



**The
construction
of the
Ka'ba**

By

Mahmūd Ibn Ahmad al Dosary (PhD).

The construction of the Ka'ba

This chapter is divided into two sections:

Section I: The construction of the Ka'ba before the dawn of Islam.

Section II: The construction of the Ka'ba after the dawn of Islam.



Section I

The construction of the Ka'ba before the dawn of Islam

Divergence of the ulama on the construction of the Ka'ba:

The ulama differed on defining who first built the Ka'ba and on how many times it was rebuilt before the dawn of Islam. Among the evidence put forward by commentators, reporters of ḥadīths and historians concerning the construction of the Ka'ba, there are irrefutable proofs, which are accepted, and others which are not. The evidence concerns matters coming from the Unseen that happened before the Prophet (s) was sent. These proofs are therefore coming from revelations, in this regard, there is no place left for interpretations⁽¹⁾.

Summary of the constructors of the Ka'ba before the dawn of Islam⁽²⁾:

1. The angels, peace be upon them.
2. Adam (p).
3. Shīth Ibn Adam (p).
4. Ibrāhīm (p).
5. The Amaliqa (al-'amāliqa or al-'amālīq).⁽³⁾

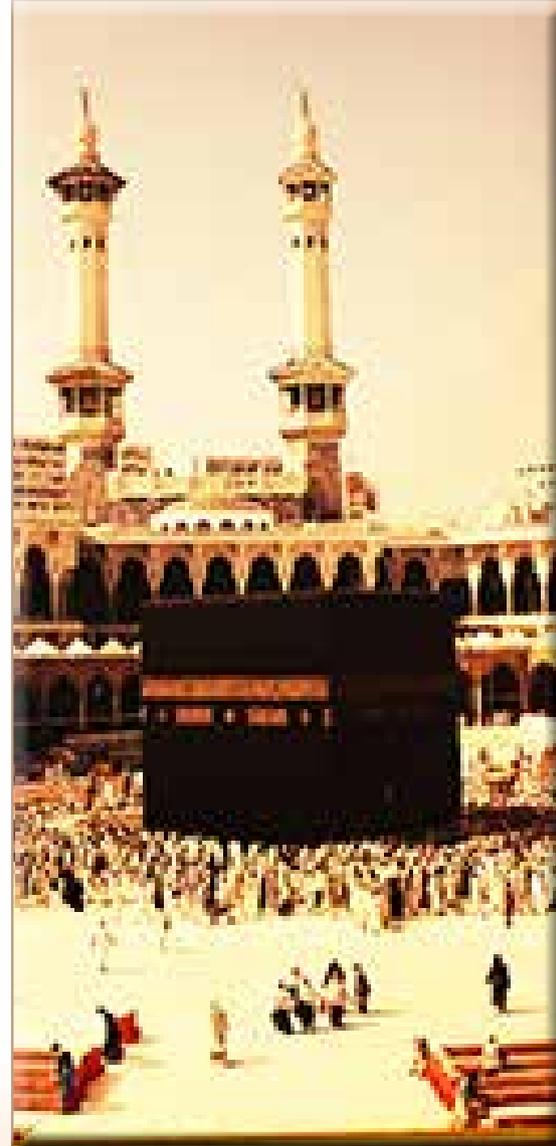


6. Jurhum.
7. Quṣay ibn Kilāb⁽⁴⁾.
8. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib.⁽⁵⁾
9. Quraysh.

**The prevailing opinion concerning
the construction of the Ka'ba before
the dawn of Islam:**

It has been established that the Ka'ba was built only four times before Islam appeared⁽⁶⁾ in the following order:

1. The construction realized by Ibrāhīm (p) which was the first construction of the Honourable Ka'ba.
2. The construction realized by the Amaliqa.
3. The construction realized by Jurhum.



4. The construction realized by the Quraysh tribe.

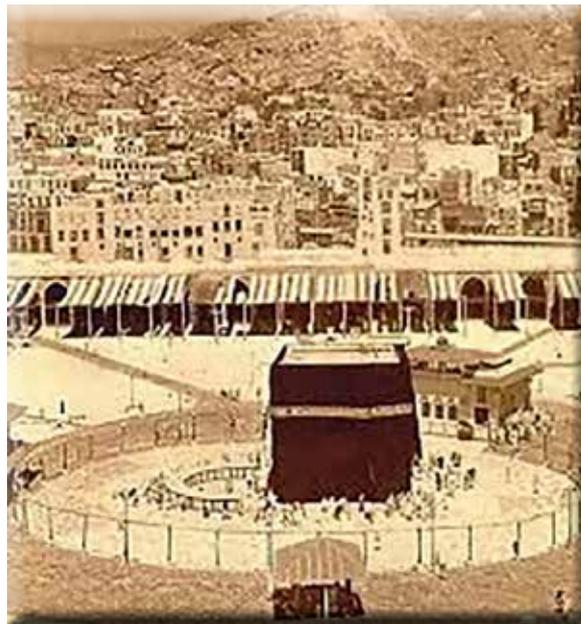
The opinion concerning the building of the Ka'ba by the angels, peace be upon them, is not backed by true evidence⁽⁷⁾, neither the construction undertaken by Adam (p) and no one can prove it.⁽⁸⁾ The same is true for Shīth Ibn Adam⁽⁹⁾ and Quṣay Ibn Kilāb; even if it has been reported by some historians, apart from being quoted⁽¹⁰⁾. There is no evidence either for the construction of the Ka'ba by 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib.⁽¹¹⁾

Scientific investigation about who did actually build the Ka'ba:

Firstly: The construction of Ibrāhīm (p).

Reason for the construction:

Ibrāhīm (p) built the Honourable Ka'ba out of stones following the order



of Allah Most High. He gave it a height of 4.5 metres (9 cubits), a length at the eastern side of 16 metres (32 cubits) and 15.5 metres (31 cubits) for the western wall; the southern wall was 10 metres (20 cubits) and the northern wall 11 metres (22 cubits). He did not put a roof on the Ka'ba but put two openings without doors on the level of the ground. Jibrīl (p) brought down the Black Stone and Ibrāhīm (p) put it in its place.⁽¹²⁾

If we study the texts, the Qur'ān and the Sunna, we find that they point out that **Ibrāhīm (p)** is the first one who actually built the Honourable Ka'ba⁽¹³⁾.



Evidence:

1. The word of Allah Most High:

﴿وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ

وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ﴾

“And (mention) when Ibrāhīm was raising the foundations of the House and with him Ismā‘īl” Surat Al-Baqara – The Cow: 127.

