

# THE DAWN

**SPECIAL ABRAHAM EDITION!**

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**ISLAM IS:**

**INTERNATIONAL**

- It recognizes prophets being raised among all nations and requires Muslims to believe in them all.
- Truth and goodness can be found in all religions. God treats all human beings equally justly, regardless of race, nationality or religion.

**PEACEFUL**

- Allows use of force only in unavoidable self-defence.
- Teaches Muslims to live peacefully under any rule which accords them freedom of religion.

**TOLERANT**

- Gives full freedom to everyone to hold and practise any creed or religion.
- Requires us to tolerate differences of belief and opinion.

**RATIONAL**

- In all matters, it urges use of human reason and knowledge.
- Blind following is condemned and independence of thought is granted.

**INSPIRING**

- Worship is not a ritual, but provides living contact with a Living God, Who answers prayers and speaks to His righteous servants even today as in the past.

**NON-SECTARIAN**

- Every person professing Islam by the words *La ilaha ill-Allah Muhammad-ur Rasul-ullah* (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) is a Muslim and cannot be expelled from Islam by anyone.

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Photo: Ignaz P. Ahmadali

# PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOUSE OF ALLAH

**The annual pilgrimage to Makkah, the Hajj, is an obligation only for those who are physically and financially able to perform it. Nevertheless, about two million people go to Makkah each year from every corner of the globe providing a unique opportunity for those of different nations to meet one another. Although Makkah is always filled with visitors, the annual Hajj begins in the twelfth month of the Islamic year, named Zul Hijjah (which is lunar, not solar, so that Hajj and Ramadan fall sometimes in summer, sometimes in winter). Pilgrims wear special clothes (ihram), simple garments which strip away distinctions of class and culture, so that all stand equal before God.**

**The close of the Hajj is marked by a festival, Eid al-Adha, which is celebrated with prayers and the sacrifice of an animal. This, and the Eid al-Fitr, a feast-day commemorating the end of Ramadan, are the main festivals of the Muslim calendar.**

**Below, the rites of Umra and Hajj will be described in brief.**

## UMRA

### General

*Umra* (sometimes referred to as The Lesser Pilgrimage) consists of the performance of a set of devotional rites in the *Masjid ul Haram* in Makkah. These rites also form an integral part of *Hajj*. *Umra* may be performed at any time of the year and as many times as one may wish.

The following are the essential elements of *Umra*:

- (1) Changing into *ihram* at Meeqat (border), followed by the

pronouncement of the intention (*niyyah*) to perform *Umra* and frequent recital of the *Talbiyah* thereafter.

- (2) *Tawaf-ul-Umra* of the Kabah followed by two *rakahs salat-us-sunnah* and partaking of the waters of Zam-Zam.
- (3) Performance of *sai*.
- (4) *Halq* or *taqseer*, followed by changing into street clothes.

This will complete the *Umra*.

## HAJJ

### General

*Hajj* consists of the performance of a set of devotional rites in and around Makkah (i.e., in Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalifah) in a prescribed order. The rites of *Umra*, as described above, form an integral part of *Hajj*.

### Types of Hajj

There are three different types of *Hajj* a pilgrim may perform: *Hajj-ul-Ifrad*, *Hajj-ul-Qiran* and *Hajj-ut-Tamattu*. All of these involve the performance of essentially the same rites and acts of worship. The difference consists basically in the *niyyah* pronounced by the pilgrim at *Meeqat*.

## TAWAF

The devotional act of circumambulating (i.e. walking around) the Kabah while reciting prayers and supplications is called *tawaf*. Seven circuits around the

Kabah complete one *tawaf*.

