

السَّلَامُ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلِ اللَّهِ

PROPHET IBRAHIM^[A.S]

نبي الله إبراهيم (ع)

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 1

Lesson 1: Prophet Ibrāhīm's Youth

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to Prophet Ibrāhīm as one of the principal prophets
- Be introduced to Prophet Ibrāhīm's family
- Discuss the story of Prophet Ibrāhīm's youth
- Discuss Prophet Ibrāhīm's experiences with his uncle and his opposition to those who worshipped idols
- Discuss Prophet Ibrāhīm destroyed the idols
- Discuss the quality of courage and that it is rooted in not fearing anyone but God
- Be introduced to more stories from the life of Prophet Ibrahim including:
 - Taking Hajer and Ismail to Mecca
 - The command to sacrifice Ismail
 - Discuss the quality of 'trust in God' (tawakkul) that Prophet Ibrahim exhibited throughout these trials.

There are 124,000 prophets but Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) is one of the very important prophets. His name appears in the Qur'an many times. Muslims all over the world remember him especially at the time of 'Īdul Aḍḥā, during the month of Dhul Ḥajjah.

HIS FAMILY

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) had a beautiful wife named Sara; but she did not have any children. So she asked Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) to marry Hājer, her maid servant. So the Prophet had two wives.

He prayed to Allah (SWT) to grant him children, which Allah did. He was quite old when his wife, Hājer gave birth to Ismā'īl. Five years later, even his wife Sara miraculously gave birth to another boy, Isḥāq. Both these boys were prophets.

PROPHET IBRĀHĪM'S YOUTH:

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was born in the city of Ur. The king of that time was Namrud. He was proud and told everybody that he was God. An astrologer had told Namrud that a prophet would come and overthrow the ruler and invite people to Allah (SWT). Namrud ordered all men and women in the land to be separated so there would be no babies born. He thought he could change the will of Allah (SWT).

As soon as Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was born, his mother hid him in a cave outside the town. When he was 13 years old, his mother felt it was safe to bring him into town

then. His father had already died, so his father's brother Āzar looked after him. Āzar was a famous sculptor who made idols out of stone. He gave Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) a job to sell these idols. On the first day of his job, he tied a rope around some idols and dragged them through the market-place. He then called out to the people.

"Come and buy these lifeless idols who can neither benefit nor harm anybody."

The people of the town were furious and complained to Āzar. Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) already believed in Allah (SWT) and hated idols. He purposely did a bad job, so Āzar stopped him from selling the idols anymore!

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) tried to reason out with his uncle.

"O my father! Do not worship Satan; he was disobedient to Allah."

Āzar was angry. He said: "Do you turn against my gods, O Ibrāhīm? If you do not go away I will stone you. Get away from me."

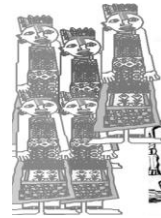
See how bold Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was? Āzar shouted at him yet he was polite but courageous. He did not feel helpless. He had trust in his Lord, Allah (SWT).

DESTROYING THE IDOLS

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) continued to tell to his people not to worship statues. They said that they were doing what their ancestors had done all along.

One day when all the people were out of the town to celebrate a pagan festival, Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) went to the temple where the statues were kept. He broke all of them leaving only the biggest one. He then put the axe round the neck of the biggest one. When the people of the town returned, they saw the broken statues; they rushed towards Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) asking: "Who has done this to our Gods, Abraham? Did you do it?"

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) wanted them to realise how helpless these statues were. "Ask your biggest idol," Ibrahim told them boldly. He was not scared at all!



The people knew that their gods could not answer. They lowered their heads in shame and said: "You know very well that these (statues) don't speak." Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) replied:

"Why do you then worship them; they can neither help nor harm you?"

IBRAHIM'S COURAGE

Did you see how brave Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was? He believed in Allah (SWT), and was not scared of standing up for the truth. He knew he was right and he was afraid of nobody. He feared only God.

The people decided to kill him, so they built a huge furnace and collected firewood for a month. Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was thrown into a big fire using a catapult. The fire was very hot. Nobody could come near it, and Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was thrown into it.

The angels came to help him. He said he did not need their help. He was not afraid, and was certain that if Allah (SWT) wanted him to stay alive, He would save him.

