairs. All of it is valuable and precious. It captivates the hearts. One of its corners contains the Black Stone; a stone from Paradise on this earth.

Its courtyard contains the Zamzam Well; a drink from Allah for His noble servant Ishmael, the son of Abraham, and for people after him.

Its water is a cure for ailments, and acts like nourishing food.

People from all around the world head to Makkah to fulfill the rites of pilgrimage, the 5th pillar of Islam, responding to the call of their father Abraham—upon him be peace.

From that day onwards, Makkah became the desire of the hearts and the aspiration of the people. People, men and women alike, come to it from every direction to witness its benefits for them and to mention the name of God upon what they have been granted by Him.

The pilgrim departs from the designated miqat having entered the sacred state of Ihram, stripping away from worldly attire, positions and status, beauty, and embellishment of this world. He wears the lightest and unimportant of clothing as he stands in a magnificent display of Muslim unity despite their different colours and races.

In Makkah, a Muslim remembers his noble lineage, the lineage of pure belief that was carried by the purest of all humans. He remembers how the Muslims witnessed the early moments of Muhammad's message, how the noble companions suffered from the harm of the pagans, and how they were patient, perseverent, stood on guard, migrated, and struggled until Allah perfected His light for mankind and jinn.

He remembers the cave of Hira in which the entrustee of the sky, angel Gabriel, descended to meet the entrustee of the Earth Muhammad ﷺ with clear light: the Noble Quran, the final message of God to the people of the Earth.

**Here in Makkah, the verses of Allah were revealed.
Here the Messenger of God, the best Prophet, was raised.**

**Here the companions lived having created for us...
...a unique glory that hasn't aged with time.**

**O best of lands, see how much my longing for you is...
and see how much passion for you I bear with continual cause.**

**All my yearning has settled within me, except for you.
Upon your mention, my yearning encircles me.**

Longing for you, O Makkah!