### Types of tawaf

There are five types of *tawaf* the pilgrim may perform:

- (1) *Tawaf-ul-Qudoom* is the initial *tawaf* which will be performed upon arrival at the *Masjid-ul-Haram* in Makkah for the first time pursuant upon *niyyah* of *Umra* or *Hajj*.
- (2) *Tawaf-ul-Ifadah* is the *tawaf* the pilgrim will perform on the 10th of *Zul Hijjah* after taking off the *ihram* and changing into street clothes and before returning to Mina for stoning.
- (3) *Tawaf-ul-Wida* (The Farewell *tawaf*) is the *tawaf* the pilgrim will perform immediately before leaving Makkah for the next destination following the completion of *Hajj*. This is the last act to be performed in Makkah.
- (4) *Tawaf-ul-Umra* is the *tawaf* which is performed as a part of the rites of *Umra*. It is identical to *Tawaf-ul-Qudoom* in its essentials except for the *niyyah*.
- (5) *Tawaf-un-Nafl* is a devotional *tawaf* which can be performed at any time.

## SAI

### General

The devotional act of walking seven times between the knolls of Safa and Marwah, which are located some distance from the Kabah inside *Masjid-ul-Haram*, is called *sai*.

According to tradition, Prophet Ibrahim left his wife, Hajar, and infant son, Ishmael, in the desert close to where the *Kabah* is located today in response to a divine revelation. Unfortunately, his wife and son were with few provisions. After her meagre supply of water was exhausted and her son started crying with

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thirst, Hajar began looking for water in the desert. In her desperation, she repeatedly ran between the hillocks of Safa and Marwah, climbing them to get a better view of the landscape and, perhaps, also to see if there was a desert traveller in sight. Upon her return to her son after one of her runs, she discovered that a spring had miraculously sprouted near the infant. This spring, called Zam-Zam, is located to the east of the Kabah (and is now inside *Masjid-ul-Haram*).

The pilgrim will retrace the steps of Hajar in *sai*, in commemoration of her search for water and Allah's mercy in answering her prayers with the miracle of Zam-Zam.

### **MINA, ARAFAT, AND MUZDALIFAH (8<sup>TH</sup> - 13<sup>TH</sup> OF ZUL HIJJAH)**

The rites to be performed at Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalifah are an integral part of *Hajj*.

The pilgrim will stay at Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalifah in the following sequence:

- (1) **Mina:** From after *fajr* (morning prayer) on the 8<sup>th</sup> of *Zul Hijjah* to after *fajr* on the 9<sup>th</sup> of *Zul Hijjah*.
- (2) **Arafat:** From after *fajr* on the 9<sup>th</sup> of *Zul Hijjah* to slightly after sunset on the same day.
- (3) **Muzdalifah:** From after sunset on the 9<sup>th</sup> of *Zul Hijjah* to after *fajr* on the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Zul Hijjah*.
- (4) **Mina and Makkah:** 10<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> of *Zul Hijjah*

#### **(I) Arafat:**

The pilgrim will have arrived at Arafat before midday. **The *Hajj* will not be complete without *Qiyam-ul-Arafat*** in accordance with the *sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). One should spend as much time in prayers and remembrance of Allah as possible.

#### **(II) Muzdalifah:**

The pilgrim will stay under the sky at Muzdalifah. Seventy pebbles will be collected here for the stoning ritual (if not already collected at Mina).

The pilgrim will spend the night at

Muzdalifah and offer *fajr* there. Afterwards, the pilgrim will leave for Mina before sunrise on the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Zul Hijjah*.

### **Mina (10<sup>th</sup> of Zul Hijjah)**

The rites to be performed on this day are as follows: preferably before midday, the biggest of three pillars, symbolising the devil, will be stoned seven times. A sacrifice is now required for *Hajj-ul-Qiran* and *Hajj-ut-Tamattu*, and is recommended for

Marwah is a tribute to the patience and fortitude shown by Lady Hagar, the mother of Ishmael. The throwing of pebbles at Satan is a tribute to the resistance offered by Prophet Abraham to the attempts of Satan to dissuade him from sacrificing his son, while he was taking him to the place of sacrifice.