Ibn Kathīr (m) said: The apparent meaning of the Qur’ān states that Ibrāhīm (p) is the very first builder of the Ka’ba, the first who raised its foundations. His land was already glorified before this and honoured for all ages and all times, a fact that Ibrāhīm was well aware of.⁽¹⁴⁾

2. The word of Allah Most High:



﴿وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ﴾

“And when We designated for Ibrāhīm the site of the House” Surat al-Ḥajj
– The Pilgrimage: 26.

Ibn Kathīr said: There is no true irrefutable evidence attributed to the Prophet (s) that the House was built before al-Khalīl (p) (Allah’s friend, Ibrāhīm), and anyone who pretends the opposite using the verse “the site of the House” has no obvious nor evident clue in doing so; because the verse is not about the



construction. What is meant here is that the spot has been chosen in the science of Allah; it has been established by His power and hallowed by the prophets since the age of Adam until the time of Ibrāhīm, peace be upon them.⁽¹⁵⁾

3. The words of Ibrāhīm (p) in a ḥadīth elevated and attributed to the Prophet (s) narrated by Ibn 'Abbās (r2), in testimony of this: **Certainly, Allah ordered me to build here a House, and He designated a raised hillock. There, they both raised the foundations of the House, Ismā'īl bore the stones and Ibrāhīm built, until the construction was heightened. Then Ismā'īl laid a stone for his father (as a foothold), Ibrāhīm stood on it for building and Ismā'īl was carrying to him the stones, and both of them said: Our Lord, accept this from us. Indeed You are the Hearing, the Knowing.**⁽¹⁶⁾



﴿رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ

الْعَلِيمُ﴾

Secondly and thirdly: The construction by the Amaliqa and the Jurhum tribe:

This construction has been reported by many authenticated accounts and stories, including:

1. 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (r) narrated: **The ravages of time destroyed it, then the Amaliqa rebuilt it, then the ravages of time destroyed it and the Jurhum tribe rebuilt it, after which the ravages of time destroyed it again and the Quraysh rebuilt it.**⁽¹⁷⁾
2. 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (r) also narrated, after having mentioned the construction of Ibrāhīm (p): **Then it came to destruction and the Amaliqa rebuilt it, then it came to destruction and a tribe from Jurhum rebuilt it, then it came to destruction and the Quraysh**



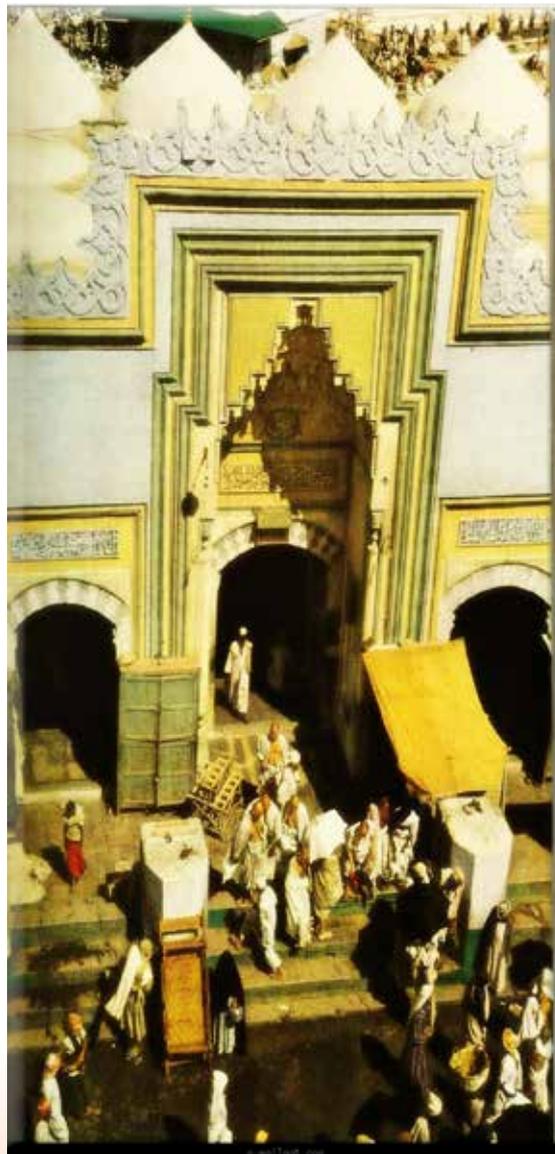
rebuilt it.⁽¹⁸⁾

This matter is not open to debate or interpretation as it is impossible for 'Alī (r) to speak like this unless he heard it from the Messenger of Allah (s), in this regard, this speech is elevated and attributed to the Prophet (s).

Fourthly: The construction of Quraysh:

Reason for the construction:

History books mentioned that once a woman came with a brand of fire to burn the Ka'ba; a spark flew out of her embers and the Kiswa (cloth that covers the Ka'ba) caught fire. Then came a great flood that entered the Ka'ba and cracked its walls. The Quraysh took fright and decided to rebuild the Honourable Ka'ba. These events took place five years before the start of the mission of the Prophet (s). The Quraysh

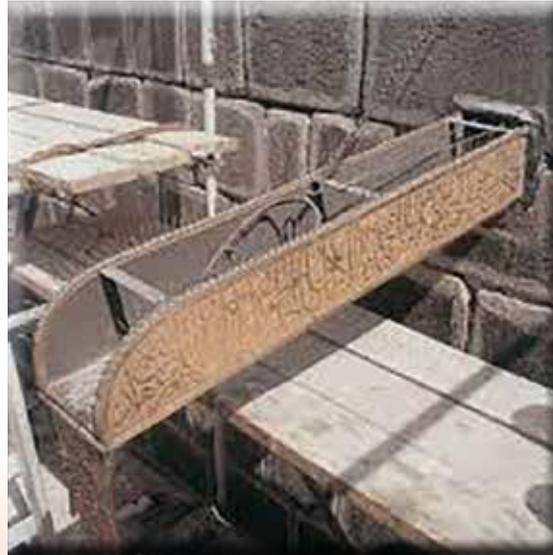


imposed the condition that no money coming from immoral earnings would be accepted; but they ran out of clean money for the completion of the building. Therefore the Quraysh reduced by six cubits and a span (3.23 metres) or about three metres and a quarter, the wall of the Hijr⁽¹⁹⁾ and set up a low circular wall around it for the people to circumambulate behind it. They also made a few changes such as giving the Ka'ba more height: it reached 18 cubits (9 metres) and they gave it a roof for the first time; they added to it a gutter made of wood, they closed the western door and elevated the eastern door higher than the ground in order to decide who would enter the Ka'ba or not. The Messenger of Allah (s) took part in this construction, he bore stones with them.

