

Historical narratives: the sacrifice story revisited

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Since the dawn of time, there have been disputes and fabrications about Islamic history. The most pertinent topic to cover in regards to the life of the Prophet is the birth of his two sons, Isma'il and Ishaq, as well as the account of the sacrifice. The name of the son who has been chosen to be sacrificed for Allāh is not mentioned in the sacred text. According to religious concerns, the Ibrahim's (as) sacrificial myth also received criticism. Muslims, Christians, and Jews are all aware that Ibrahim (as) was asked to sacrifice his son and that he was willing to do so, but God substituted a sheep for his prized offspring. Prophet Ibrahim is revered throughout Islamic history as a divine messenger. He holds an unique position in all Semitic religions, including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, in fact that the Islamic world has used him as an example of a sincere, obedient man. In his lifetime, he completed all of the Lord Allāh's demands and tests. God accordingly promised that he would guide the entire universe. Every able-bodied Muslim is obligated to undertake the Hajj and go to Mecca, which is a magnificent city that was rebuilt by Prophet Ibrahim and his son Prophet Isma'il. The holy day of "Eid al-Adha" in Islam is celebrated in remembrance of Prophet Ibrahim's sacrifice. The Muslim Ummah views Adnanite--Arabs and Israelites came through him and he has a remarkable influence in the purifica-

tion of the world from idolatry in his time.

The sacrificed person, according to Jews and Christians, was Isaac. Ishmael is the one who is sacrificed in Islamic perspective. Biblical scholars and Qur'ānic exegetes agree that the sacrificial story's episode illustrates the unwavering character of confidence in God. Another interpretation is that it was a test that was also designed to get religious believers to think on the idea that if they believe in God, God will support them in any circumstances. As a result, it is important to assess different points of view on this history using biblical and Qur'ānic narrations as well as current scholars' viewpoints.

Qur'ān AND BIBLICAL NARRATIONS

The historical accounts of the Qur'ān, which offer a wealth of information about a time period known as the pre-Islamic period by historians, are evidence of its miraculous nature. The holy text has demonstrated many pieces of stories including the stories of Hābīl and Qābīl (5:27-31), Hārūt and Mārūt (2:102), Heifer (2:67-73), Prophet Moses and Al-Khidr (18:60-82), Qārūn (Korah) (28: 76-80), Bilqīs (Queen of Sheba), 'Uzayr (9:30), Dhul-Qarnayn (18:83-98), Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj (18:94-97), People of the Cave (18:13-24), the Sabbath-breakers (7:163-166), and the people of the ditch (85:4-8). The Qur'ān goes into great detail about the histories of numerous earlier Prophets and ancient kingdoms. It has been established

beyond a doubt that the Prophet Muhammad was unaware of these historical occurrences. He had spent the previous forty years living among the Quraysh, but throughout that time he had never studied under a tutor, a priest, a monk, or a writer of historical works. Nevertheless, he began to teach his followers about historical occasions that had taken place in the past, such as the creation of heaven and earth, the construction of the Ka'ba, and the creation of Prophet Adam. Where did the Prophet get this knowledge? The miraculous element of the historical stories in the Qur'an is formed through this.

The historical accounts in the Bible also offer staggering data during a time frame regarded as the "pre-Islamic period" by historians. The stories of Adam and Eve, Noah and his Ark, Moses, Abraham and his sons, Aaron, Ezekiel, and Daniel are just a few examples of the many story fragments that may be found in the Holy Bible. The Bible provides in-depth explanations of the histories of numerous ancient prophets, kings, and nations, including the tale of the world's genesis, making it a highly regarded historical source in the field of ancient studies.

MUSLIM SCHOLARS' VIEWS

The founder of the Hanbali school of jurisprudence Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d.855 AD) has admitted a hadith of Safiya bint Shaybah (d.640AD) on the authority of Sufiyan al-Thawri (d.778 AD), Mansoor and Nafi', she said that a woman from Banu Sulaym told me that the Messenger of God, peace be upon him, sent to Uthman bin Talha (d.651 AD) and she asked Uthman that why he invited you Messenger of God? "I used to see the two ram horns when I came into the house, and I forgot to tell you to leave them on," he said that the two ram horns were burned because they were inside the Kaaba when it was set on fire, according to Sufyan al-Thawri. The head of the ram was still hanging at the gutter of the Kaaba, and it had dried out, according to a hadith that was related on the authority of Ibn Abbas (d. 687 AD). According to Ahmad ibn Hanbal, the fact that the Prophet Isma'il was from Mecca, is a proof that he offered the sacrifice.

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Ka'ab bin Ahbar, one of the companions of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh), who claimed that it was Prophet Ishq. Caliphs Ubaid Allāh bin Umar, Abbas, Ali, Ibn Masud, Masruq ibn al-Ajda', Amer Al-Sha'bi, Muqatil ibn Sulyman, Ibn Shihab Al-Zuhri, and Abu Al-Qasim al-Zahrawi accepted Ka'b bin Ahbar's point of view. Ibn Kathir claims that this is unacceptable because a lot of these academics' claims that the Prophet Islam was the sacrifice are widely recognised and cited. Ibn Abbas has agreed with the theory that the Prophet Islam was offered as the sacrifice.