Again, while we recite the *darud* (invoking Allah's benedictions) in favour of the Founder of Islam, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), at the end of each prayer yet we also recite the *darud* for Prophet Abraham (peace

*Labbaika, Allahumma labbaika. Labbaika la shareeka laka.*

*Labbaika innal hamda wan-ni'mata laka. Wal mulka laka.*

*Laa shareeka laka.*

*Here I am in Thy presence, O my Lord, here I am in Thy presence!*

*There is no associate with Thee. Here I am. Verily all praise and bounties and the Kingdom belong to Thee. There is no associate with Thee. Here I am in Thy august Presence.*

#### *Hajj-ul-Ifrad.*

The pilgrim will now proceed to *Masjid-ul-Haram* in Makkah for *Tawaf-ul-Ifadah* and will return afterwards and stay there until the 12<sup>th</sup> or the 13<sup>th</sup> of *Zul Hijjah* for the stoning.

### **Mina (11<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> of Zul Hijjah)**

All three pillars will be stoned after midday on all three days. Stoning on the 13<sup>th</sup> of *Zul Hijjah* is optional. The pilgrim may return to Makkah after this ceremony on the 12<sup>th</sup> of *Zul Hijjah* to perform the Farewell *Tawaf* (*Tawaf-ul-Wida*), which will be performed just before leaving Makkah for the next destination.

### **HAJJ COMMEMORATES THE SUPREME SACRIFICE OF PROPHETS ABRAHAM AND ISHMAEL AND LADY HAGAR**

One unique aspect of the rituals of pilgrimage is that in this high-point of worship, no memorable event relating to the life of the Founder of Islam, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), has been included in the ritual of *Hajj*. The sacrifice of an animal offered is a tribute to the spirit of sacrifice shown by Prophet Abraham when he was ready to sacrifice his son Ishmael in obedience to the Divine command. The circuits around the Ka'bah are made as a tribute to Abraham and Ishmael for re-building the Ka'bah. The *sa'i* (running) between the two hillocks of Safa and

be upon him) with the same zest and fervour.

### **UNITY AMONG MUSLIMS**

By restricting the *Hajj* to a certain period, Allah undoubtedly has the aim to strengthen the unity among the Muslims. Allah indeed commands the Muslims to form a unity (Qur'an 6:160, 61:4, 3:102 and more). Therefore, it is a pity that some Muslim groups label some of their Muslim brothers as *kafirs* (unbelievers) and restrain them for performing the *Hajj*, despite the fact that Allah mentions in Qur'an 4:94:

*"Say not to any one who offers you salutation: Thou are not a believer."*

And despite the fact the Qur'an (22:25) warns Muslims not to hold others back from fulfil their religious duties:

*"Those who disbelieve and hinder (men) from Allah's way and from the Sacred Mosque, which We have made equally for all men, (for) the dweller therein and the visitor. And whoever inclines therein to wrong, unjustly, We shall make him taste of painful chastisement."*

And despite the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad:

"Whoever says, None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, faces our Qibla during the prayers, prays like us and eats our slaughtered animal, then he is a Muslim, and has got the same rights and obligations as other Muslims have" (*Bukhari*).

And lastly, what the Qur'an says in 2:113 is also interesting:

*"And the Jews say, the Christians follow nothing (good), and the Christians say, the Jews follow nothing (good); while they recite the (same) Book. Even thus say those who have no knowledge, like what they say."*

Sources:

- SoundVision.com
- The Alim for Windows
- Article from Mr. Nasir Ahmad BA LL.B (Pakistan)



*him down upon his forehead, and We called out to him saying, O Abraham, thou hast indeed fulfilled the vision. Thus do We reward the doers of good. Surely this is a manifest trial. And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice."*

The animal sacrifice that is offered by Muslims all over the world every year (at *Eid-ul-Adha*) is in commemoration of the supreme act and spirit of sacrifice offered by Prophet Abraham in lieu of his son Ishmael.

## ABRAHAM: PATRIARCH OF MANKIND?

*In many religions Abraham is a very important personality. We studied the place of this Prophet in four religions.*



### ISLAM

*"Peace be to Abraham! Thus do We reward the doers of good. Surely he was one of Our believing slaves" (Qur'an 37:109).*

*"And who is better in religion than he who submits himself entirely to Allah while doing good (to others) and follows the faith of Abraham, the upright one? And Allah took Abraham for a friend." (Qur'an 4:125).*

In Islam, Prophet Abraham is thus the friend of Allah, the father of Prophets Ishmael and Isaac and the grandfather of Prophet Jacob (6:85-87). He is also one of the ancestors of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him).

