

Hajj Stories

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Tomorrow the sun will surely shine again

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‘Allah has blessed you with two masha-Allah grandchildren,’ he was told. Some said that the babies were going to consume all his energies, they were going to fill up any free second that he may have, and that they were going to open new avenues leading to paths to excitedly wander and wonder down. He had two additions to his life for which he thanked his Creator for. He was sincerely praying that they would be in addition to what he already had and cherished. He was supposed to gently compete with his wife of who would play with which twin. He was supposed to tease his daughter as to whom her children loved the most; their mother or their grandfather. It is said that it is not for us to question the will of Allah or decide on the fairness or unfairness of the Creator’s decisions. In his case he was indeed blessed with two grandchildren, and Allah recalled both their mother and grandmother. He had two additions to his family, but he lost his life companion and his only daughter within a few days of each other just after their birth.

I was honoured to be in his company on Hajj a few years ago. I used to frequent his room with the strange proviso that he exited his room when I entered. No, it was not any bad blood that led to this situation. In fact it was his utmost generosity that made him avail his room to be used as a medical consulting room during certain hours of the day. The nature of my work resulted in me not having time to spend in his company. He however consulted me one day about some visual problem. As he was a diabetic I thoroughly examined his eyes and realised that I was facing a medical emergency. I referred him immediately to hospital where he was attended to most competently. He however had visual disturbances in that eye but he could still see and for that he was immensely grateful. He was on Arafat, and we all know that Hajj is Arafat. Some on Arafat were wheelchair bound, some were disabled and some were blind. Yet all could feel and in effect see that they were as close to their Creator as was possible. He had his Hajj.

‘What Allah willed happens to be your loss, my loss and ultimately our loss.’

He was not without any medical afflictions. He would often recall how long he spent in the intensive care unit of a hospital and on more than one occasion this local Cape Town community thought that they have permanently lost one of the most well-known voices traversing the airwaves. Some of the lonely thought that they lost their only companion during the desperately dark nights. His voice would simultaneously console, encourage, enlighten and entertain. He was the proverbial caravan of the night, surely and certainly loading his listener passengers as they travelled roads varying from the wide highways to narrow gorges leading to far flung villages. Sometimes no one knew where the journey embarked would lead.

We do not know what went through his mind when he was at death’s door. That door was one that refused to open and in his own comforting words, for him and his listeners, the next day the sun certainly rose again.

how he could not envisage a life without her. He stared at the steps that led to the rooms that his daughter and her family lived in, a part of his house that he proudly extended for that purpose. Every moment he expected her to walk down those steps to him.



Whichever path we travel and no matter for what reason, whether between Safa and Marwaa or anywhere else on this world, we are never ever alone.

The rays were beaming down on him when his daughter gave birth to twins, and no could foresee the dimming of the light. She developed complications and despite modern medical advances, he could see all the latest technological instrumentations ticking away her last hours, then her last minutes and finally her last seconds. He and his wife mourned the sudden and unexpected loss of their daughter, even though visiting the twins occupied a significant part of their time and minds. A few days later his wife suddenly took ill, and three days later a number of us attended her Janazah salaah. The two added to his life suddenly paled into insignificance compared to his pride that was first taken away and now his rock and ultimate support structure that was now no more. No one could foresee the sequence of events and sometimes, even for those with the deepest of insight, our sorrows, loss and pain can blind us to the vision that Allah set out for us.

He was very distraught when a good friend who happened to be a Sheigh, and I visited him a few days after his wife’s Janazah. He asked why Allah took his wife and daughter away before him. He could not foresee a life without his wife of many decades. Building bonds with the babies was easy as there was the time, the need and the will to establish and cement them. He however would also have to engage in restructuring a lifetime bond that has suddenly been severed after nearly four decades and would seemingly take even longer to accomplish. He reflected on how his and his wife’s lives were intricately intertwined and

‘Why was I not taken away by Allah instead of them?’ he lamented. The Sheigh was listening intently and his response was very sage-like. ‘Your wife and daughter saw you virtually on your deathbed and the relief that you survived and in effect was brought back into their lives was a major blessing for them,’ the Sheigh said. ‘Maybe our Creator wanted to spare them losing you and therefore recalled them first. Imagine the heartbreak and sorrow they would have felt if you had to leave this world first,’ he continued. It is difficult to console anyone in such a situation. All we can attempt is to gently allude to the fact that Allah has decreed our fate and that our Creator has not burdened any of His subjects with more than they can bear even when in the depths of our hardship the pinnacle of ease seems an Everest away.

I was reminded of standing of Arafat whilst we were conversing with him. On Arafat we all are individuals desperately reaching out for the Mercy of Blessings of our Creator. Yet we all are one, we all are in our harmoniously uniform Ihram, all united on a common plain, all part of one Ummah, and all blanketed by the same call of ‘Labaik!’, of all being present. In the same I wanted to say to him: ‘What Allah willed happens to be your loss, my loss and ultimately our loss.’ Together we’ll look up the next day to see that the sun surely will rise and shine again.

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