

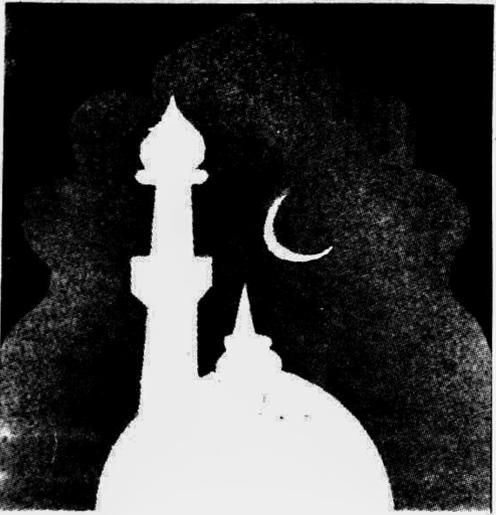
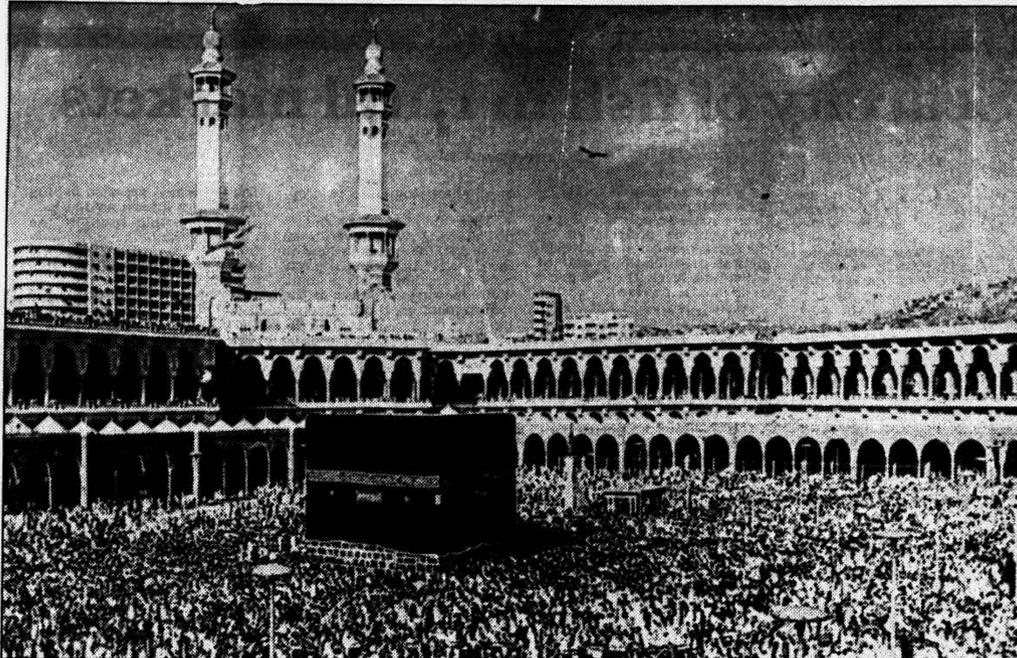
Eid-ul-Azha

Significance of Sacrifice

by Kazi Aulad Hossain

OF the two greatest Muslim religious festivals Eid-ul-Azha or the Festival of Sacrifice is one of them. The literal meaning of the word "Eid" or "Festival" is: celebration — merry making, feast, get together etc. I am not concerned how others celebrate Eid-ul-Azha in their respective countries, but in Bangladesh to most of us it is a festival day, we just fast on this occasion little realizing or appreciating the real meaning or significance of Festival of Sacrifice. We do not give serious thought to the actual teaching of Eid-ul-Azha or the Supreme Sacrifice Prophet

pregnant with a number of meanings. I will cite here only two concrete examples clearly indicating the importance and nobleness of self-sacrifice in the light of the aforesaid Quranic Ayat. Benign Allah has graciously been pleased to send the Holy Quran for guidance of the whole of mankind. Since Islam is a universal religion and Al-Quran is a complete code of life, knowingly or unknowingly its dictates and principles relating to personal sacrifice are meticulously applied and followed in various countries of the world for the benefit of the poor and needy persons.



Hazrat Ibrahim Khalilullah (Friend of Allah) made at the behest of Almighty Allah in order to please Him. As a matter of fact we celebrate Eid-ul-Azha without really solemnizing it. We simply follow the formalities without following its inner meaning and significance as desired by Benign Allah.

