



**HIS MAJESTY KING MOHAMMED VI
MAY GOD ASSIST HIM**



HM the King, Commander of Faithful, Delivers Address to Moroccan Pilgrims Headed to Holy Sites of Islam

His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Commander of the Faithful, may God assist Him, delivered an Address to the Moroccan pilgrims that are headed to the Holy Sites of Islam for the year 1447 HA.

Here follows the full text of the Royal Address, read out by Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs Ahmed Toufiq, at the departure of the first group of pilgrims from the Rabat-Salé airport on Monday:

"Praise be to God.

Peace and blessings be upon the Prophet, His family and His companions.

Honorable pilgrims,

May Almighty God bless you and protect you.

It gives me great pleasure to address this group of esteemed pilgrims, and through them all of this year's pilgrims, in line with the trust vested by God Almighty in me as the Commander of the Faithful, namely to protect the rituals of Islam. Foremost among these is to enable the believers - men and women - to perform their religious duties, especially when it comes to a chief pillar of Islam, such as Hajj.

This address to pilgrims, which is a customary practice, is meant to highlight eight practical, jurisprudential, and spiritual purposes upon which the correct performance of Hajj depends. Indeed, Hajj is a ritual between the pilgrim and his or her Creator. It hinges on the acceptance of pilgrimage by God Almighty. In this regard, acceptance of Hajj depends of the spiritual state pilgrims are in during their journey, particularly when performing the pilgrimage rituals. That is because the timeline of pilgrimage is a spiritual one; it requires

immersion in turning to the Almighty and supplicating Him to grant acceptance and the promised forgiveness and satisfaction.

My message to you will highlight eight purposes:

The first one is to congratulate those whom Almighty God has blessed by enabling them to perform Hajj this year. I share their feelings and their longing for the holy places and for the blessed Rawdah, the resting place of my ancestor, the Chosen One - may peace and blessings be upon him. I pray that Almighty God accept your rituals, fulfill your hopes, answer your prayers and shower His favors upon you. May you return safe and sound to your homeland. He is the All-Hearing, Oft-Responding.

The second purpose is to point out that I have seen to it - by the Grace of the Almighty - that the conditions for the performance of pilgrimage rituals are facilitated. I therefore instructed the Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to prepare for the pilgrimage season, be it in terms of planning, organization, scholarly training, or spiritual guidance. This is because performing Hajj requires spiritual preparation for travel as well as for the journey, given that the proper performance of the rituals depends on observing the conditions stipulated in the Quran and the Sunnah. This is the responsibility of each and everyone of you - no one can substitute for another in this; similarly, nothing can aid the pilgrim in this regard except patience, remembrance of God, and humility. Pilgrims must never lose sight of the purpose of Hajj, not even for a moment.

The third purpose is to advise pilgrims to be diligent in performing their rituals, including the related pillars, obligations, recommended acts, and desirable practices. They should see to it that not a moment of their precious time passes without them engaging in supplication, seeking forgiveness, remembering God, and performing sincere prayers so that they may reap the reward Almighty God promised the believers who undertake a righteous Hajj, in accordance with the saying of the Prophet - may peace and blessings be upon him - who said: "There is no reward for an accepted Hajj except Paradise."

The fourth purpose is to advise pilgrims to be at all times mindful of God Almighty in what they are about to do, as they recite the talbiyah: "At Your service, Allah, at Your service". I urge pilgrims not to forget my unremitting care of religious sanctities, which goes hand in hand

with my concern for the preservation of our national identity, especially its moral side. Pilgrims therefore need to commit to the ideal values of Islam, namely to sincere brotherhood, uncompromising tolerance, beautiful patience, and effective solidarity, in compliance with the words of the Almighty: "For Hajj are the months well known. If anyone undertakes that duty therein, let there be no obscenity, nor wickedness, nor wrangling in the Hajj. And whatever good you do, (be sure) God knows it. And take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best of provisions is right conduct. So fear Me, O you that are wise!".