The Holy Qur'an (4:150 and others) states that a Muslim should believe in all Prophets: Moses, Jesus, etc., and thus also in Abraham:

*"Those who disbelieve in Allah and His messengers and desire to make a distinction between Allah and His messengers and say: We believe in some and disbelieve in others; and desire to take a course in between."*

The direction in which every Muslim must face when praying is towards the Kabah (in Makkah, Saudi Arabia), which was rebuilt by Prophet Abraham and his son, Ishmael. With regards to

the Kabah, Allah says this about it:

*"Certainly the first house appointed for men is the one at Bakkah, blessed and a guidance for the nations. In it are clear signs: (it is) the Place of Abraham; and whoever enters it is safe; and pilgrimage to the House is a duty which men owe to Allah - whoever can find a way to it. And whoever disbelieves, surely Allah is above need of the worlds" (Qur'an 3:96-97).*

Many rituals of the *Hajj* can be traced to the Prophet Abraham. We know the walking between the hills Safa and Marwah in remembrance of Abraham's wife Hagar, seeking water for her son, Ishmael. We also know the event, when Prophet Abraham received Allah's order in the form of a vision to sacrifice his son Ishmael. Both father and son willingly submitted to Allah's command. Allah substituted a ram in Ishmael's place at the last moment. This incident is mentioned in Qur'an 37:100 -107:

*"My Lord, grant me a doer of good deeds. So We gave him the good news of a forbearing son. But when he became of (age to) work with him, he said: O my son, I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice thee: so consider what thou seest. He said: O my father, do as thou art commanded: if Allah please, thou wilt find me patient. So when they both submitted and he had thrown*



### JUDAISM

According to *A Concise Encyclopedia of Judaism* by Dan Cohn-Sherbok (Oneworld Publications 1998), Prophet Abraham is the father of the Jewish people. According to Scripture, he was the son of Terah and the father of Isaac, who was born to Sarah, and he was also the father of Ishmael, who was born to Hagar.

After leaving Ur of the Chaldees, Abraham travelled to Canaan, visited Egypt and returned to Hebron. God appeared to him in a vision. He promised Abraham that his descendants would inherit the land. God's covenant with Abraham is expressed in the ritual of the circumcision. God tested Abraham's faith by asking him to sacrifice his son.



### CHRISTIANITY

According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 1 (1999, Kevin Knight, online version), and the *New Testament* (John 8:33, 39), the generation of Jesus Christ is traced back to Abraham. And according to *A Concise Encyclopedia of Christianity* by Geoffrey Parrinder (Oneworld Publications 1998), Abraham is a great Hebrew patriarch and is considered the common spiritual father of the Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam.



### HINDUISM

According to the book *Muhammad in World Scriptures* (vol. 1) by Maulana Abdul Haq Vidyarthi, the Abraham of the

Bible and the Qur'an is the same person as the Hinduistic Brahma. Maulana Vidyarthi makes a very interesting comparison, which we quote in short:

- The likeness in the name: Abraham and Brahma;
- Abraham is seen as the patriarch, the father of the Israelites (through his son Isaac) and the Arabs (through his son Ishmael); likewise *Brahmaji* is seen as the father of mankind, or the first of the gods (*Mundaka Upanishad*);
- The Hindus have another name for Brahma, namely, Parjapati (father of nations), whereas

Jews refer to Abraham as the Patriarch;

- According to the *Gopatha Brahmana*, Brahma prayed for offspring; likewise, Abraham prayed for offspring (Gen. 15:1-4, Qur'an 37:100);
- Abraham had two sons: Ishmael and Isaac; Brahma also had two sons: Atharva and Angiras (*Gopatha Brahmana*);
- Both Abraham and Brahma had children born to them in old age (Gen. 15:2-4 and *Gopatha Brahmana* 1:1);
- Both Abraham and Brahma are said to have had two wives who

bore similar names. Compare Sarah with Saraswati and Hagar with Parvati, the latter two being identical in meaning and standing for 'a rock' or 'a hill'.

