

## Lesson 8 - The Great Sacrifice

### *Learning Objectives*

- **To comprehend that Allah (swt) does not let our sacrifices in His name go in vain**
- **To link the rites of Hajj to the event in the lives of Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail**

Once Prophet Ismail encouraged his father to fulfil the dream, they headed off to Mount Arafah.

On the way, they passed a plain stretch of land called Mina. Shaytan appeared and tried to dissuade Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail from performing the command of Allah (swt). Prophet Ibrahim picked up a handful of pebbles and threw them at Shaytan to get rid of him. This happened a second time and a third time. Both times Prophet Ibrahim threw pebbles at Shaytan and ignored his evil whispers. This act was so loved by Allah (swt) that he has made it incumbent upon Muslims to follow this exact scenario as part of the rites of Hajj. This is known as ‘Ramy’ – stoning at the three points that Shaytan had appeared at to misguide Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail from their mission. During this action, the Muslims at Hajj reflect upon their sinful acts and intend to cleanse those habits by ignoring and getting rid of Shaytan when he misguides them just as Prophet Ibrahim got rid of him.

When Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail finally reach near Mount Arafah, Prophet Ismail makes a request towards his father. He tells him to tie his hands and legs and blindfold him so he would not struggle as this may make his father even more upset than he was going to be. Prophet Ibrahim followed his son’s request and even blindfolded himself so that he would not see his son suffer. He then took the knife and did what Allah (swt) had told him to do.

When he took the blindfold from his eyes he looked down and did not see Prophet Ismail. Instead he saw a dead ram and Prophet Ismail was at his side all safe and sound. Prophet Ibrahim was obviously confused and concerned that he was not able to fulfil what he saw in his dream. He then heard a voice telling him not to worry as Allah (swt) looks after his followers. An angel, upon the command of Allah (swt) had placed the ram to be sacrificed instead of Prophet Ismail. This was actually a test from Allah (swt) and Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail had both passed this difficult test with flying colours.

***“ You have fulfilled the vision!’ Indeed, We thus reward the doers of good. Indeed, this was the clear trial. And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice. And We left for him [favourable mention] among later generations.” – Surah as-Saffat 37:105-108***

This sacrifice is another aspect from the lives of Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail that has been included in the rituals of Hajj. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of Dhulhijja, after performing Ramy, the stoning of the Shaytan, the Muslims then sacrifice an animal in following the footsteps of the two great prophets. Once this has been completed, they are officially granted the title of ‘Hajji’ – one who has completed Hajj and this also marks the beginning of the celebration of Eid-ul-Adha: the Eid of Sacrifice which is celebrated by all Muslims across the world.

A few years after this event in the life of Prophet Ibrahim, Allah (swt) blessed him with another son through his first wife, Lady Sarah. This son was named Is’haq and he too grew up to become a prophet. In fact, several prophets come from the lineage of Prophet Is’haq such as Prophet Yaqub, Prophet Yusuf, Prophet Musa and Prophet Isa.

Prophet Muhammad (saw) is a descendant of Prophet Ismail.

**Discussion:**

- Bring together all the various aspects of Hajj that originate from actions of Prophet Ibrahim, Lady Hajra and Prophet Ismail [*Kaaba, Sae'e, Ramy, Zamzam*]
- Allah (swt) calls this sacrifice of Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail the 'Great Sacrifice', can you think of any other sacrifice that is worthy of greatness in Islamic history? [*The sacrifice of Imam Husayn (as) at the tragic event of Ashura in Karbala*]
- What lessons can we gain from the various events that occurred in the lives of Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail? [*Faith and trust in Allah (swt), obedience to Allah (swt) and parents, firmness in religion, recognising Shaytan's whispers as evil and misguiding...*]