Canada is not a Muslim country. But according to Canadian regulation a Canadian citizen belonging to highest income group is required to pay every year half of his total annual income to the government for the benefit of unemployed and needy persons. When I find a Canadian physician who earns 150 thousand Canadian dollars a year and he, like other income earners, sacrifices a big chunk of his total annual emolument as indicated above with a view to helping his fellow Canadians then such sacrifice is certainly in consonance with dictates of the said Ayat of the Holy Quran sent to our Prophet (SM) peace be on him, more than 1400 years ago. In the same way when I find in Bangladesh a retired headmaster manages a few minutes daily and affectionately and carefully coaches a poor meritorious SSC student free of cost sacrificing his leisure and comfort then I will say that such noble gesture and feeling for the poor student is also undoubtedly in accordance with the same Quranic Ayat referred to above.

Slaughter of healthy and spotless cattle, as has been stated above, is in commemoration of the supreme sacrifice made by Prophet Hazrat Ibrahim Khalilullah and the sacrifice of animals we make is surely symbolic for real sacrifice we are required to make in every sphere of our life while dealing with people. Slaughter of animals reminds us to slaughter our interests as much as possible for the sake of distressed people. Before I end I would like to remind that our Holy Prophet (SM) peace be on him, once opined that a miser and close-fisted person is always far away from the poor, relatives and Benign Allah, but near to hell, whereas a kind and generous person is always near to the poor, relatives and Allah. Allah is Rabbul Alamin, but far away from hell. So, let us on this auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Azha endeavour to learn the real meaning of sacrifice, and unlearn many superfluous things and practices.

The Great Sacrifice

by Naseem Huq

HAJAR was a slave chosen by Ibrahim (AS) to help his wife Sarah in the house. She had a good life with Ibrahim (AS) and Sarah. Ibrahim (AS) and Sarah have been married a long time and were getting old. They longed for a child, but unfortunately Sarah could not have a child, but Ibrahim (AS) must have an heir.

So Sarah suggested to Ibrahim (AS) that he should marry Hajar. He refused at first, but after much coaxing from Sarah, he agreed and so Ibrahim (AS) and Hajar got married.

After some time, Hajar gave birth to a baby boy. He was named Ismail. Prophet Ibrahim (AS) was overjoyed, but Sarah could not hide her sadness. She could not accept the child even though Ibrahim (AS) had said it was a gift from Allah. Then Prophet Ibrahim (AS) dreamt that Allah was telling him to take Hajar and the baby south and leave them there and return to Palestine alone.

So Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and Hajar left Palestine and headed south as was the will of Allah. Ibrahim (AS) had full trust in Allah. Prophet Ibrahim (AS) believed that this journey to nowhere had been decided by Allah and he asked for His Protection.

At last, after journeying for weeks, the camels stopped in a valley between two hills. That valley was Mecca. There was nothing there but sand, stones and bare hills. Grew very worried at the thought that in a place like this, surely she and her baby would die of hunger and thirst.

Ibrahim (AS) looked at Ismail's innocent face, then at Hajar. His heart sank at the thought of leaving them, but he had to carry out Allah's orders. Hajar pleaded him not to leave them in this barren land. "If it was not Allah's Command, I would never leave you here with the baby," he told her. "Have faith in Allah. His blessings and protection will always be with you." They both wept at the thought of their separation. They did not know if they would meet again.

Before Prophet Ibrahim (AS) walked away, he stopped for a moment, lifted his hands and prayed, "O My Allah, I place my child and the children of his descent in this dry and barren valley, near Your House (Baitullah), so that they may worship You and follow Your law. Let the hearts of men take pity on them and give them sweet fruits to eat, so that they may bless you."

Someone calling her. She ran between the hills of Safa and Marwa seven times, and each time took a look at her helpless baby. She was in despair.

Ismail was crying more and more, his heels stamping the ground. Hajar prayed for Allah's protection, then Allah sent Angel Jibrail (AS). Suddenly Hajar saw water sprouting from a crack in the ground beneath Ismail's heel. She could hardly believe her eyes. She praised Allah, dug at the sand around the spring. She cupped the water with her hands and lifting it carefully, let Ismail drink. He was quiet now and Hajar was no longer afraid.

The water continued to flow, until it became a well. Hajar called it the Zam Zam well — a well created from sorrow, patience and a mother's faith in Allah.

The Zam Zam well still continues to flow, even after thousands of years and quenches the thirst of millions of pilgrims who go for Umrah or Hajj at the Baitullah every year.

Many years had passed since Ibrahim (AS) had left his family in the barren valley. He prayed for them everyday and longed to see them again. His heart ached to think how he had left them. So he decided to go and find them.