Therefore, we can conclude that Abraham was the patriarch according to four important religions; Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism.

Sources:

- *SoundVision.com*
- *Muhammad in World Scriptures (Abdul Haq Vidyarthi)*

## NECESSITY OF INTERPRETING DREAMS

In the ritual worship of *Hajj*, in addition to the obligatory prayers (*salah*), there is greater emphasis on extolling Allah's greatness and celebrating His praise, and that is why, if we study the Qur'anic verses relating to *Hajj*, the words *fuzkurullah* (so remember Allah) have been used five times for this act of worship instead of the usual word, *salah*. The fact remains that, in reality, in *Hajj* there is a continuous affirmation of *tauhid*, or the unity of Allah, and one's complete readiness to obey Allah's commandments. These rituals are indicative of a man's ex-

*vouring seven lean ones, and seven green ears of corn and seven dry ones* (12:43). Now, the interpretation of Joseph's dream turned out to be that his treacherous brothers, the king and other members of the ruling class ultimately bowed to his authority. To one of his companions in prison he said that he would find deliverance and would be serving the king, and the other was told that he would be hanged on the cross (12:41). Similarly, he told the king that his dream meant that there would be seven years of severe drought and famine and the way for

and see how the sense or interpretation of it turned out to be something quite different. Again, also keep in mind that when Joseph narrated his dream to his father, Jacob, who himself was a prophet, he did not take the dream literally. Rather, the Holy Qur'an tells us that Jacob was given a hint about the events that were to overtake Joseph and the high spiritual station which was to be vouchsafed to him, though he was not made fully aware of it at that time. But all the same, he perceived the import of the dream that his son was to later become a prophet, so he advised his son accordingly and this has been recorded in the Holy Qur'an in the following words:

*He said: O my son, relate not thy dream to thy brethren, lest they devise a plan against thee. The devil indeed is an open enemy to man. And thus will thy Lord choose thee and teach thee the interpretation of sayings, and will make His favour complete on thee and to the Children of Jacob, as He made it complete before to thy fathers, Abraham and Isaac. Surely thy Lord is Knowing, Wise* (12:5-6).

please bear in mind that a dream is always subject to interpretation, because what one sees in a dream is all symbolic and the underlying reality may be quite different.

treme sense of servitude and perfect obedience to his Lord, and this is why this act of worship has acquired such an important position.

### PROPHET ABRAHAM FULFILLED THE DREAM

In this context, please bear in mind that a dream is always subject to interpretation, because what one sees in a dream is all symbolic and the underlying reality may be quite different. For instance, Joseph saw in a dream that *eleven stars and the sun and the moon are making obeisance to him* (12:4). Then, during imprisonment, one of his two companions saw in his dream that he was *pressing grapes* and the other saw that he was *carrying bread on his head and birds were eating it* (12:26). Again, the king of Egypt saw in a dream *seven fat cows de-*

survival was also described in the dream itself. In this context, we give hereunder the Qur'anic version of the interpretation:

*He said: You shall sow for seven years as usual, then that which you reap, leave it in its ear, except a little which you eat! Then after that shall come seven years of hardship that will eat away all that you have stored beforehand for them, except a little you have preserved! Then after that will come a year in which people will have rain and in which they will press (grapes)* (12:47-49).

Now, look at the apparent description or events shown in the dream

The knowledge of the Unseen is given to the prophets and the righteous through dreams, visions, revelation and inspiration. At times these are hints in the form of a dream and at other times these may be explicitly stated through words and messages. But in all circumstances, these people have firm belief and complete faith in Allah and their spirit of obedience remains firm and enduring. To wit, Allah kept on giving news to Jacob about Joseph, so that is why when Joseph's brothers got their younger brother,

Benjamin, arrested on a charge of theft and on their return they informed their father about this incident, the impact the news had on Jacob is stated in the Holy Qur'an thus:

