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Common Arabic Sayings

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Common Arabic Sayings

In the Arabic language there is a saying for almost every occasion. Whether you are shaving or bathing, we have words of wisdom for you.

كل عام و أنتم بخير

Kull ‘aam wa antum bikhayr

Happy holiday! May you be safe and prosperous this year!

This phrase can be used at any annual celebration, such as a birthday or the New Year. Muslims exchange this greeting at the lesser and greater Eids, or feast days. Arab Christians may use it at Christmas and Easter.

الله يرحمه

Allah yarHamuhu

May God have Mercy on him!

This expression is used when speaking of someone (in this case male) who has died.

الله يوفقك

Allah yuwaffiqu

May God give you success and prosperity!

For Arabs, especially Muslims, the mention of God is common in most greetings and wishes. This expression could be equivalent to “good luck.”

لا اله الا الله

La Ilaha illa-llah

There is no God but God.

This expression, used in meditation, is part of the beginning of the 1st pillar of Islam (speaking of the “shahaada” or declaration of the oneness of God).

ان شاء الله

In shaa’ Allah

God willing

This greeting is perhaps one of the most well-known and widely used expressions in Arabic for both Muslims and Christians when speaking of future events. It is an expression of faith in God’s control over all circumstances.

ما شاء الله

Maa shaa’a-llah

Whatever God intends

This is an expression of praise, perhaps originating with the Arabic belief in the “evil eye.” In this belief, envy and the bad luck it brings can be warded off by showing submission to “whatever God intends.”



*Translation: In the name of God the most merciful most compassionate
Calligraphy by Sadika Ramahi*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

bism-Allah ar-rahman ar-raheem.

In the name of God the most merciful most compassionate (we begin.)

A phrase widely used by Muslims when they begin to recite a Qur'anic verse or simply when they undertake something unfamiliar such as opening a package, a door, beginning a letter or a meal. These words express their belief and ask God's blessing.

أهلاً وسهلاً

Ahlan wa sahlan!

Welcome!

A common greeting of welcome to a home or another place where family is gathered. "Ahlan" is derived from "ahl" meaning "family or relatives." "Sahl" means "easy and convenient."

صباح الخير

SabaaH al-khayr

Good morning!

"SabaaH" = "morning," "al-khayr" = "goodness." This greeting is a wish of goodness upon the person being greeted. In replying to this, one could either repeat "SaaaH al-khayr," or say "SabaaH al-nuur."

صباح النور

SabaaH an-nuur

Good morning! (reply)

Literally, “morning of light” (“nuur” = “light”). Used as a response to the greeting “SabaaH alxayr.” Variations of this reply include, “SabaaH al-ward” (“ward” = “flowers”) or “SabaaH al-jamaal” (“jamaal” = “beauty”).

الخير مساء!

Masaa’ al-khayr

Good evening!

“Masaa’ “ = “evening”, “al-khayr” = “goodness.” This greeting bestows a wish of goodness for the person being greeted.

مساء النور

Masaa’ an-nuur

Good evening! (reply)

(“nuur” means “light”) This is usually used as a reply to the greeting “masaa’ al-khayr” (see previous entry”).

مع السلامة

Ma’as-salaama

Goodbye

You may respond with the same phrase or by saying “allaah yusallimuka” (“may God give you safety”).

Written and translated by Sadika Ramahi