Once again Ibrahim (AS) went south across the vast desert, but this time he knew where he was going. He prayed to Allah to bless his journey and give him His protection. When he had left his wife and child, he thought he was mistaken, as there were people there and plenty of water for everyone. When Ibrahim (AS) asked the people about Hajar and Ismail, they showed him the well. It belonged to Hajar and Ismail, they said. The well had sprung from the ground beneath Ismail's heel.

Ibrahim (AS) heard this, he praised Allah. Allah had granted his prayers. Hajar and Ismail were not at their camp when Ibrahim (AS) went there. Some one told him that they were tending their sheep at the fields and showed him the way.

Ibrahim (AS) got on his camel again and set off for the fields which were outside Mecca. At last, by late afternoon he came to a place which is known as the Plains of Arafat — the place of meeting and friendship. He found Hajar and Ismail who were overjoyed to see him. Tears of joy ran down their cheeks and they said the prayer of thanks to Allah: "Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, Wali'Llahil Hamd" (Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest, and all praise to Allah).

As the sun began to set, Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and his family left the field of Arafat and made their way towards Mecca. They travelled all day and came to a place called Muzdalifah, where they stopped for the night. While Prophet Ibrahim (AS) slept, he dreamt that Allah was commanding

him to sacrifice his most beloved possession. He woke up with a start and looked at Ismail sleeping nearby. He knew at once that his most beloved possession was his only son Ismail and that his dream was actually a command from Allah.

The next morning, with a very painful heart, Ibrahim (AS) told his son of his dream. When Ismail heard his father, he said calmly, "Father, carry out Allah's commands. I have the courage to obey His will." (Surah Al-Saffat, Verse 102). Ismail already showed the great faith and loyalty to Allah of a future prophet and messenger of Allah. This was not the first test which Ibrahim (AS) and his family had faced. Ibrahim (AS) would obey Allah's command because his loyalty to Allah was even stronger than his great love for his son.

So, without telling Hajar, Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and his son set off for the Hill of Angles in Mina. This is where they would carry out Allah's commands for the greatest of all sacrifices — the sacrifice of a human life. Their courage and faith were so great that they did not hesitate once.

On the way, they met a big man who tried to persuade them, but they knew that this man was Iblis, hoping to tempt them. They picked up stones and threw them at the man until he fell to the ground. Then they left the place which is now called Jamrah al-Ula, and went on their way.

As they walked on, they met another man, smaller than the first one, who tried to persuade them to forget Allah's commands. Again they ignored his words and stoned the man to the ground. This man was again Iblis in disguise. This place is now called Jamrah al-Wusta. Ibrahim (AS) and Ismail walked on and were tempted a third time. This time by a man who was even smaller than the other two. This was again Iblis in disguise. Again they stoned the man to the ground. This place is now known as Jamrah al-Aqabah. (This is why pilgrims stone the Satan at these three places during Hajj).

At last they arrived at the foot of the Hill of Angels at Mina and got ready to carry out the sacrifice. Ibrahim (AS) gripped his sharpened sword. Ismail lay in front of him. They said their farewells and prayed to Allah. Then the prophet blindfolded himself and his son, so neither could see the grief on each other's face. Then as the prophet put the point of his sword on Ismail's throat, he heard a voice, (the voice of Angel Jibrail AS) from the hill-top, telling him to open his blindfold. Ibrahim (AS) took off his blindfold and saw a fat and healthy sheep in place of his son. The voice continued, "Ibrahim, take this sheep and divide the meat into three parts. You and your family eat one part of the meat, one part is to be given to your friends and relatives and give the third part to the poor. This shall be a day of celebration for you." The angel

left the sheep and disappeared.

With the sacrifice of the sheep, Allah saved Ismail and blessed the family of Ibrahim. The Celebration Day of the Sacrifice when Muslims all over the world sacrifice a lawful animal even today, is in the memory of Ibrahim (AS) and Ismail's sacrifice of the sheep. This is celebrated on the 10th Jil Hijrah of the Islamic Calendar and is known as Eid-ul-Azha.

After some years Prophet Ibrahim (AS) again had a dream. This time he dreamt that Allah was commanding him to build the "House of Allah". Prophet Ibrahim (AS) told his son that Allah has commanded him to build a house for the worship of the "One Allah" on the high ground near the Zam Zam well. Ismail was delighted. Allah had spoken and they began work at once. In the dream, Angel Jibrail (AS) had told Ibrahim (AS) how to build the house of Allah which would be called the Kabah.

Both father and son worked from sunrise to sunset, and as they worked, they prayed:

"O Allah! Accept our offering.

You are All-hearing and All-knowing.

O Allah! Let us remain, Your followers.