*And he turned away from them, and said: O my sorrow for Joseph! And his eyes were filled (with tears) on account of the grief, then he repressed (grief). They (the brothers) said: By Allah! Thou wilt not cease remembering Joseph till thou art a prey to disease or thou art of those who perish. He said: I complain of my grief and sorrow only to Allah, and I know from Allah what you know not (12:84-86).*

I have given a detailed explanation of dreams and their interpretation and the events that overtook Joseph

and Jacob as stated in the Holy Qur'an in order to elucidate that dreams are always composed of hints and allusions and need to be interpreted and explained. But Abraham and Ishmael were so enthusiastic and were imbued with such an extreme sense of obedience and submission to the will of Allah that they took the dream literally and got ready to act upon it.

Now, see how Allah appreciated this extremely praiseworthy resolve of Abraham - a resolve that was made in response to a difficult test set for him by Allah - and how Allah then rewarded him for such superb faithfulness:

*Surely this is a manifest trial. And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice. And We granted him among the later generations (the salutation), Peace be upon Abraham*

(7:106-109).

And in the very next verse Allah gives an assurance that anyone who does noble deeds is always granted abundant reward by Him: *Thus do We reward the doers of good.* And it is a living reality that this sacrifice was so highly appreciated that the memory of this act of sacrifice by Abraham and Ishmael was given eternal recognition through making it an obligatory part of the rituals of the pilgrimage. Also, two *raka'hs* of *salah* to be offered at Maqam-i Ibrahim (the place where Abraham stood) were made an obligatory part of the ritual of pilgrimage as well. In addition to the making of circuits around the Ka'bah, *sa'i* (running between the two hillocks, Safa and Marwah) was also made obligatory.

May Allah give us the strength to tread along the path of righteousness and to do good to others. And may He also enable us to inculcate within us a spirit of submission and sacrifice in obeying His commandments. This is the important lesson *Eid al-Adha* tries to convey to us for leading a better and virtuous life. May Allah bless all of us.

*Source: Article from Mr. Nasir Ahmad BA LL.B (Pakistan)*

## ISAAC... OR ISHMAEL?

***Towards the end of February 2002, Muslims throughout the world will commemorate Allah's command to Abraham to sacrifice his (Abraham's) son, Ishmael. When Abraham was about to fulfill the command of Allah, Allah told him it was no longer necessary since Abraham had already proved his righteousness by his intention to obey Allah's command. Instead of his son, Abraham was told to sacrifice an animal.***

The Qur'an does not explicitly state that it was Abraham's son, Ishmael, who had to be sacrificed, as we see in 37:102:

*"But when he became of (age to) work with him, he said: O my son, I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice thee: so consider what thou seest. He said: O my father, do as thou art commanded: if Allah please, thou wilt find me patient."*

But according to 37:112 (*And We gave him the good news of Isaac, a prophet, a righteous one*), it can be concluded that Isaac was born after this event.

The Bible, however, contradicts itself when narrating this event. The Old Testament explicitly states that Abraham had to sacrifice Isaac. As we read in Gen. 22:2 and Hebr. 11:17:

*"And he said, take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah. And offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of*

*the mountains which I will tell thee of"* (Gen. 22:2).

*"By faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac: yea, he that had gladly received the promises was offering up his only begotten son"* (Hebr. 11:17).

We will now examine, according to the Bible, whether Isaac was indeed the only son of Abraham when this event took place.

*"And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram"* (Gen. 16:16).

*"Abraham was a hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him"* (Gen. 21:5).

According to these quotations, we can conclude that Isaac was born fourteen years after Ishmael. Therefore, if Abraham had to sacrifice his first son, it could only be Ishmael. We also read in Gen. 17:23-26 (see

below) that Abraham and Ishmael were circumcised when Abraham was ninety-nine years old. That Isaac is not mentioned here is further evidence that he had not yet been born. According to Gen. 21:4, Isaac was circumcised eight days after he was born, as God had commanded Abraham. Therefore, at the time Abraham received the command of circumcision, Isaac was not yet born.