Allah (SWT) then ordered the fire:

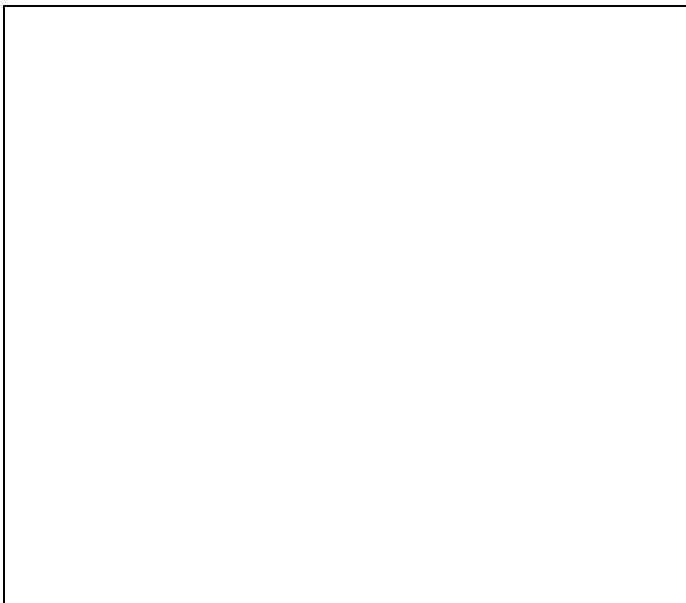
"O fire! Be cool and safe for Ibrāhīm"

Namrud, who was watching from the top of his palace, saw that the fire had turned into a garden; he was shocked. He ordered Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) to leave his kingdom.

The picture below shows the big fire that Prophet Ibrahim was thrown into.



In the space below, draw a beautiful garden that the fire turned into instead. Decorate it with colourful flowers and tall trees.



Class Activity 1

In the following sentences, circle the correct word that completes the sentence

1. Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) feared no one but (Namrud/ Āzar/ God)

2. He was alone yet he was (timid/ courageous/ rude) in telling the truth.

3. He (feared/trusted) Allah (SWT) to guide and help him.

Class Activity 2

Match the name with the correct description

- | | | |
|--------|-----|-------------------|
| Sara | ___ | mother of Ismā'il |
| Namrud | ___ | mother of Ishāq |
| Hājer | ___ | the sculptor |
| Āzar | ___ | king of Babylon |

Review Questions

Q1. Āzar was Prophet Ibrāhīm's:

- Father
- Brother
- Uncle

Lesson 2: Prophet Ibrāhīm's Trust in Allah (SWT)

LIFE IN MECCA

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was quite old when Ismā'il was born. He took his wife Hājer and her son (as) to Mecca. At the time, Mecca was an empty desert land, without much water or plantation. Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was ordered to take them there by Allah (SWT).

Hājer was unsure why Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) had brought them to this place, and why he was leaving them there.

She asked him: "Ibrāhīm, did God order you to do so?" He said, "Yes". She then replied: "Then He will take care of us". Although Hājer was all alone in the desert, she had learnt from Prophet Ibrāhīm to trust in Allah (SWT) and be patient.

After a few days, her son began to cry because he was hungry and thirsty, so Bibi Hājer he started to look for some source of water or food. She started running between the two hills on either side of her, named Şafā and Marwah.

She ran from one hill to another seven times until she got tired because it was very hot. She could not find any water in the hot dry valley.

Then a miracle occurred. Allah (SWT) inspired her son to kick the earth with his feet, and suddenly a spring of water gushed out. This spring of water became known as Zamzam. Slowly, because there was water in Mecca, people began to move to that area in order to be able to use the water. Within a few years, Hājer and Ismā'il were surrounded by people and water and vegetation.

The spring of Zamzam is there till today. When people go to Ḥajj, they honour Hājer by walking between the hills of Ṣafā and Marwah, and they drink from the water of Zamzam.

THE COMMAND TO SACRIFICE ISMĀ'ĪL

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) used to visit Hājer and his son quite often. On one of his visits when his son had grown up and was able to help his father and be almost like a friend to him, Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) had a dream. He dreamt that he was killing his son by cutting his neck with a knife. Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) often received Allah's commands in his dreams, but because he was being asked to actually kill his son, he wondered whether it was real. On the next two nights Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) saw the same dream again. Now he was sure it was the command of Allah (SWT).