And our children, and our children's children.

So they may become the family of Islam.

Show us the way to worship. Have mercy on us, for truly You are All-forgiving and Loving."

(Surah Al-Baqarah, Verses 127-128)

Prophet Ibrahim (AS) always said this prayer at a particular place which is now called the Maqam-e-Ibrahim. (Here the pilgrims can see the footprints of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) in a glass-case.)

When the Kabah was complete, the last stone was set in place low down. This was a special black stone called the Hajar Al-Aswad. This stone was carried once round the Kabah before it was put in its place.

Ibrahim (AS) and Ismail (AS) kissed the stone in praise of Allah now that their work was completed. They were astonished to see that each time they kissed the Hajar-al-Aswad, the light of Allah's love shone from the stone. This is the love which surrounds the family of Islam. (During Umrah and Hajj all pilgrims begin the Tawwal from the Hajar-al-Aswad).

Allah then sent Angel Jibrail (AS) again, to show Ibrahim (AS) and Ismail (AS) how to perform the worship. The same ceremonies were still performed during the time of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (AS) and is still practices even today.

All the rituals that we perform during Umrah and Hajj follow all the things that were done by Hajar, Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and their son Prophet Ismail (AS).

This is the history behind Hajj, Umrah and Eid-ul-Azha.

Special

Aab-i-Zumzum

Makkah's Water of Benison

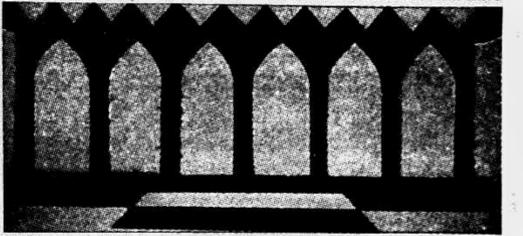
by Moin Uddin Ahmed

COMES the Haj season, and I am reminded of the wonders of Aab-i-Zumzum. Let me go back to how it all started. In 1971, an Egyptian doctor wrote to the European press a letter saying that Aab-i-Zumzum was not fit for drinking purposes. I immediately thought that this was just a form of prejudice against the Muslims and that since his statement was based on the assumption that the Khaan-i-Ka'aba was a shallow place (below sea level) and located in the center of the city of Makkah, all the waste water of the city collecting through rains fell into well holding the water.

Fortunately, the news came to King Faisal's ears who got extremely angry and decided to disprove the Egyptian doctor's provocative statement. He immediately ordered the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources to investigate and send samples of Aab-i-Zumzum to European laboratories for testing the potability of the water. The ministry then instructed the Jeddah Power and Desalination Plants to carry out this task. It was here that I was employed as a desalting engineer (chemical engineer to produce drinking water from seawater). I was chosen to carry out this

same phenomenon everywhere in the well. Actually the flow of water into the well through the bed was equal at every point, thus keeping the level of the water steady. After I finished my observations I took the samples of the water for European laboratories to test. Before I left the Khaan-i-Ka'aba, I asked the authorities about the other wells around Makkah. I was told that these wells were mostly dry. When I reported my findings to my boss who listened with great interest but made a very irrational comment that the Zumzum well could be internally connected to the Red Sea. How was it possible when Makkah is about 75 kilometers away from the sea and the wells located before in the city usually remain dry?

The results of the water samples tested by the European laboratories and the one we analyzed in our own laboratory were found to be almost identical. The difference between Aab-i-Zumzum and other water (city water) was in the quantity of calcium and magnesium salts. The content of these was slightly higher in Aab-i-Zumzum. This may be why this water refreshes the tired Hajjis, but more significantly, the water contains fluorides that have



assignment. At this stage, I remember that I had no idea what the well holding the water looked like. I went to Makkah and reported to the authorities at the Khaan-i-Ka'aba explaining my purpose of visit. They deputed a man to give me whatever help was required. When we reached the well, it was hard for me to believe that a pool of water, more like a small pond, about 18 by 14 feet, was the well that supplied billions of gallons of water every year to Hajjis ever since it came into existence at the time of Hazrat Ibrahim, many, many centuries ago.

