

## Background

1. One unique aspect of Umrah is the opportunity to visit historical sites (*ziyarah*) as a part of the journey.

- Sites in and around **Makkah** relate to either Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and his family, or to Prophet Muhammad (S) and his noble companions.
- Sites in and around **Madinah** relate to Prophet Muhammad (S) and his noble companions (RA).

*Note: Many of these sites are away from Masjid Al-Haram and Masjid Nabawi. Others, however, are contained within the current masjid compounds and hence are not physically preserved; however, their general locations are known.*

2. It is important to understand the purpose of visiting these sites, which is twofold.

1. Express our appreciation for the sacrifices of our pious predecessors
2. Create a unique opportunity for dua' (see **Appendix A**).

*Note: Amongst the sites often visited are battlefields (e.g., Badr & Uhud) and graveyards (e.g., Jannatul Baqee'). These sites are particularly noteworthy as it gives us the additional opportunity to (1) convey our salam to the Sahabah buried here and (2) thank them for their sacrifice.*

## 4 Steps to Maximize on the Opportunity

### 1. Learn

- This is the only step that occurs **prior** to the journey of Umrah. We should inquire from our travel agent or group leader the sites that are intended to be visited.
- Then, we should study the history of this space, review the sacrifices that were made here, and journal a list of duas we intend to make when visiting.
  - This preparatory step is key. It is unbecoming of us to “show up” as tourists, hoping to gain enlightenment from a past occurrence.

### 2. Appreciate

- Upon arrival to the site, we should silently appreciate the sacrifice that was made here. This can be done by making dua' for the individuals that made contributions here, or by envisioning the scene(s) as it may have played out.

### 3. Reflect

- We should then reflect upon the relevance of this space as it relates specifically to us.
  - Listed in **Appendix B** are examples of sites we may visit, and the types of reflections that may arise within the heart. These reflections are personal and will vary from person to person.

### 4. Make Dua'

- Finally, we should make dua' to Allah (SWT) in these spaces, recognizing that duas are most effective when they are tied in to a particular circumstance.
  - Dua is particularly effective if steps 1-3 above have been taken, as we have now demonstrated to Allah (SWT) that we genuinely appreciate the sacrifices of his chosen pious servants and we recognize the relevance of their efforts to us. We, too, now seek a portion of Allah's special mercy.
- These duas should be personalized. **Appendix C** lists examples of sites we may visit and sample duas we can use to help us formulate our own.

## Appendix A

The following highlights the benefit that arises from tying duas into the circumstance of a situation. It is an excerpt taken from “Perfecting the Journey”, a hajj and umrah guidebook written by my teacher, Shaykh Husain A. Sattar:

*Asking according to the circumstance of a situation is ideal. An example of this is present in the Holy Quran. Maryam (upon her be peace) was once eating fruits outside of their season. Prophet Zakariya (upon him be peace) found her in this state and inquired ‘From where have you attained these provisions?’ She responded, ‘This is from Allah.’ Prophet Zakariya quickly recognized that if Allah could give her fruits out of season, then He could similarly give him a child despite his barren old age. So, he immediately supplicated, ‘O my Lord! Grant me from Your presence a righteous offspring.’ An angel then called out, while he was still standing and praying, ‘Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya’ [Quran 3:37-41]. From this example, we learn that duas made according to circumstance are accepted quickly. This is also the beauty of the duas present in the sunnah. The Prophet (S) would ask according to circumstance. For example, when he saw himself in a mirror, he would supplicate, ‘O Allah, just as you made my outer form beautiful, also make my manners and character beautiful’ [Ahmad]. This is one of the benefits of regularly and A Guidebook to Hajj, Umrah, and Visiting Madinah 53 consistently making those duas that are found in the sunnah*

## Appendix B

### ● Birthplace of Rasulallah (S)

- If it weren't for this space and for its facilitation of the coming of Rasulallah (S), how lost would I be today? Without my faith, without a perfect example to follow...

### ● Well of Zam Zam

- Because of the unearthing of this blessed water, the city of Makkah became alive. And it's through this source of nourishment that so many settled here, and allowed this city to become the spring of Islam. This pure message then took the most unlikely channels to eventually reach me today...

### ● Hodaybiyah

- What a difficult day this must have been for the sahabah! They intended to approach the kaa'ba and perform umrah in a state of ihram, just like me! Yet they were unable to carry forward beyond this space. How patient must they have been? And it was here that the Prophet (S) taught us the reality of patience in Allah's will and the long-term benefit that arises from it. How much trust have I placed in Allah's long-term plans? And, what beautiful advice our mother Umm Salamah (RA) gave to Prophet Muhammad (S)? What role do I play as an advisor to those around me?

### ● Battlefield of Uhud

- What incredible sacrifices Rasulallah (S) and his companions made on this day! How selfless must the companions have been, that they were willing to protect this deen with their own life! And, this entire battle served as a reminder for all of the subsequent ummah to never leave the instruction and command of Rasulallah (S). What has my relationship with the instruction of the Prophet (S) been? And what difficulties have potentially arisen in my life as a result of neglecting his advices and instructions?

## Appendix C:

- **Sites of Hajj (Mina, Muzdalifah, ‘Arafah & Jabal Rahma)**

- Oh Allah! It is in these special places that millions of your servants are invited annually to receive complete forgiveness and start anew. Oh Allah, through the barakah of this invitation, and the incredible Mercy that you have always shown in this place, please include me as amongst those who are completely forgiven! Oh Allah! It was at this site (Jabal Rahma) that your Messenger (S) gave his final advices to the ummah. Oh Allah, allow me to internalize these advices and act upon them [ideally one should reflect upon each advice and make dua’ accordingly].

- **Badr**

- Oh Allah! It was in this place that your Messenger and his companions were outnumbered, and defeat seemed apparent. Oh Allah, through the barakah of the events that occurred here, and the beseeching of Rasulullah (S) in this space, allow me, too, to succeed in the face of any difficulty, and provide me with the same assistance you provided the blessed companions on that day!

- **Travel from Makkah to Madinah**

- Oh Allah! It was through this journey of the sahabah (hijrah) that you granted them peace and safety and a space to comfortably practice and express their deen. Oh Allah, I too am now taking this journey. Please make the deen alive and comfortably expressed both in my home and in my community!

- **Masjid Quba’**

- Oh Allah! As your qur’an mentions, this masjid was built upon taqwa, and it was constructed by the hands of Rasulullah (S). Oh Allah, make taqwa the foundation of my local masjid, and grant me the ability to contribute to it in the most effective way!