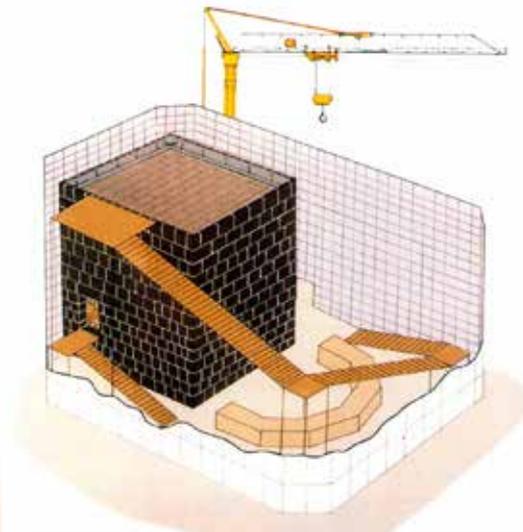


When the work was completed, the Quraysh wanted to fix the Black Stone and a serious conflict broke out amongst them; each tribe fighting for the privilege of putting the Black Stone in its place. They agreed that the first person entering the sanctuary would settle the disagreement between them. This person was the Prophet (s). He took the Stone, put it on a cloth and then asked all the tribes to take a part of the cloth and to lift it, after which he put the Stone in its place. With his lofty wisdom, the Prophet (s) resolved a conflict that almost destroyed their unity and would have lead to many deaths.⁽²⁰⁾

This construction has been reported by many authenticated accounts and stories, including:



1. 'Ā'isha (rh) narrated: The Messenger of Allah (s) told me: **Had your people not been unbelievers in the recent past (had they not quite recently accepted Islam), I would have demolished the Ka'ba and would have rebuilt it on the foundations laid by Ibrāhīm; for when the Quraysh had built the Ka'ba, they reduced its area, and I would also have built a**



door in the rear⁽²¹⁾.⁽²²⁾

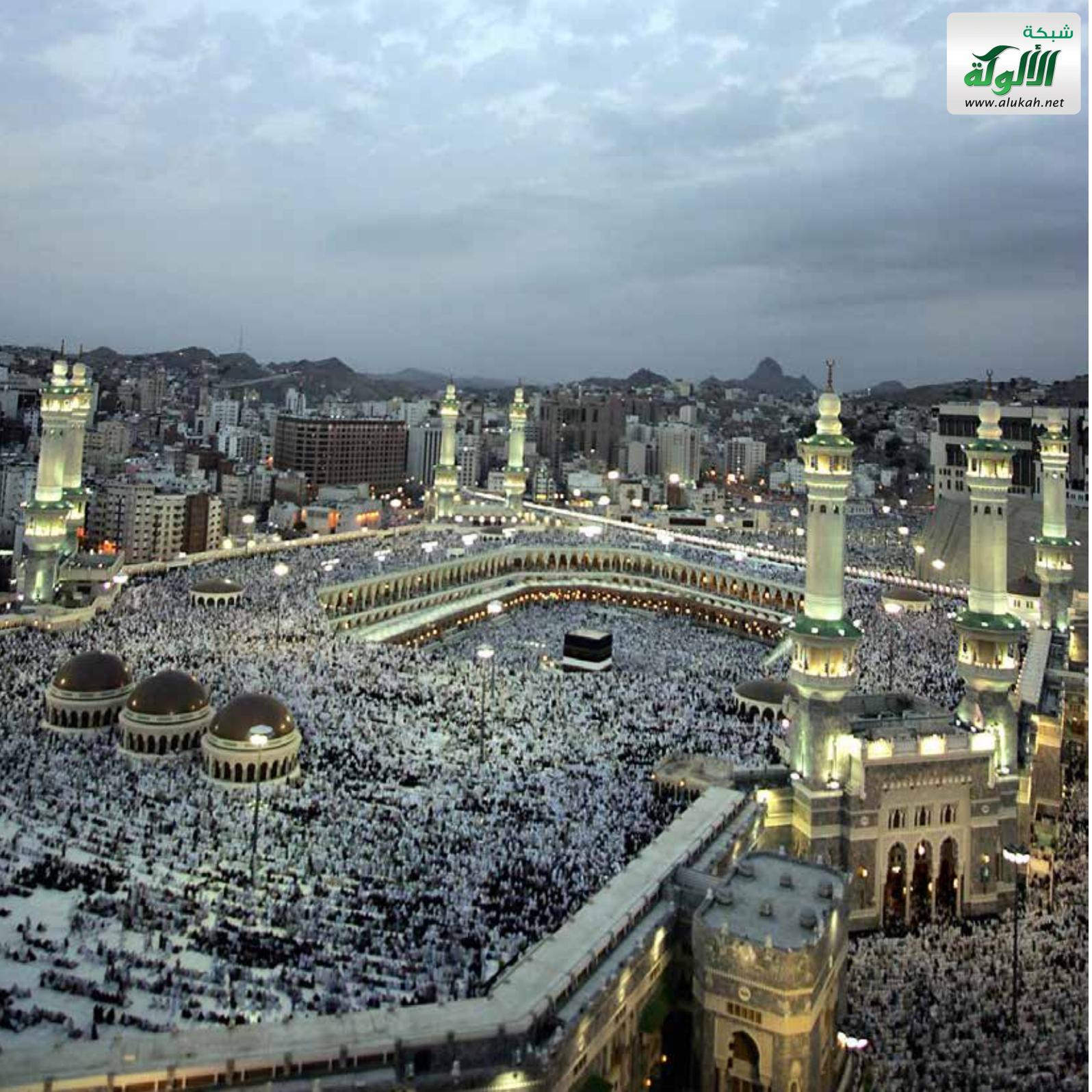
2. 'Ā'isha (rh) also narrated that the Prophet (s) told her: **Don't you see that when your people built the Ka'ba, they did not build it on all the foundations laid by Ibrāhīm?**⁽²³⁾
3. The participation of the Prophet (s) in this building is also an established fact. Jābir Ibn 'Abd Allah (r2) said: When the Ka'ba was being built, the Prophet (s) and 'Abbās went to carry stones. Al-'Abbās said to the Prophet (s): Take off your waist sheet and put it on your neck. When the Prophet took it off, he fell on the ground with his eyes open towards the sky and said: **Give me my waist sheet.** And he covered himself with it.⁽²⁴⁾



Ibn Kathīr (m) said: It is known that when this happened, the age of the Prophet (s) was 35 years old, according to the statement of Muḥammad Ibn Ishāq (m).⁽²⁵⁾

On basis of this authentic evidence, it appears that the construction of the Ka'ba by the Quraysh is true and that it took place five years before the mission of the Prophet (s) started.





