



NEW MUSLIM
ACADEMY



LIFE LESSONS FROM A **CONVERT** AT **HAJJ**

Shaykh Abdullah Hakim Quick shares his
experiences performing the Hajj Pilgrimage

Introduction

Dr Abdullah Hakim Quick is a historian, social activist and religious leader who has travelled around the world doing research and delivering lectures on a variety of topics. He accepted Islam in 1970, and performed his first Hajj in 1973.

He's been to Hajj many times after that, but his favorite pilgrimage was in 1977 when he lived in Arabia with his family while studying at the Islamic University of Medina. Although his pilgrimage took place decades ago, **the Hajj holds timeless wisdom and has stayed essentially the same since the time of Muhammad, the Messenger of God.** This ebook describes Dr. Quick's early Hajj trips and some beautiful lessons that he learned through his experience in Mecca.



WELCOMING STRUGGLE

The Hajj pilgrimage is a journey of self-discovery - you learn more about who you are when all distractions and luxuries of everyday life are stripped away. Being African-American and part Mohawk First Nation, Dr. Quick was prepared through his life experiences to take on this new challenge. **You should always welcome struggle in life: it readies you for tests.**

The first trip was hosted by an international Islamic organization, so it came with five-star accommodations. Although a welcomed blessing, Dr. Quick wanted to experience Hajj again - this time fully experiencing one of its intended purposes: simplicity.



By 1977, he had settled into study at the Islamic University of Medina and he and his small family were used to the lifestyle of Arabia. There were just a few asphalt roads and people resting on the sidewalks, so he and his family were able to travel backpacking, bringing their necessities with them as they travelled on foot, performing the different Hajj rites. They were among the locals, blending in and moving along with others who also went on foot along the ancient routes.

It was an ebb and flow, simple and fluid, as a multitude of Muslims descended on Mecca and the other sites of the pilgrimage. No luggage was lost, no trouble with passport issues, just simple, beautiful Hajj.



A WONDERFUL SIGHT

The pivotal moment for many of those who are able to perform the Hajj pilgrimage is when they get to see the Ka'ba (the cube structure at the center of the mosque in Mecca). Dr. Quick says it was just brilliant. This was before any other man-made structures grew taller, so it stood out surrounded by the natural, mountainous landscape. He just forgot about everything else; so grateful that **he was finally present, at the ancient House of God, built by Abraham and his son**, and he was about to embark on the great Hajj pilgrimage rites...that he entirely lost his shoes.

He was never able to get close enough to touch the building during his visits in Hajj season, but when visiting it off-season, he and his family were able to touch the walls of the Ka'ba, and he even lifted his small children up to kiss the special black stone. (Note: it was a prophetic practice to touch/kiss the black stone and touch one of the corners of the structure with the hand. Muslims are supposed to do this in following the prophet, not out of superstitious beliefs.)



A JOURNEY OF FORGIVENESS

The miracle in the comparative safety of the pilgrimage, when so many people converge on Mecca, is a testament to the fact that those making the Hajj are good, concerned Muslim brothers and sisters. He saw much more good behavior and excellent manners and consideration than unpleasantness. **That is a simple truth about humanity in general: they are more good than bad.**

The Day of Arafah, the pinnacle of the Hajj journey, is a full day dedicated to praising God, seeking forgiveness, and asking for all your needs and wants. It is a day spent on the plains of Arafah (a region just outside Mecca Proper), where Dr. Quick and his family settled in to offer prayers to God.. His thoughts have always been, from the very beginning, on the state of the Muslim nation, but he remembered to pray to God for the guidance of his parents, and to beg God to overlook his previous life. As so many people are gathered together on a flat plain, it reminded him as it does others of what the Day of Judgement may feel like, and so he also prayed to God to protect him from the hardships of that great day.



SINCERITY AND FOCUS

The key to a successful Hajj, and for every type of worship, is a sincere heart. Dr. Quick advises us: **Although learning certain prayers is important, it is more important to be sincere when one prays**

Hajj also trains the pilgrim on an important life lesson: focus. To embark on the pilgrimage, you leave the world behind to focus on your connection with God and your transformation throughout. The same is true for life. **Take breaks from the daily hustle and stay focused on your ultimate goal - Paradise.**



TRAVEL IN THE LAND

Hajj is an opportunity to meet people from around the world, enriching your life experiences. Islam encourages **travelling in the way of God and experiencing the world.**

The Messenger of God, Abraham, travelled for most of his life, and it is part of the prophetic experience to travel, increase in wisdom, and become a well-rounded individual, not only for yourself but for your family as well.

Later, Dr. Quick lived for years in South Africa, and was pleased to see a joyous send-off by the families and communities of pilgrims departing for Hajj. They surrounded the pilgrims out of love and support, supplicated to God together, and wished them an accepted Hajj . The pilgrims hugged their families and friends, and requested their forgiveness for any shortcomings. Their journey became a reason for the community to come together, pray to God together, await their return and learn from their experiences.