

Highlights from ICCP Seminar on the Spiritual Dimension of Hajj – 8/28/15

O Allah, Make me Mindful of the following as I undertake my Hajj Journey:

As I prepare for Hajj, I'm mindful that:

- The entire Hajj journey is a dress rehearsal for my final journey back to Allah
- I'm thankful to Allah that He picked me from among millions to be one of His guests
- I'm about to walk in the same footsteps as Prophet Ibrahim (as) and undertake the same journey as Prophet Muhammad (saw)
- I'm taking time to ask others for forgiveness before seeking Allah's forgiveness at Hajj
- Before Hajj, I'm making lots of duas that Allah grants me His full mercy & acceptance at Hajj, that He aids me in maintaining my intention & patience, and that He answers all my duas at Hajj and on Arafah

As I enter the state of Ihraam, I'm mindful that:

- This is the official beginning of my journey and as I bathe and put on Hajj garments, I think of my own body being washed & shrouded after my death
- Like the dead, I'm leaving behind family, possessions, and all luxuries, for Allah
- My Ihraam garments remind me that I'm now equal with everyone else; I'm now one of many with all artificial masks removed
- With Ihraam, I'm declaring my total submission to Allah and leaving even halal things, for Him
- In Ihraam, I utter the Talbiyah often:
- **لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ، لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ، إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ لِأَشْرِيكَ لَكَ**
- *Labbayka Allāhumma Labbayk. Labbayk Lā Sharīka Laka Labbayk. Inna l-Hamda, Wa n-Ni'mata, Laka wal Mulk, Lā Sharīka Lak.*
- **“At Your service O Allah, at Your service. At Your service. No partner have You. At Your service. Praise, indeed, and blessings are Yours alone - the Kingdom too! No partner have You!”**
- My Talbiyah (Labbayka) is my answer to Allah's call - **“At Your service O Allah”**

At the Ka'bah, I'm mindful that:

- This is the Qiblah I've been praying towards my entire life; I'm about to see it
- As I make Tawaf, I'm walking counterclockwise, symbolically AGAINST the march of time to a state of purity. With each circumambulation, as I make dua earnestly/exalt Allah/praise Him, I am shedding the buildup of years of disobedience to the point where after seven rounds, I reach a state of purity as when I was a newborn.

- As I perform my Tawaf, I remember the honor of now joining the angels who are making their Tawaf around Al Bayt Al Ma'moor in the Seventh Heaven, and the planets that orbit the sun. I'm now in sync with all creation, repeating my devotions & glorifications continuously in my Tawaf until my heart feels totally cleansed.

As I walk briskly between the hills of Safa & Marwa (Sa'ee), I'm mindful that:

- I'm walking the frantic steps of Hajar as she searched for water while Ismael cried out of thirst. Just as she did, I need to strive in life & place my hope & trust in Allah. I need to make dua and ask Him to help me do this. He will answer my duas and quench my thirst just as He did when He made Zam-Zam water come out of earth

At Mina, I'm mindful that:

- I left Makkah for Mina where I'll spend my time preparing & meditating on tomorrow's event - the Day of Arafah, the greatest day of my life, the day in which Allah will give me the chance to be completely forgiven and have all my duas answered. I'll declutter my mind today, and make lots of duas that Allah will grant me His full mercy, answer all my duas, **protect me from all distractions, and grant me the taste of feeling accepted tomorrow in Arafah**

At Arafah (meaning “to know”), I'm mindful that:

- This is the culmination of my Hajj journey. I'll spend my entire day today pleading to Allah for forgiveness & mercy for myself, my family and all Muslims, and that He opens my heart to feel His acceptance & mercy. I'm joining millions as we declare our absolute servitude to Allah, a scene that reminds me of the Final Day of Standing before Allah
- I won't waste any time or get distracted. Every second counts. Allah is looking at me now and is selecting those who will be forgiven. My heart will keep crying out: O Allah, don't deprive me; O Allah make me feel your mercy. As I wait to feel the tears in my eyes and sense Allah's mercy, I think of myself & all creation standing on the Day of Judgment waiting for Allah's arrival
- The Prophet (saw) said, “The best invocation is that of the Day of Arafah, and the best that anyone can say is what I and the Prophets before me have said:

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لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ
الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

*Laa 'ilaha 'illallahu wahdahu la sharika lahu,
lahul-mulku wa lahul-hamdu wa Huwa 'ala kulli
shay'in Qadir.*

None has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, He has no partner. His is the Dominion and His is the Praise, and He is Able to do all things.