Section II

The construction of the Ka'ba after the dawn of Islam

It has been established that the Ka'ba was built only three times after Islam appeared, as follows:

1. The construction of 'Abd Allah Ibn Zubayr (r2).
2. The construction of al-Ḥajjāj Ibn Yūsuf ath-Thaqafī.
3. The construction of the Sultan Murād Khan.



Firstly: The construction of 'Abd Allah Ibn Zubayr (r2):

Reason for the construction:

In 64 of the Hegira, Yazīd Ibn Mu'āwiya launched an army from the Levant, under the orders of al-Ḥuṣayn Ibn Namīr to fight 'Abd Allah Ibn Zubayr (r2). He besieged Mecca and bombarded it by catapult. The Ka'ba was damaged; it caught fire and its walls were weakened. But after 17 days of siege, Yazīd died and the army withdrew to the Levant without having entered Mecca. The command remained in the hands of 'Abd Allah Ibn Zubayr (r2) in Mecca who decided to rebuild the Ka'ba on the basis of the foundations laid by Ibrāhīm (p), inspired by the desire of the Prophet (s). He added to it what the Quraysh had cut off (6 cubits and a span), he gave it two doors on the level of the ground, one oriented to the East and the other to the West, and he raised its height to 27 cubits, or 13.5 metres.⁽²⁶⁾

This construction has been reported by many authenticated accounts and stories, including:

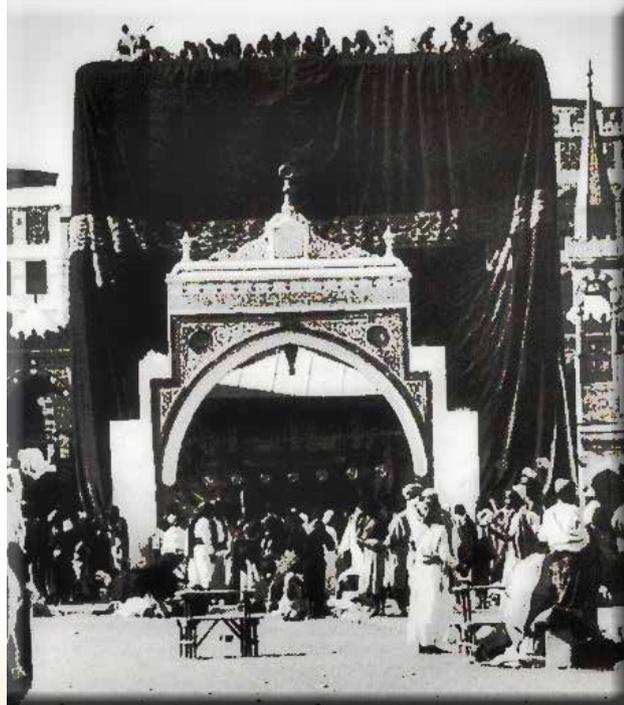
1. 'Aṭā' (m) related: The House was burnt down during the time of Yazīd Ibn Mu'āwiya when the people of the



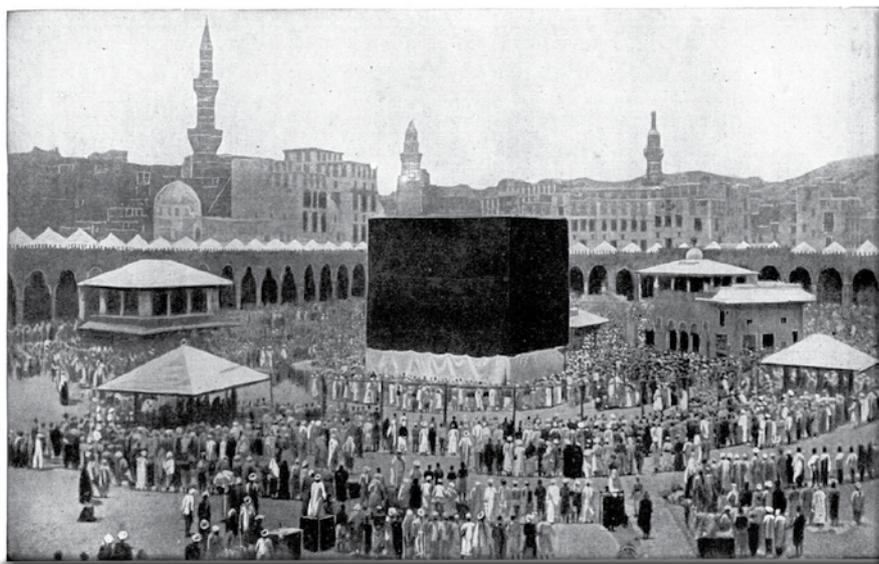
Levant fought in Mecca. And it happened to it (the Ka'ba) what happened. Ibn Zubayr (r2) left it in the same state until the people came in the season of Ḥajj. The idea was that he wanted to exhort them or incite them to war⁽²⁷⁾ against the people of the Levant. When the people had arrived, he said to them: O people, advise me about the Ka'ba. Should I demolish it and then rebuild it from its very foundations, or should I repair whatever has been damaged?

Ibn 'Abbās (r2) said: An idea has occurred to me⁽²⁸⁾ according to which I think that you should only repair the portion which has been damaged, leave the House in that very state in which people embraced Islam and leave those very stones in the same state and over which Allah's Messenger (s) had raised it.

Thereupon Ibn Zubayr (r2) said: If the house of anyone of you is burnt, he would not be contented until he had reconstructed it⁽²⁹⁾. Then what about the



House of your Lord? I would seek good advice from my Lord thrice and then I would make up my mind about this affair. After seeking good advice thrice, he made up his mind to demolish it. The people apprehended that calamity might fall from heaven on those persons who would be first to climb over the building for the purpose of demolishing it, till one ascended to the roof and threw down one of its stones. When the people saw no calamity befalling him, they followed him, demolished it until it was razed to the ground. Then Ibn Zubayr erected pillars and hung curtains⁽³⁰⁾ on them (in order to provide facilities to the people for observing religious rituals during the time of its construction).⁽³¹⁾



2. Al-Bukhārī reported about the destruction and reconstruction of the Ka'ba by Ibn Zubayr (r2): 'Ā'isha (rh) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (s) said to her: **O 'Ā'isha, were it not for the fact that your people have recently left Jāhiliya (pre-Islamic period of ignorance), I would have commanded that the House be knocked down, and I would have incorporated into it what was left out of it. I would have made its door level with the ground and I would have given it two doors, an eastern door and a western door. For they built it too small, and by doing this, it would have been built on the foundations of Ibrāhīm.** This is what motivated Ibn Zubayr (r2) to knock it down.