Ibn Jarir Al-Tabari (d.923 AD) on Prophet Ishāq as the son to be sacrificed. He clarifies in his eminent works Jami'al-bayan and Tarikh al-Tabri that Ibrahim carried out the sacrifice of his son Ishq when he was given the order by Allāh. To support his claim, he cited several sayings made by the Prophet Muhammad's (Pbuh) associates. For instance, the illustrious Sahabi Qatada (d. 735 AD) stated, "Except for Ibrahim and Ishaq, no one is complimented as a forbear. In the declaration of Saddi, he also mentioned that "when Prophet Ibrahim heard that his wife Sara was having a kid, he pledged God to sacrifice the new-born child. He asserts that Prophet Ishaq should be offered as a sacrifice in accordance with what his uncle, Abbas ibn al-Muttaleb (d. 653 AD), suggested Abu Muhammad ibn Qutayba (d.885 AD) had mentioned that, in his work al-Ma'arif. Al-Kisāi and al-Tha'labi(d.1038 AD), the debate and two opinions of Muslim scholars in their works Al-Tha'labi concluded his discussion with Prophet Ismā'il while Al-Kisāi eventually reached to Ishāq.

Opinion Of Ibn Kathîr.

Ishmael is this son since he was the first to bring Abraham good news. According to Mus-

lims and ahl Al-Kitâb, he is older than Isaac. Even in their Scripture, it is stated that Isaac was born when Abraham was 99 years old and Ishmael was born when he was 86 years old. Additionally, according to their Scripture, God commanded Abraham to offer up both his firstborn and his only son as sacrifice. And against the wording of their own Scripture, they added the fictitious name of Isaac at this location. They substituted Isaac since he is their father, as opposed to Ishmael, who is the father of the Arabs. They added Isaac out of envy and brushed away “only son” by saying that Ishmael and his mother had already been to Makkah.

The Opinion of Ulûm al-Hadîth.

The versions of the story that Isaac was sacrificed actually belong to the Isrâ’îliyyât since they were passed down by individuals who had converted to Islam among them, including Ka’b al-Ahbâr. The scholars who came after them were later duped by these stories and backed the idea that Isaac(P) was the Sacrificed. The disagreement that occurred among the salaf is mentioned in every book of exegesis (tafsîr), biography, and even history.

WHY THE MAJORITY OF MUSLIM SCHOLARS CLAIM FOR PROPHET ISMĀ’ĪL?

Famous feudal theologian Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350 AD) argued that the Jewish concept of sacrifice as it is related to the Prophet

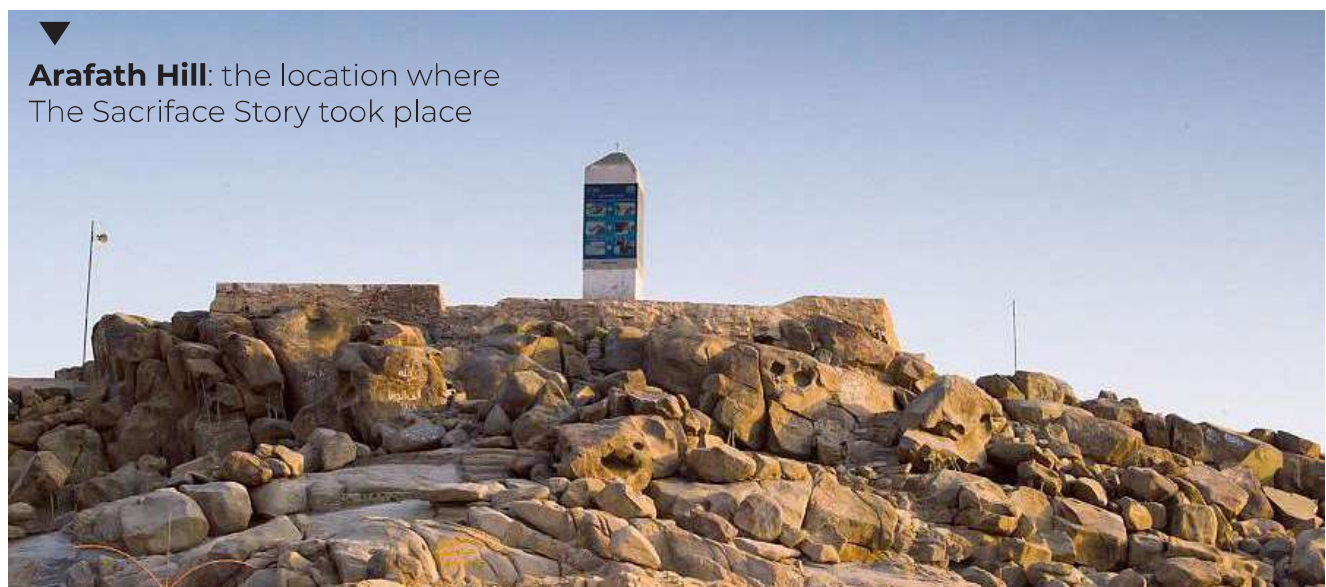
Ishq is false in his outstanding book *Zad al-Ma’d*. Because God told Prophet Abraham to sacrifice his elder son, as for is recorded in their holy text Torah. Scholars of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity all agree that Prophet Ismail was Prophet Abraham’s elder son. Ibn Qayyim’s opening argument is presented here. He himself characterised it as a reasoned argument, which is the second defence for the idea. He claims that because he and Sara did not protest against God for Sara’s infertility, the happy news of the birth of Prophet Ishaq was an honour to them both. The third argument is that Mecca, the Muslim holy land, is connected to the account of the sacrifice location. Instead of Mecca, Muslims should make Syria their first sacred location if it took place there. Ibn Qayyim thereby makes it absolutely clear that Prophet Isma’il, and not Prophet Ishaq, is the son who was to be sacrificed.

