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Between Tawaf and Sa'y

When completing the tawaf prayer in Ibrahim's position, you must go to "Masa" which is the space between the mountains of Safa and Marwa (it encompasses about 1/4 mile). "Run" between those two mountains seven times. Start at the top of Safa. Part of the path is at the level of Kaaba where you should do the "harwala". Next, you walk normally to the foot of Marwa.

Sa'y is a search. It is a movement with an aim. It is depicted by running and hurrying. During tawaf (circumambulation) you acted as Hajar. In Ibrahim's position you acted as Ibrahim and Ismail. Once you begin "trying" (Sa'y) you are acting as Hajar again.

Here is a true demonstration of oneness. Shapes, patterns, colors, degrees, personalities, borders, distinctions and distances are destroyed. Naked man and stripped humanity are on the scene! Nothing but faith, belief and action are eminent! Here nobody is spoken of; even Ibrahim, Ismail and Hajar are only names, words and symbols. Whatever exists is moving constantly, humanity and spirituality and between them only discipline. Furthermore, this is Hajj, a decision for an eternal movement in a certain direction. It is also how the whole world moves.

Here in Sa'y you are to play the role of Hajar, woman, a poor, belittled Ethiopian slave and maid for Sara. These are all of her qualifications in the human social system – in the system of polytheism, but not in the system of monotheism! This slave is the addressor of Allah, the mother of His great prophets (the messengers of Allah) and the representative of Allah's prettiest and dearest creatures. In this show of Hajj, she is the first and distinguished character. In the house of Allah, she is the only woman, a MOTHER!

Allah told Hajar to obey Him and He would provide for her and her son. Allah would take care of their lives, needs and future. Oh Hajar, the example of submission and obedience, the great champion of faith and reliance in love, you will be protected under My umbrella!

Hajar totally submitted to the will of Allah; she left her child in this valley. This was the command of Allah and the order of love! However, the model of submission (Hajar) did not "SIT QUIETLY". Soon, she arose and all alone tried to run from one dry mountain to the other searching for water! Constantly

searching, moving and struggling, she decided to rely on herself, her feet, her will and her mind.

Hajar was a responsible woman, a mother, in love, all alone, wandering, searching, enduring pain, disturbed, deprived of support, lacking shelter, homeless, isolated from her society, classless, race-less and hopeless; yet despite all these drawbacks, she was HOPEFUL! A lonely slave, a victim, a stranger, exiled and disgusted, rejected from the capitalistic–aristocratic system, hated by the nations, hated by the classes and races, hated by the family – this black maid was all alone with her child in her arms! She was far away from her town and country of a more privileged race. Wandering in this strange desert, she was like a prisoner in these mountains. All alone, she was restless but hopeful and determined in her search for water, going from one area to the other.

All alone ... Running on her feet to the top of these mountains (NOT SITTING AND CRYING HELPLESSLY!) in search of water.

This is the promoter of Ibrahim's tradition – not a god but a slave (Hajar), not seeking the mercy of "fire" but of "water". Water? Yes water! Not unseen not metaphysical, not love, not submission, not obedience, not soul, not a Philosophical view of life. Not in heaven, not in the hereafter. No, no, no ... In this world and it is drinking water! From a fountain on this earth, it is purely material. This same liquid which flows on earth (water) is that which life is so thirsty for. The body requires it since it becomes blood in your vessels. It is the milk in the mother's breast which satisfies the child's thirst. Searching for water symbolizes searching for material life on this earth. It is genuine need which shows the relation of mankind to nature. It is the way of finding heaven in this world and enjoying its fruit on this earth.

Sa'y is physical work. It means exerting your efforts and running after water and bread in order to satisfy your thirst and feed your hungry children. It is a way to achieve a better life. Your son is thirsty and awaiting you in this dry desert; it is your duty to find a fountain to bring him some water. Sa'y is the struggle and search for your needs out of the heart of nature; it is the attempt to get water out of the stone.

Sa'y: purely material; a material need; a material aim and material act! Economy: nature and work!
Needs: material and human!

Surprisingly, in terms of distance, there are only a few steps or few moments from Tawaf to Sa'y.

Nevertheless, a great difference exists between the two:

Tawaf: Absolute love! Sa'y: Absolute wisdom! Tawaf: All "Him". Sa'y: All "You"! Tawaf: Almighty's will only! Sa'y: Your will only! Tawaf: As a butterfly who encircles the candle until it burns; and its ashes are gone with the wind – disappearing in love and dying in light! Sa'y: As an eagle who flies above these black mountains with the support of its strong wings to find its food and seize his bait in the midst of stones. It conquers both the earth and the sky. The wind blows the earth and the sky. The wind blows so softly against the eagle's wings. Flying freely above the sky, heaven signifies its ambition. Under its wings, the earth is so despised. The earth is also conquered by the eagle's sharp and prudent look! Tawaf is: Mankind in love with the "truth". Sa'y is: Mankind self-supported by the "facts". Tawaf is: The exalted

man. Sa'y is: The powerful man.