Yazīd said⁽³²⁾: I saw Ibn Zubayr when he knocked it down, rebuilt it, and included part of the Ḥijr in it. And I saw the foundations of Ibrāhīm (p): stones like the humps of camels.⁽³³⁾

No contradiction between the two reasons:

It appears in **the version narrated by Muslim** that the reason for Ibn Zubayr building up the Ka'ba is the fire that broke out when the people of the Levant attacked Mecca; it became ramshackle.

In **the version narrated by al-Bukhārī**, the reason is different: it is the ḥadīth of the Prophet (s) only. There is no contradiction between the two versions. The ḥadīth was probably the reason, and the blaze that occurred at the time of Yazīd was a timely opportunity to put the ḥadīth into practice⁽³⁴⁾; or maybe the blaze was the cause and the ḥadīth was the justification on which Ibn Zubayr (r2) relied for destroying the Ka'ba, rebuilding it on the foundations of Ibrāhīm (p) and



giving it two doors.

Al-Fāsī (m) said: Concerning the construction of 'Abd Allah Ibn Zubayr (r2), it is an established and well-known fact. The reason is that the Ka'ba became tumbledown after bearing the brunt of stones thrown by catapult, when Ibn Zubayr (r2) was in Mecca under the persistent siege of Yazīd Ibn Mu'āwiyā at the beginning of the year 64 of the Hegira.⁽³⁵⁾

Question: What was the best thing to do? Leave the Ka'ba as it was since the Quraysh? Or rebuild it on basis of the foundations laid by Ibrāhīm (p)?

This question has two aspects:⁽³⁶⁾

1. To avoid rebellion among the people and to collect enough



The construction of the Ka'ba

money to pay for the cost of the reconstruction. Therefore, the priority in this case is the demolition of the Ka'ba and its reconstruction on the foundations laid by Ibrāhīm (p), as the Messenger of Allah (s) wanted it.

This is exactly what 'Abd Allah Ibn Zubayr (r2) did when he said: I today have the means to spend and I entertain no fear of the people that they would protest against this change. So he added five cubits of area from the side of the Hījr to it. There appeared the old foundations upon which Ibrāhīm (p) had built the Ka'ba⁽³⁷⁾ and the people saw that. It was upon these foundations that the wall was raised. The length of the Ka'ba was eighteen cubits after the addition was made to it (which was in its breadth), then naturally the length appeared to be smaller compared with



its breadth. Ten cubits of area were also added to its length later. Two doors were also constructed, one of which was meant for entrance and the other one as an exit.⁽³⁸⁾

2. The fear of sedition, even if means were available to spend for building. In this case, leaving the Ka'ba as it used to be was the priority, as the Prophet (s) refrained from rebuilding it on the foundations of Ibrāhīm (p) for this reason.

An-Nawawī (m) said about the explanation of the ḥadīth of 'Ā'isha (rh) concerning the demolition and reconstruction of the Ka'ba: In this ḥadīth, there is a rule of law: if there is an opposition between the advantages and drawbacks, and if it is hard to choose between doing good and avoiding evil, priority is given to the most important; as the Prophet (s) said about the



demolition and reconstruction of the Ka'ba on the foundations of Ibrāhīm (p) that it was a good point; but the wrong this implied was bigger, namely the fear of sedition of those who converted recently and who believed in the virtue of the Ka'ba; they thought that any change to it would be a serious problem, so the Prophet (s) did not do anything.⁽³⁹⁾

The wish was again expressed by some Abbasid caliphs to restore the Ka'ba as did Ibn Zubayr (r2), since they were convinced this was only the desire of the Prophet (s), but the conditions did not allow this.⁽⁴⁰⁾

It has been narrated that Hārūn ar-Rashīd told Mālik Ibn Anas that he wanted to destroy the construction of al-Ḥajjāj and to rebuild the Ka'ba as Ibn Zubayr did. Mālik Ibn Anas said to him: I beseech you, O Commander of the Faithful, not to make this House a playing



field for the Kings; all of them want to raze it and rebuild it; but consequently its reverence will disappear from the hearts of the people.⁽⁴¹⁾

If there was any advantage in the construction of the Ka'ba on the foundations of Ibrāhīm (p) it would have been in opposition to a bigger evil, namely a loss of reverence and making the Ka'ba a kind of game for the kings; this is what Imam Mālik (m) realized, so the Ka'ba remained as it used to be.

Secondly: The construction of al-Ḥajjāj Ibn Yūsuf:

Reason for the construction:

ʿAbd al-Malik Ibn Marwān sent a large army lead by al-Ḥajjāj Ibn Yūsuf ath-Thaqafī to Mecca. He conquered the city and killed Ibn Zubayr (r2). He restored the Ka'ba in 74 of the Hegira: he shut the western door, elevated





the eastern door, knocked down the northern wall and cut 6 cubits and a span from the side of the Ḥijr and he did not change its height.⁽⁴²⁾

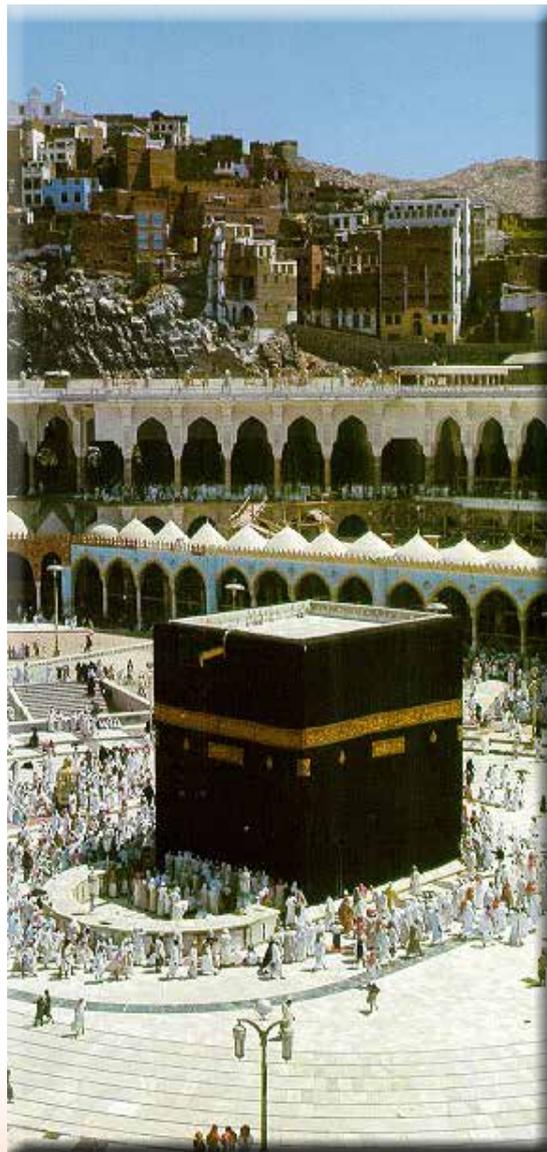
The question that naturally comes to one's mind:

Was the political disagreement between 'Abd Allah Ibn Zubayr and 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwān the reason for the destruction of Ibn Zubayr's building? Or was it for another reason?