The Connection to the Holy Places of Islam

Because Muslims and Jews agree that Prophet Ism’l dwelt in Mecca and Prophet Ishq had never been there, al-Alusi (d. 1854) shows in his well-known exegesis *Ruh al Ma’ni* that Prophet Ism’l was the one who was to be sacrificed. Al Thaqafi, also known as Alusi, died around 1308 AD.

Evidence From Hadîth Literature

Abdullâh Ibn Sa’îd is reported to have said the following, as related by al-Hâkim in *Al-Mus-*



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Arafath Hill: the location where
The Sacrifice Story took place

tadrak, in his commentary with its isnad, and by others: “We were at Mu’âwiyah’s reception and the people started arguing [the topic of] Ishmael and Isaac(P) and which one was the sacrificial. Ishmael and Isaac were two names mentioned (as). We were with the Prophet (Pbuh) when a Bedouin approached him and said, “O Prophet of God, I have left the pasture dry and the life hard, the children died, and the wealth is gone, so give me [something] of what God has bestowed on you, O Son of the two sacrificed.” Mu’âwiyah responded, “I am the expert you need. The Prophet (Pbuh) grinned and made no comments about or attempts to place blame for what he said. Who are the two who were to be sacrificed, the populace inquired? When Abdul Muttalib was given the order to excavate Zamzam, he swore to sacrifice one of his sons if God were to aid him in his mission (i.e., the excavation of Zamzam). He drew lots for his ten offspring once he had completed the mission. Abdullâh was given the option, so he chose to sacrifice the boy. However, the boy’s uncles, Banu Makhzûm, objected to the sacrifice and urged, “Satisfy your Lord and ransom your son.” So, using a hundred camels as ransom, he freed him. The other sacrificed person was Ishmael (as), according to Mu’âwiyah.

The Qur`ân states that Isaac(P) cannot be the sacrifice. Ishmael(as) is the victim, according to the true traditions of Islam. The Muslim scholars have resolved this issue, and Ishmael’s(as) sacrifice has been incorporated into mainstream Islamic tradition very early in the history of Islam. statement It is clear that the assertion that the son was Ishmael is contrary to the Qur`ân is absurd and exhibits a shocking lack of knowledge on the side of the critic, who has no concept how Qur`ânic exegesis is conducted. Before calling upon ghosts that will frighten no one but themselves, Christian missionaries should carefully study the Qur`ân. They must deal with the mystery of the Biblical account of the event, which says to “sacrifice your only son, Isaac” or “sacrifice your firstborn son, Isaac.”

Different versions of the story are told in the Qur`ân and the Bible, leaving opportunity for interpretation and disagreement. Muslims view

the Qur`ân as a miracle work of literature because it includes historical accounts that Prophet Muhammad revealed without prior knowledge, which supports its divine origin. Similar historical tales are found in the Bible, which offer insightful perspectives into earlier times.

Various Muslim scholars have voiced their opinions on the subject. Some claim that Ishmael was the son who needed to be slaughtered based on their readings of hadiths and historical evidence, including Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Abbas, and Ibn Jarir al-Tabari. On the other hand, proponents of Isaac as the sacrificed son include intellectuals like Ka’b bin Ahbr.

Ibn Kathr, a well-known theologian of the Middle Ages, notes that the majority of Muslim scholars agree that Ishmael was the chosen son. He contends that the inclusion of Isaac’s name in the Bible was done so that Isaac would be recognised as the ancestor of the Jewish people, as opposed to Ishmael, who is regarded as the ancestor of the Arabs.

Additionally, academics like Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya place an emphasis on rational justifications for Ishmael’s sacrifice. They contend that the fulfilment of God’s promise and the end of Ibrahim and Sara’s reproductive problems made Ishmael’s birth momentous for Ibrahim and Sara. Ishmael being implicated is further supported by the fact that the sacrifice story is linked to Mecca, a sacred city, where he lived.

In general, one’s interpretation and religious tradition will determine which son in Prophet Ibrahim’s story was chosen for sacrifice. The various viewpoints expressed in historical records, religious writings, and scholarly judgements demonstrate the complexity and diversity of religious ideas as well as the difficulties in bringing them together.