### DID ABRAHAM LOVE ISHMAEL?

But what is the reason that the Bible encourages us to believe that Isaac, and not Ishmael, had to be sacrificed? Regarding this point, theologians usually hold the opinion that Abraham had to sacrifice the son **whom he loved**, and that this was Isaac (Gen. 22:2).

We will now examine the vision of the Bible regarding this point.

*"And Abraham said unto God, Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!"* (Gen. 17:18).

*"Wherefore she (Sarah) said unto Abraham, Cast out this handmaid and her son. For*

the son of this handmaid shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight on account of his son" (Gen. 21:10-13).

As we see here, Abraham surely had some feelings of love for his son, Ishmael.

### WAS ISHMAEL AN OUTCAST?

Another theory of the Christian scholars is that the sacrifice can be related to Isaac alone, because they regard Ishmael as an outcast, an illegitimate son born of a slave. The Bible, however, does not support this opinion; rather, it regards Ishmael as one of the righteous, as we see in the following quotations:

"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: behold, I have blessed him, and will make him a great nation" (Gen. 17:20).

"Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him (Ishmael) in thy hand. For I will make him a great nation" (Gen. 21:18).

We also notice that the covenant of God with Abraham applied to Ishmael also:

"And God said unto Abra-

ham, And as for thee, thou shalt keep my covenant, thou, and thy seed after thee throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee: every male among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of a covenant betwixt me and

circumcised, and Ishmael his son" (Gen. 17:23-26).

We thus conclude that, according to the Bible, Ishmael was the first son of Abraham, that Abraham loved him as his son and that Ishmael was surely not an outcast. If the Bible states that Abraham had to sacrifice his first son, it could only be Ishmael. Therefore, it is strange that the Bible mentions Isaac as the only son of Abraham at the time of the

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*"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: behold, I have blessed him, and with him a great nation."*

(Genesis 17:20)

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you" (Gen. 17:9-11).

sacrifice.

"And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. In the selfsame day was Abraham

Another noteworthy point in support of the fact that it was Ishmael, and not Isaac, who was to be sacrificed, is that Muslims alone commemorate the sacrifice made by Abraham, since they are the followers of Prophet Muhammad who descends from Ishmael. Had Isaac been sacrificed, Jews and Christians would today be celebrating this grand sacrifice, since they are followers of Moses and Jesus, who descend from Isaac.

#### Sources:

- *The Holy Quran*
- *The Bible*

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## FAREWELL ADDRESS OF THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD

Sensing that his mission was done  
Since *Sura 'Fatihah'* had already come,  
Seated on his she-camel  
He did address  
His followers, all in a *Haji's* dress,  
A hundred thousand strong,  
United by a fraternal bond,  
All kinds of men,  
Fair, brown and black,  
Chanting: *Labbaik...*  
*Allahumma, Labbaik!*  
Thus:  
"All praise is due to Allah  
Him do we praise  
From Him we seek assistance  
From Him we seek grace!  
Repentantly we turn to Him  
In Him we seek refuge,  
From the mischief of our inner selves  
From the effects of sins' deluge!  
Whoso Allah Guideth

None can lead astray  
And those that He doesn't  
None can show the way!"  
"Hark ye and listen,  
For I may not be around  
The next time you gather  
In 'Arafat's hallowed ground!  
So listen carefully to what I say  
And spread it around!"  
"O men!  
Guard your duty to Allah  
Do guard it ever so well,  
Tread in His way fearfully  
Beware of the fire of hell!"  
"He alone is worthy of worship,  
I declare and testify,  
And I am His servant-apostle  
He sent to pacify,  
To reform and remind

Every nation on this earth  
All of mankind!"  
"I call you all  
To all that is good  
To what you shouldn't  
And what you should!  
All the savage customs  
Of pre-Islamic days,  
All the evil habits  
All the filthy ways,  
Stand trampled under my foot  
Forever and for good!"  
"Hark ye, O Men!"  
"Just as God is One,  
So was your father Adam!  
Let there be no question  
Of Arab over the 'Ajam!  
Or, the colour of your skin  
Descended from Adam,

We are all akin!  
None enjoys any priority  
In the Eyes of Allah  
Except through his piety,  
Or, what is called 'Taqwa'!  
All claims to excellence,  
All claims to being fine,  
Pride in your forefathers  
Glorying in your line,  
Stands wiped out  
By command of the Divine!"