There are numerous stories about the construction of the Ka'ba by al-Ḥajjāj Ibn Yūsuf ath- Thaqafī under the command of 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwān.

Among the stories related to this matter are the following:

1. 'Aṭā' (m) reported: When Ibn Zubayr was killed, al-Ḥajjāj wrote to 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwān informing him about it and telling



him that Ibn Zubayr had built the Ka'ba on those very foundations which were laid by Ibrāhīm (p) and which reliable persons among the Meccans had seen. 'Abd al-Malik wrote back to him, saying: We are not concerned with the wrong done by Ibn Zubayr⁽⁴³⁾ in anything. Keep intact the addition made by him in the length and whatever he has added from the side of the Ḥijr, bring it back to its previous foundations, and wall up the door which he had opened. Thus al-Ḥajjāj, at the behest of 'Abd al-Malik, demolished that portion and restored its former structure.⁽⁴⁴⁾

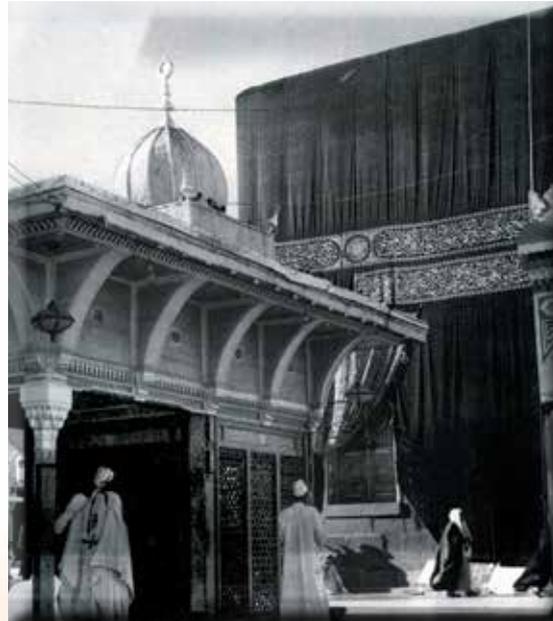


2. Abū Qaza'a (m) reported: While 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwān was circumambulating the Ka'ba, he said: May Allah ruin Ibn Zubayr that he lies in attributing to the Mother of the Faithful, as he says: I heard her stating that Allah's Messenger (s) had said: **'Ā'isha, if your people had not been new converts to Islam, I would have demolished the House and would have added in it area from the Ḥijr for your people have reduced the area from its foundations.** Al-Ḥārith Ibn 'Abd Allah Ibn Abī Rabī'a said: Commander of the Faithful, don't say that, for I heard the Mother of the Faithful saying this. Whereupon he said: If I had heard this before demolishing it, I would have left it in the state in which Ibn Zubayr had built it.⁽⁴⁵⁾



3. 'Abd Allah Ibn 'Ubayd (m) reported: Al-Ḥārith Ibn 'Abd Allah led a deputation to 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwān during his caliphate. 'Abd al-Malik said: I don't think that Abū Khubayb (i.e. Ibn Zubayr) had heard from 'Ā'isha (rh) about the intended wish of the Holy Prophet (s) in regard to the alteration of the Ka'ba. Al-Ḥārith said: Yes, I myself did hear that from her. He ('Abd al-Malik) said: Well, tell me what you heard from her. He stated that she had said that Allah's Messenger (s) remarked: **Verily your people have reduced the area of the House from its original foundations, and if they had not recently abandoned polytheism (and embraced Islam) I would have reversed it to those foundations which they had left out of it. And if your people would take initiative after me in rebuilding it, then come along with me so that I should show you what they have left out of it. He showed her about seven cubits of area from the side of the Ḥijr (that they had separated).** This is the ḥadīth of 'Abd Allah Ibn 'Ubayd.

4. Al-Walīd Ibn 'Aṭā' has, however, made this addition to it: Allah's Messenger (s) said: **I would have made two doors on the level of the ground facing the east and**



the west. Do you know why your people raised the level of its door (i.e. the door of the Ka'ba)? She said: No. He said: **They did it out of vanity so that they might be in a position to grant admittance to him only whom they wished. When a person intended to get into it, they let him climb the stairs, and as he was about to enter, they pushed him and he fell down.**

'Abd al-Malik said to al-Hārith: Did you yourself hear her saying this? He said: Yes. He (al-Hārith) said that he ('Abd al-Malik) scratched the ground with his staff for some time⁽⁴⁶⁾ and then said: I wish I had left his (Ibn Zubayr's) work there.⁽⁴⁷⁾



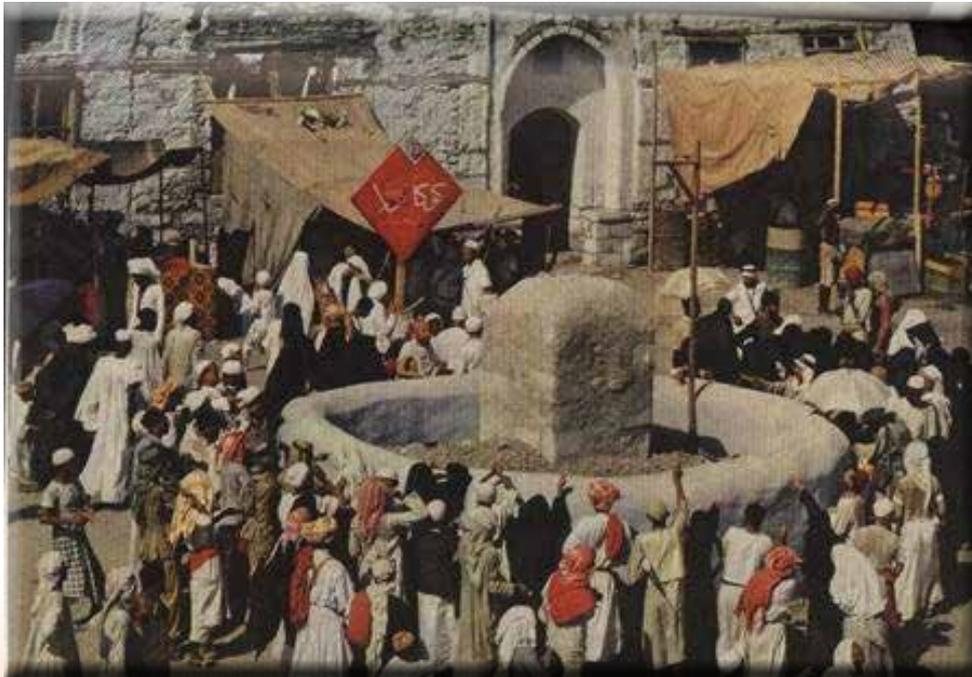
Ibn Zubayr (r2) was right:

It appears clearly from this statement that the construction of al-Ḥajjāj ath-Thaqafī was the execution of the orders of 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwān, and that 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwān did not know about the ḥadīth narrated by 'Ā'isha (rh) concerning the position of the Prophet (s) about the Ka'ba, which was exactly the line of conduct followed by Ibn Zubayr (r2). 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwān thought that the construction of Ibn Zubayr was a pure product of his own imagination



or slander against the Mother of the Faithful 'Ā'isha (rh). When he clearly understood that the narration of 'Ā'isha was true, he regretted it and wished he had left the Ka'ba as he found it. What emerges from 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwān's regrets is that the political conflict with Ibn Zubayr was not the motive of his demolition of the Ka'ba; instead, the reason for doing so was ignorance of the ḥadīth of the Prophet (s) narrated by the Mother of the Faithful (rh), in addition to his willingness to honour and glorify the Ka'ba.

It emerges from this that Ibn Zubayr (r2) was right in the works he carried out on the Ka'ba.



Praise of the emirs and ulama towards the Ka'ba

Ibn Taymiya (m) confirmed and insisted on this matter when he said: All the princes and ulama who saw these events and were praising and glorifying the Ka'ba. Their deeds and opinions were what they thought was closer to the love and preference of Allah and his Prophet (s); none of them intended to insult the Ka'ba, and if someone says that one of the servants of Allah wanted to shell the Ka'ba with a catapult or to stain it with filth, he is a liar. This never happened, neither during the Jāhiliya nor after Islam, and those unbelievers who did not respect the Ka'ba, like the people of the Elephant or the Qarmatians, did not do such a thing. So what about Muslims who praised the Ka'ba? And even if we suppose – Allah forbids – that someone wants to dishonour the Ka'ba and is able to do so, he does not need a catapult, he could damage it without, as it will be destroyed at the end of time, when Allah will decide the Resurrection: His House will be demolished, His



Word will be raised from Earth so that there will be no more Qur'ān in the books nor in the hearts, He will send a pleasant wind that will take the souls of all the believers and only the wicked will survive; and the Ka'ba will be destroyed by Dhu-Suwayqatayn,



as reported by the two ṣaḥīḥ: Abū Hurayra (r) narrated: The Prophet (s) said: **Dhu-Suwayqatayn^(٤٨) from Al-Ḥabasha (Abyssinia or Ethiopia) will destroy the Ka'ba⁽⁴⁹⁾.** Al-Bukhārī reported from Ibn 'Abbās (r2) that the Prophet (s) said: **As if I were looking at him, a black person with thin legs (faḥaj)⁽⁵⁰⁾ plucking the stones of the Ka'ba one after another^{(51) (52)}.**

Thirdly: The construction of the Sultan Murād Khān:

The Sultan Murād Khan was one of the Sultans of the Ottoman Caliphate. His reign extended from 1032 of the Hegira to 1050. The 19th of the month of Sha'bān 1039 H. a violent rain beat down on Mecca and torrents of water entered the Ka'ba and the Sacred Mosque causing many deaths. The northern wall of the Ka'ba fell down and also parts of the eastern and western walls. The Yemeni

wall was hit, weakened and knocked down, as it was collapsing. The ruins of the two other walls (eastern and western) were also knocked down. After this, the great Ka'ba was rebuilt. The reconstruction was completed the second day of the month of Dhul-Hijja 1040 H. This was the very last time the Ka'ba was rebuilt and it is still standing today on these foundations.⁽⁵³⁾

Fourthly: The Shādhawān of the Ka'ba:

Description:

Shādhawān or *Shādhirwān* is a Persian name⁽⁵⁴⁾; it designates the leaning stone upon which rely all the walls of the Ka'ba, except the side of the Hījr which stands on the threshold of the original House. The Shādhawān was made of a



yellow convex stone that tends towards white; it is inlaid with rings of brass used to fix the Kiswa. The stones of the Shādhawān are made of the most precious marble; its height varies between 68 and 77 centimetres and its breadth between 54 and 72 centimetres.⁽⁵⁵⁾

Reality of the Shādhawān:

The ulama diverged on the reality of the Shādhawān. There are two opinions:

1. According to the majority of the ulama⁽⁵⁶⁾ from the Mālikī, Shāfi'ī and Ḥanbalī schools, **the Shādhawān is a part of the House** left by the Quraysh tribe. It is a piece of the original wall of the Ka'ba the Quraysh left because



of a lack of ḥalāl money collected to restore the building. It is said that Ibn Zubayr (r2) reduced it from the breadth of the basis of the Ka'ba when he reached the ground where people circumambulate, while restoring the building. It was like a plinth, then it received the round shape it has today, to prevent the people from walking on it.⁽⁵⁷⁾

2. According to the **Ḥanafī School, Ibn Taymiya and late Mālikī and Shāfi'ī scholars⁽⁵⁸⁾, the Shādhawān is not part of the House** but was placed as a pillar for it, a reinforcement of its base against floods and erosion. This is proven by its protuberance from the wall of the Ka'ba and its different shape compared with it. **This opinion is prevailing.**⁽⁵⁹⁾

Fifthly: Complete restorations of the Ka'ba (H. 1417, 1996 CE):

With the passing centuries, the Caliphs, Sultans and Emirs hasten to repair any defect appearing on the Ka'ba. In 1996, the Custodian of the two Holy



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Mosques, King Fahd Ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz (m) ordered the complete restoration of the Honourable Ka'ba: the bases were made stronger, the Shādhawān and its rings were renovated, the outside of its walls were smoothed, the gaps between the stones were bridged and its roof was replaced.⁽⁶⁰⁾

This was the last complete renovation of the Honourable Ka'ba. We ask Allah his pardon and salvation for all those who glorified the Ka'ba and understood its true value, and all those who worked for its restoration, building and construction over all the ages.