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- As I make duaas in the final hour before sunset, I think of Allah hearing me & answering me. I think of His words to His angels, "**Look at My slaves. They have come from far and near, with hair disheveled and faces covered with dust, to seek My mercy, even though they have not seen My chastisement.**"
- As I leave Arafah, I pray that I've been purified and made worthy of returning back to the sacred house of Allah (Ka'bah) tomorrow (Day of Eid)

In Muzdalifah (from "Zalafa" which means "to come closer"), I am mindful that:

- On my way to Muzdalifah, Allah is asking me to spend the entire night, along with millions of others, beneath the open sky and on the sand (where my body originated from), all for Allah and to prepare to return back to Allah's house (Ka'bah) tomorrow. O Allah, You brought me this far, so make me worthy of returning back to Your House tomorrow.
- As I awaken before the Fajr prayer, I witness thousands of other worshippers rising from their sleep, reminding me of the day when all humans would rise from their grave in response to the blow of the trumpet on the Day of Judgment

On Eid (the Day of Sacrifice), I'm mindful that:

- While millions celebrate Eid, I return from Muzdalifah back to Mina for the busiest day of Hajj rituals
- I begin my march towards the stations where I throw the pebbles, remembering my father Ibrahim's struggle against the Shaytan, declaring my own enmity towards Shaytan and casting away evil/vice with each pebble
- As I perform the animal sacrifice, I remember the sacrifice of Ibrahim (as) and his willingness to sacrifice Ismael to answer Allah's command
- As I shave/trim my hair, I remember that I'm now sacrificing everything precious, including my hair

(symbol of beauty & individuality) to come closer to Allah. As I come out of Ihraam, I'm feeling grateful to Allah that He granted me the strength & patience through the state of Ihraam, to reach this point in Hajj, and for the gifts I was separated from, while in the state of Ihraam.

- I return back to the Ka'bah to perform **Tawaf Ifaadah**, feeling grateful that Allah made me worthy of returning back to the Ka'bah after the journey to Mina and Arafah. Here, many shed tears after the Tawaf in gratitude to Allah that He made them complete the rites of this day, and for feeling accepted & cleansed. No feeling is like this feeling

On my last days in Mina, I'm mindful that:

- I'm following in the footsteps of the Prophet (saw) as I continue performing the rituals of stoning the Jamarat. I remember that my main enemy is the Shaytan, and my fight with him will not end until my last breath on earth

For my Farewell Tawaf, I'm mindful that :

- I am returning back full circle to the House of Allah (the Ka'bah) to perform my final Tawaf which completes my journey, and to bid my farewell. My Hajj is now complete, and I ask Allah that He makes my Hajj Mabruur (accepted). I ask Allah that He grants me the feeling of being reborn again (just as the hadeeth of the prophet promised).
- As I depart, I remind myself that every spot that my feet touched will be a witness for me before Allah. I thank Allah for the gift of Hajj; I ask Him for acceptance of my Hajj; to keep me steadfast after Hajj; to empower me to reform myself and to be a reformer; and to grant me Jannah as the Prophet (saw) promised: "**There's no reward for a pious pilgrimage but Paradise.**" Ameen. Ameen.
- "If it felt this exhilarating to see the Ka'bah and be with Allah at Hajj, how will it feel when I actually get blessed to see Him in Paradise! O Allah, don't deprive me of seeing Your Face"
- **I'm now a Hajji, Alhamdulillah!**