Tawaf: Love, worship, spirit, morality, beauty, goodness, holiness, values, truth, faith, righteousness, suffering, sacrifice, devotion, humility, slavery, perception, enlightenment, submission, Allah's might and will, metaphysics, the unseen, for others, for the hereafter, and ... for Allah! And ... whatever the easterner's spirit is motivated by and in love with. Sa'y: Wisdom, logic, needs, living, facts, objectives, earth, material, nature, privileges, thinking, science, industry, policy, benefit, joy, economy, civilization, body, freedom, will-power, mastery, in this world – for the self. And ... whatever the westerners struggle for.

Tawaf: Allah only! Sa'y: Mankind only! Tawaf: Soul and nothing else. Sa'y: Body alone. Tawaf: Pains of "being" and worrying about the "hereafter". Sa'y: Joys of "living" and convenience of "this world". Tawaf: Searching for "thirst"! Sa'y: Searching for "water"! Tawaf: The butterfly. Sa'y: The eagle.

Hajj is the combination of Tawaf and Sa'y. It resolves the contradictions that have confused mankind throughout history:

Materialism or idealism? Rationalism or enlightenment? This world of the hereafter? Epicureanism or asceticism? The will of Allah or the will of man? To rely on Him or the will of man? To rely on Him or rely on one's self?

Allah (Ibrahim's God) will teach you the answer – Both! A lesson not by words, perception, science nor philosophy but by showing you an example of a human. This example from whom all the worldly philosophers, scientists and great thinkers who are searching for faith and facts are to learn the great lesson of Allah is again a woman, a black Ethiopian slave and a mother. It is Hajar!

To the command of "love", she submits herself to His absolute will. Leaving her town and country, she brings her child far, far away and leaves him in this dry and lonely valley (Mecca). She relies absolutely on Allah and His love. With the power of faith, she denies all the logics and rationales. This is Tawaf!

But, unlike many of the so-called righteous people or worshippers, she does not sit quietly beside her son. She does not wait for a miracle to occur or for an invisible hand to bring some fruits from heaven or to flow a river to quench their thirst. Nay! She leaves her son in the hands of "love" and immediately arises to run – having decided to search for water and try her best. And now in the uncivilized and dry mountains of Mecca, a woman – alone, thirsty, responsible, a stranger – wanders in a fruitless search for "water"! Oh Allah, are we talking of "Hajar" or "mankind"?

Hajar's efforts are useless; she returns desperately to her son. To her astonishment, the child who was left under the umbrella of "love" in a state of thirst and restlessness, has dug under the sands with his heels. At that moment of maximum desperation and from an unexpected place, suddenly there appears: *by miracle, by the power of needs and the mercy of Allah – "a humming", "the sound of water"!* It is Zam-Zam, a sweet and life-giving fountain of water flowing from stone! This lesson: to find water by "love" not by effort but "after the effort".

Though you cannot approach Him by working hard, Oh my heart you should try your best.

Oh in love, try, try your best – You, the absolute faith and absolute reliance!

Try seven times which is the same number of times you circumambulated during Tawaf! But, this time, do not pursue a circular path that finally leads you no place except where you originally started (i.e. Zero). Do not travel in an empty circle, reaching nowhere, gaining nothing and moving aimlessly!, working to fill the stomach and filling the stomach in order to be prepared to work. Finally, continue on until the time of death!

Tawaf: Living not for the sake of living but for the cause of Allah. Sa'y: Trying your best not just for yourself but for the people. Here your path is straight and not a circle! You do not move in circles but walk ahead. It is a migration, beginning at one point and reaching your destiny; it is going from Safa to Marwa.

During Sa'y you repeat a back and forth action seven times. The figure (7) is "odd" not "even" so that your Sa'y ends up in Safa and not at the point where you began! Seven times! Seven, a symbolic figure represents always, all your life to ... Marwa! Start at Safa which means pure love for others. Your destination is Marwa which means the ideal of manhood a sense of honor, generosity and forgiveness toward others! Who are the others? Those who are trying with you!

What do I know? This is only my understanding and not all that it signifies. It means annihilating and drawing yourself into this ocean of love; coming out clean and sinless; and stepping in Ibrahim's position. From there – Oh man, a stranger, homeless and exiled from the earth, a sense of responsibility urges you to search for water in the mirage. Go to the top of Safa as Hajar did. See the white flood of people trying. Running down from Safa restlessly and in a state of thirst, they search for water in this hot and dry desert they continue to the top of Marwa where they find no water. With dry lips, empty hands and sad looks, they return to Safa and Start their search again. This procedure is repeated seven times, yet water is not found nor is their thirst quenched! But, they do reach Marwa!

And you, Oh a drop, from the top of Safa join this White-river of wandering, struggling and thirst! Draw yourself into this flood of people. Try your best (to Sa'y) with the others. In the middle of your Sa'y at the level of Kaaba, "hurry up" along with the others.

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