Endnotes

- (1) See: *Bayt Allah al-ḥarām al-Ka'ba*, p. 73.
- (2) See: *Bayt Allah al-ḥarām al-Ka'ba*, Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd Allah Thābit Shabbāla p. 80.
- (3) Related to their grandfather 'Imlīq Ibn Lāūdh Ibn Sām Ibn Noah, they were inhabitants of the Yemen. See *al-Kāmil*, Ibn al-Athīr (61/1).
- (4) The 4th grandfather of the Prophet (s), his name was Zayd. See: *Sīra Ibn Ishāq* (60/2).
- (5) The grandfather of the Prophet (s), his name was Shayba al-ḥamd. See: *Sīra Ibn Ishāq* (43/1).
- (6) See: *Bayt Allah al-ḥarām al-Ka'ba*, p. 103.
- (7) Ibid p. 83.
- (8) Ibid p. 90.
- (9) Ibid p. 91.
- (10) Ibid p. 97.
- (11) Ibid p. 98.
- (12) See: *tārīkh al-Ka'ba al-mu'azzama* p. 70-75; *Makka al-mukarrama, tārīkh wa ma'ālim*, p. 43.
- (13) Ibid p. 92.
- (14) *Al-Bidāya wa an-Nihāya*, Ibn Kathīr, (298/2).
- (15) Ibid, 163/1.
- (16) Reported by al-Bukhārī (1229/3), H. 3184.
- (17) Reported by al-Ḥākim in *al-mustadrak* 629/1 number 1684, authenticated and agreed by adh-Dhahabī.

- (18) Reported by al-Azraqī in *Akhhbār Makka* (62/1).
- (19) See: *Al-ʿiḍāḥ wa at-tibiyān li-maʿrifa al-mikyāl wa al-mīzān*, Ibn ar-Rafʿa, Taḥqīq : dr. Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Khārūf, p. 77.
- (20) See: *Tārīkh al-Kaʿba al-muʿazzama*, p. 87-94; *Makka al-mukarrama tārīkh wa maʿālim* p. 44.
- (21) In another narration, the Prophet (s) explained: **I would have given it two doors, one facing the east and the other one to the west.** Reported by Muslim (969/2) H.1333. In another version: **I would also have constructed a door for the people to enter, and a door for their exit.** Reported by Muslim (970/2), H. 1333. See: *Sharḥ an-Nawawī ʿalā ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (89/9).
- (22) Reported by Muslim (968/2), H. 1333.
- (23) Reported by al-Bukhārī (573/2), H. 1506, Muslim (969/2), H. 1333.
- (24) Reported by al-Bukhārī (573/2), H. 1505.
- (25) *Al-Bidāya wa an-Nihāya*, (300/2).
- (26) See: *tārīkh al-Kaʿba al-muʿazzama* p. 106-123, *Makka al-mukarrama tārīkh wa maʿālim* p. 45.
- (27) See: *Sharḥ an-Nawawī ʿalā ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (92/9).
- (28) See: Ibid (92/9).
- (29) Or until he had made it new.
- (30) The reason for these pillars and curtains: to make it possible for the people at that time to know the place of the Kaʿba for their prayers. The curtains remained there until the construction was completed and visible to the people. See: Ibid (93/9).
- (31) Reported by Muslim (970/2), H. 1333.

- (32) We speak here about Yazīd Ibn Rumān al-Asadī, Abū Rūh al-Madanī, the freed slave of the family of Zubayr Ibn al-‘awwām. See: *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, al-Mazī (122/32). *Tārīkh al-Islām*, adh-Dhahabī (502/7).
- (33) Reported by al-Bukhārī (574/2), H. 1508.
- (34) See: *Bayt Allah al-ḥarām al-Ka‘ba*, p. 105.
- (35) *Shifā’ al-gharām bi Akhbār al-balad al-ḥarām* (97/1).
- (36) See: *Bayt Allah al-ḥarām al-Ka‘ba*, p. 106.
- (37) He dug a hole of this size on the ground of the Ḥijr, so people could see the foundations of the House erected by Ibrāhīm (p), and he built its construction on them.
- (38) Reported by Muslim (971/2), H. 1333.
- (39) *Sharḥ an-Nawawī ‘alā ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (89/9).
- (40) See: *Nabdha fī tārīkh al-Ka‘ba al-musharrafa wa al-mashā‘ir al-muqaddassa*, Dr. ‘Iṣām Ibn ‘Abd al-Muḥsin al-Ḥamīdān (13).
- (41) *Sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ibn Baṭṭāl (264/4).
- (42) See: *Tārīkh al-Ka‘ba al-mu‘azzama* p.124-129 ; *Makka al-mukarrama tārīkh wa ma‘ālim* p.46.
- (43) He wanted to insult him by saying this, and to reduce his deeds. In other words: We are innocent of the stain of Ibn Zubayr. See: *Sharḥ an-Nawawī ‘alā ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (94/9).
- (44) Reported by Muslim (971/2), H. 1333.
- (45) Reported by Muslim (972/2), H. 1333.
- (46) This is the habit of someone thinking about important matters. See: *Sharḥ an-Nawawī ‘alā ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (95/9).
- (47) Reported by Muslim (971/2), H. 1333.

- (48) “The one with thin legs”, a characteristic of people from Soudan. See: *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi Sharḥ an-Nawawī* (35/18).
- (49) Reported by al-Bukhārī (577/2), H. 1514; and Muslim (2232/4), H.2909.
- (50) *Faḥaj*: the space between the middle of the legs. See: *Tahdhīb al-luġha*, al-Azharī (97/4).
- (51) Reported by al-Bukhārī (579/2), H. 1518.
- (52) *Minhāj as-Sunna an-nabawiya* (582-583/4).
- (53) See: *Tārīkh al-Ka’ba al-mu’azzama* p. 130, *Bayt Allah al-ḥarām al-Ka’ba* p.111.
- (54) See: *al-Majmū’* by an-Nawawī (463/3).
- (55) See: *Tārīkh al-Ka’ba al-mu’azzama* p.179, *Makka al-mukarrama tārīkh wa ma’ālim* p.53.
- (56) See: *Balġha as-sālik* aṣ-Ṣāwī (274/1), *al-Majmū’* (23/8), *al-Mughnī* Ibn Qudāma (398/3).
- (57) See: *Tuḥfa al-muḥtāj*, al-Haythamī (79/4).
- (58) See: *Fath al-Qadīr*, Ibn al-Hammām (494/2), *Fatāwā Ibn Taymiya* (121/26).
- (59) See: *al-Ka’ba wa ba’d aḥkāmihā al-muhimma*, Dr. Sharaf Ibn ‘Alī ash-Sharīf, *majalla Jāmi’a oumm al-Qurā*, n° 14, p. 148, *tārīkh al-Ka’ba al-mu’azzama*, p. 179, *Makka al-mukarrama tārīkh wa ma’ālim*, p. 53.
- (60) See: *Makka al-mukarrama tārīkh wa ma’ālim*, p.47.

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