"You are secure, if Allah you fear,  
If you don't,  
The consequences you bear!  
You are all born of Adam,  
The progenitor, the first,  
And he was just a mortal,  
A Handful of Dust!"

"Hark ye! O Men! And listen!"

"Your blood, your property  
and your honour  
Like this day, this city,  
This place, this hour,  
Are Sacrosanct!"

"Soon you shall be standing  
in Allah's Court  
Facing the reckoning  
Giving your report!"

"Don't you lose the Way  
after me,  
Striking each other's necks  
In rage and fury!"

"All the blood feuds of yore  
Are void and no more!  
Forgive and forget,  
It's better for you,  
I declare forgiven  
The blood of my nephew!"

"Return all trusts  
All interest, waive!  
But the principal of the debt  
Shall be duly met!"

"All usury is banned  
By Allah's Command,  
And the first sum I write off  
Is my uncle's demand!"

"Verily, Satan and his evil band  
has despaired of being worshipped  
in this Holy Land!"

"Beware of his machinations  
Lest he leads astray,  
By suggesting minor sins  
He makes you lose the Way!"

"The number of months is twelve  
In Allah's reckoning,

Four of these are sacred,  
Having no fighting!  
"Hark ye! O Men!"

"Beware of Allah,  
Give your wives their rights,  
In Allah's name you've taken them  
As your wedded wives!  
They should guard their chastity,  
And be faithful to you,  
Good food, clothing and shelter  
Are certainly their due!  
Should they breach the trust  
Chastise them lightly,  
Don't treat them cruelly  
Nor beat them brutally!"

"Hark ye! O Men!"

"As for the slaves,  
They are Allah's trust,  
Treating them with gentle kindness  
For you, it is a must!  
Feed them well and full  
With what you yourself eat,  
Clothe them well and properly,  
Keeping them clean and neat!"

"Hark ye! O Men!"

"In matters of inheritance  
He's fixed for all a share,  
So none can now stipulate  
A bequest regarding an heir!"

"A son inherits from the man  
in whose bed he is born  
And fornicator's punishment  
is laid down in the Qur'an!"

"A husband's property  
is a trust unto his wife,  
She must guard it carefully  
As she guards her life!"

"Hark ye! O Men!"

"Debts should be repaid,  
Things borrowed restored;  
A guarantor is liable  
For the sum he has assured!  
By meeting a gift with a gift  
Mutual affection is secured!"

"Hark ye! O Men!"

"A man is surely responsible  
For the acts he has done,  
The son won't pay for his father,  
Nor the father for his son!"

"Hark ye! O Men!"

"Even if an African  
with a sawn-off nose

is made an *Amir* over you,  
Give him his due respect  
And obedience that is his due!

"Hark ye! O Men!"

"There's no prophet after me,  
(Neither old or new),  
Nor another *Ummah*  
Is going to come into view!"

"Hark ye! O Men!"

"Lovingly worship your Lord,  
Dutifully, offer prayers, five odd;  
Piously, observe *Ramadhan*, the  
month of fasting  
At least, once in a life-time,  
Visit the house of God!"

"Hark ye! O Men!"

"I leave something behind  
That will always remain with you,  
Hold on to it firmly  
And keep it in your view,  
It's the Book of Allah,  
And my *Sunna*,  
A record of what I do!"

Finally he posed the question  
To Islam's mighty nation,  
"When the Good Lord asks  
you  
On the Day of Resurrection  
Did My Apostle convey  
My Mission?  
What would you  
tell Him then!"

"We shall say; he  
accomplished the mission,  
Delivered Thy Message, a  
duty well-done!"  
With one voice  
they responded,

Islam's valiant sons!

He then,  
Lifting his finger  
Towards the sky,  
Addressed his Lord,  
God  
the High:  
Spake thus:

"O Allah! Bear Witness!  
O Allah! Bear witness!"

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