As for the fifth purpose, it concerns the importance of respecting the Hajj arrangements. You realize - may God protect you - that performing pilgrimage, with its rituals, the standing at the holy sites, and moving between the sacred places, requires good knowledge of the pillars, obligations, and recommended practices of Hajj. You are also expected to comply with the arrangements and guidelines established by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs. These arrangements are there for your comfort during your travel and your stay. They are meant to enable you to perform your rituals in an optimal way, thanks to the multidisciplinary teams of specialists who will be there for you, from the moment you depart for the Holy Land until your return to the homeland. Those teams include male and female religious scholars and guides, doctors and nurses who will be looking after you, as well as administrative staff working around the clock to provide the necessary services our pilgrims may require at any given point.

The sixth purpose is to emphasize the importance of complying with the organizational arrangements made by the authorities concerned in our sister nation, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The latter provides for the comfort of pilgrims, making sure the Hajj season is smooth and orderly, in keeping with the instructions and wise guidance of my esteemed brother, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, may God grant him good health and a long life. May the Almighty assist him through the Crown Prince, my dearest brother, His Royal Highness and Prime Minister, Prince Mohammed bin Salman - may God protect him and grant him a long life. I wish to avail this opportunity to say how much I value the fraternal bonds between our two kingdoms and our peoples.

Honorable Pilgrims,

The seventh purpose of my message to you is to remind you - for reminders benefit the believers - that just as you are duty-bound, during the great Hajj season, to reflect the lofty values of Islam, including uprightness, proper conduct, solidarity, and sincere devotion to God - the Lord of all worlds - you are also expected to represent your country, Morocco, and reflect the vibrant civilization for which my ancestors were renowned throughout history - one that is rooted in unity, cohesion, and adherence to religious and national sacred values based on moderation, balance, and the unity of rite. Therefore, be worthy ambassadors for your country and seek to preserve its radiant image. Keep in mind that it is these values and principles which have enabled our country to enjoy security and stability, and to press ahead with its successful journey towards further progress and prosperity under my wise leadership.

The eighth purpose is for you to remember your duty, when you are in those holy places - especially when standing at Arafat - to pray for your King, who looks after your comfort, your security, the unity of your nation, and the betterment of your lives. Pray that Almighty God continue to support me, grant me victory, guide my steps and bless me and my esteemed family with good health and well-being. Pray God Almighty that I see only such things as please the eye and delight the heart from His Royal Highness Crown Prince Moulay El Hassan. Pray that Almighty God grant forgiveness to, and be satisfied with, my venerable grandfather and with my revered father, Their Majesties the late King Mohammed V and the late King Hassan II - May God bless their souls. Implore Him to surround our country with His protection, and shower His benevolent care on our homeland.

Honorable Pilgrims,

No doubt you are eagerly looking forward to fulfilling your spiritual longings, during the Hajj season, by visiting the Prophet's Mosque in al-Madinah al-Munawwarah, and standing, with the utmost reverence and humility, before the best of mankind and the Seal of the Prophets and Messengers, my ancestor, the Chosen One - may peace and blessings be upon him. Do remember - may God grant you success - the humility, veneration and reverence owed to the Prophet of Mercy and Grace, so that you may obtain the reward promised by God to all who invoke blessings and peace upon the Prophet - peace be upon him - for he said: "Whoever sends blessings upon me once, Allah will send blessings upon him ten times." At every sacred place you pass

through, and in every moment of pure spirituality you experience, do not forget to offer the best of prayers for your King, who attends to your security and prosperity, to the unity of your nation, and to the preservation of its sovereignty and dignity, so that our country may hold its rightful place in the region as well as the Islamic and international world.

Before concluding, I reiterate my prayers for a blessed Hajj and for God's abundant reward. May you return safe and sound to your homes.

The Most High is All-Powerful, Oft-Responding.

Wassalamou alaikoum warahmatoullahi wabarakatouhou".