He told his son about his dream. Imagine how Ismā'il might have felt, being told that his father had been ordered to kill him. However, he too was a prophet and immediately said:

"O father! Do as you have been commanded. If Allah wills, you will find me from the patient ones." (37 : 102)

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) took a rope and a knife, and took his son into the desert. On the way, Satan appeared in the form of an old man, and tried to convince Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) that he was making a big mistake in killing his son. Three times Satan came, and each time Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) made him go away by throwing stones at him.

When they reached a place called Mina, Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) laid his son on the ground and tied his legs and hands. He blindfolded him with a handkerchief. He took the knife to sacrifice his son. As he went to use the knife, he found

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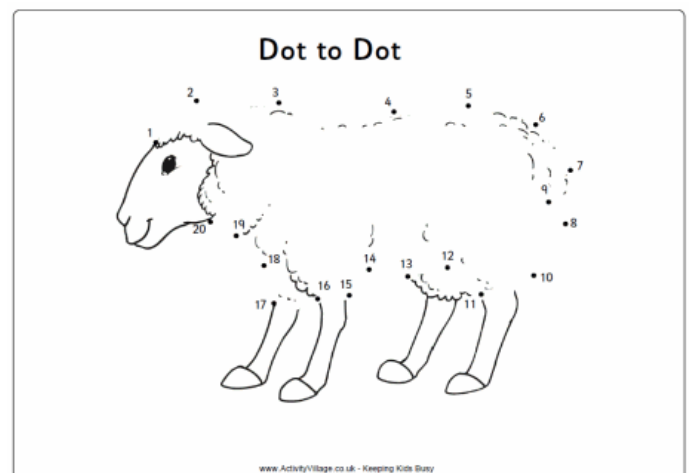
that it was not working. The knife, which he had just sharpened, was not causing any harm to his son at all. Suddenly, Allah (SWT) sent a sheep down from heaven. He told Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) that he had already passed his test, and that now he could sacrifice this sheep in place of his son.

Till today, Muslims honour this sacrifice of Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) when they perform Ḥajj. They stone the pillars representing Satan for three days in a row, and they sacrifice an animal for the sake of Allah (SWT).

Colour the following picture of prophet Ibrāhīm following the command of Allah (s.w.t) and sacrificing his son:



Follow the numbered dots to get a picture of the animal that Allah (s.w.t) asked prophet Ibrāhīm to sacrifice instead of his son, and colour the picture.



What is this animal called? _____

TRUST IN ALLAH (TAWAKKUL)

Tawakkul is an Arabic word meaning ‘trust in Allah’. One should have so much trust in Allah as to do whatever Allah (SWT) had ordered that person to do, and to know that Allah (SWT) will always be there to help and rescue that person.

It is not enough for us to say that we believe in Allah. He will test us according to our ability. These tests and trials make us stronger, and also distinguish evil people from good people.

Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) had some very difficult tests in his life and he passed them to reach a very high position with Allah (SWT). The most difficult test was sacrificing his son.

PROPHET IBRĀHĪM’S TAWAKKUL

Do you remember how graciously Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) argued with his uncle, a great idol worshipper? He was not rude or harsh. He was polite but firm; he respected his uncle and wanted to correct and guide his old man. At the same time, he did not fear his uncle, or in fact the whole town. He did what was right, and trusted in Allah (SWT) to protect him.

Think of the time when Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) was thrown into the flaming hot fire! He showed no fear! When he had left Hājer and his baby son alone in the desert, imagine how he would have felt then! But again, he showed complete trust in Allah (SWT).

Then imagine a lady in the desert with a small child and no sign of water, food or people! Hājer stayed behind and did not go after Prophet Ibrāhīm (as), knowing Allah (SWT) would look after her. She also displayed great level of trust in Allah (SWT), learning it from Prophet Ibrāhīm (as).

Finally, Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) had so much trust in Allah (SWT) that he was ready to sacrifice his son, the most beloved thing to him in this world.ⁱⁱ

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Class Activity:

Look for the following words in the word search above:

ALLAH, FAITH, GUIDANCE, HAJAR, IBRAHIM, ID-AL-AZHA,
ISMAIL, RAM, SACRIFICE, TRUST, ZAMZAM

Class Activity 2

Let us act out the incident of Ibrahim taking his son for sacrifice! Your teacher will give each of you a role to play.

Review Questions

Q1. Prophet Ibrāhīm (as) left his family in:

- Medina
- Ur
- Mecca

Q2. The well which miraculously appeared for Hājer and Ismā’īl is called:

- Safa
- Marwah
- Zamzam

ⁱ **Bibliography:**

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