

Ismail (Ishmael) - Ishmael's Wives

The Prophet continued: "After Ishmael's mother had died, Abraham came after Ishmael's marriage in order to see his family that he had left before, but he did not find Ishmael there. When he asked Ishmael's wife about him, she replied: 'He has gone in search of our livelihood.' Then he asked her about their way of living and their condition, and she replied: 'We are living in misery; we are living in hardship and destitution,' complaining to him. He said, 'When your husband returns, convey my salutation to him and tell him to change the threshold of the gate (of his house).'

"When Ishmael came, he seemed to have felt something unusual, so he asked his wife: 'Has anyone visited you?' She replied: Yes, an old man of such-and-such description came and asked me about you, and I informed him, and he asked about our state of living, and I told him that we were living in a hardship and poverty.' On that Ishmael said: 'Did he advise you anything?' She replied: Yes, he told me to convey his salutation to you and to tell you to change the threshold of your gate.' Ishmael said: 'It was my father, and he has ordered me to divorce you. Go back to your family.' So, Ishmael divorced her and married another woman from among them (i.e. Jurhum).

'Then Abraham stayed away from them for a period as long as Allah wished and called on them again but did not find Ishmael. So he came to Ishmael's wife and asked her about Ishmael. She said: 'He has gone in search of our livelihood.' Abraham asked her: 'How are you getting on?' asking her about their sustenance and living. She replied: 'We are prosperous and well-off (i.e. we have everything in abundance).' Then she thanked Allah. Abraham said: 'What kind of food do you eat?' She said: 'Meat.' He said: 'What do you drink?' She said: 'Water.' He said: 'O Allah! Bless their meat and water.'"

The Prophet added: "At that time they did not have grain, and if they had had grain, he would have also invoked Allah to bless it. If somebody has only these two things as his sustenance, his health and disposition will be badly affected, unless he lives in Mecca."

The Prophet continued: 'Then Abraham said to Ishmael's wife: 'When your husband comes, give my regards to him and tell him that he should keep firm the threshold of his gate.' When Ishmael came back, he asked his wife: 'Did anyone call on you?' She replied: Yes, a good-looking old man came to me,' so she praised him and added: 'He asked about you and I informed him, and he asked about our livelihood and I told him that we were in a good condition.' Ishmael asked her: 'Did he give you any piece of advice?' She said: Yes, he told me to give his regards to you and ordered that you should keep firm the threshold of your gate.' On that Ishmael said: 'It was my father, and you are the threshold (of the gate). He has ordered me to keep you with me.'

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