

the stages of the rites of

THE HAJJ



- 1 Pilgrims arrive by 7th day of the month of Ramadan. All perform rites of purification, but only men are required to put on the **ihram** (two pieces of white cloth reminiscent of a burial shroud). Women dress in clean, modest clothing.
- 2 Pilgrims then go to the Great Mosque and perform seven **tawafs** (circles around the Ka'aba) and **sa'y** (running between two local hills called Safa and Marwah seven times, as Hagar did when trying to find water for Ishmael). A special sermon is preached in the Great Mosque.
- 3 On the morning of the eighth day (called yawm al-tarwiyah, "the day of watering", because the water needed for the next few days is provided), pilgrims travel to an area outside of Mina where they spend the night. There is a mammoth tent city there for pilgrims, most of whom will stay here until the final day of Hajj.
- 4 On the morning of the ninth day all pilgrims leave Mina and move to the plain of Arafat. From noon to sunset prayers and the Qur'an are recited and people try to climb the Mount of Mercy (*Jabal al-Rahman*) seeking absolution for their sins.
- 5 At sunset, pilgrims move on to Muzdalifah and spend the night there. They gather pebbles (traditionally ten) to use in stoning Satan the next day.
- 6 After midnight, pilgrims move back to Mina to the largest of three stone pillars that symbolize the Devil. Throwing these stones (**al-Jamarat**) symbolizes casting evil out of one's life. Men have some of their hair cut off (symbolizing rebirth and renewal) and bathe, and no longer wear **ihram**. On the tenth and eleventh days, the other two pillars are stoned. Pilgrims then return to Mecca for where one final farewell lap around the Ka'aba is performed.

- 7 Pilgrims who have remained in Mina leave on the twelfth day. Then begins the Feast of Sacrifice (***Eid al-Adha***) when an animal (goat, sheep, camel) is sacrificed just as Abraham sacrificed a ram in place of Ishmael. Pilgrims now gain the honorific title of ***hajyah*** for women and ***hajji*** for men.