I started my investigations and took the dimensions of the well. I asked the man to show me the depth of the well. First he took a shower and descended into the water. Then he straightened his body. I saw that the water level was up to just above his shoulders. His height was around five feet eight inches. He then started moving from one corner to the other in the well (standing all the while since he was not allowed to dip his head into the water) in search of any inlet or pipeline inside the well to see from where the water came in. However, the man reported that he could not find any inlet or pipeline inside the well. I thought of another idea. The water could be withdrawn rapidly with the help of a big transfer pump which was installed at the well for the Aab-i-Zumzum storage tanks. In this way, the water level would drop enabling us to locate the point of entry of the water. Surprisingly, nothing was observed during the pumping period, but I knew that this was the only method by which you could find the entrance of the water to the well. So I decided to repeat the process. But this time I instructed the man to stand still at one place and carefully observe any unusual thing happening inside the well. After a while, he suddenly raised his hands and shouted, "Alhamdulillah! I have found it. The sand is dancing beneath my feet as the water oozes out of the bed of the well." Then he moved around the well during the pumping period and noticed the

an effective germicidal effect. Moreover, the reports of the European laboratories showed that the water was fit for drinking. Hence the statement made by the Egyptian doctor was proved false. When this was reported to King Faisal he was extremely pleased and ordered the contradiction of the report in the European press. In a way, it was a blessing that this study was undertaken to show the chemical composition of the water. In fact, the more you explore, the more wonders surface and you find yourself believing implicitly in the miracles of this water that God bestowed as a gift on the faithful coming from far and wide to the desert land for pilgrimage.

Let me sum up some of the features of Aab-i-Zumzum.

This well has never dried up. On the contrary it has always fulfilled the demand for water. It has always maintained the same salt composition and taste ever since it came into existence. Its potability has always been universally recognized as pilgrims from all over the world visit Khaan-i-Ka'aba every year for Hajj and Umrah, but have never complained about it. Instead, they have always enjoyed the water that refreshes them. Water tastes different at different places. Aab-i-Zumzum's appeal has always been universal.

This water has never been chemically treated or chlorinated as is the case with water pumped into the cities. Biological growth and vegetation usually takes place in most wells. This makes the water unpalatable owing to the growth of algae causing taste and odor problems. But in the case of the Aab-i-Zumzum well there wasn't any sign of biological growth.

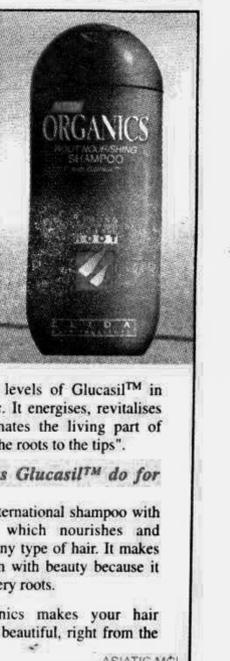
Centuries ago, Bibi Hajra searched desperately for water in the hills of Sufwa and Murwa to give it to her newly-born son Hazrat Ismail. As she ran from one place to another in search of water, her child rubbed his feet against the sand. A pool of water surfaced, and by the grace of God, shaped itself into a well which came to be called Aab-i-Zumzum.



NEW

ORGANICS

The first ever root nourishing Shampoo with Glucasil



know your hair

Try this simple test. Hold a few strands of your hair and pull. Ouch! It hurts, doesn't it? But when you cut your hair, it does not. Why? Because hair is made of two parts.

- The Hair Shaft: The visible part of the hair which is made up entirely of dead cells.
- The Hair Follicle: A small sac in the scalp which contains the hair roots and the nerve fibres. So any movement of the hair (like when it is pulled) is felt in the follicle. The follicle is where hair begins its life. The hair root is the only living part of the hair.

WHAT IS HAIR MADE UP OF?

About 60% of hair is made of the complex compound, protein. It consists of 20 amino acids. Glucasil™ is a larger component of the amino acid.

HAIR LIFE CYCLE

Each hair has a life cycle. The span of which could last upto 7 years and has 3 stages.

Growth stage:

Hair keeps growing for 3-7 years due to intense metabolic activity in the hair bulb.

Transition stage:

Metabolic activity now slows down. The follicle shrinks towards the surface. This stage lasts for several weeks.

Rest stage:

Hair growth now stops completely for 3-4 months. A new hair begins to grow, pushing out the old follicle.

The Secret of ORGANICS

Glucasil™ - Hair's own fuel

Glucasil™ is one of your body's own natural nutrients. It is used by the cells of the hair roots as fuel. Glucasil provides energy for hair maintenance and growth. It is a major building block of hair.

Glucasil™ has been isolated after years of painstaking research at Unilever's international Laboratories

in collaboration with scientists at Cambridge University and the Elida Hair Institute, Paris.

How does Glucasil™ in ORGANICS work?

Glucasil™ penetrates deep down to the hair roots. It supplements

the natural levels of Glucasil™ in the root sac. It energises, revitalises and rejuvenates the living part of your hair — the roots to the tips.

What does Glucasil™ do for you?

Organics International shampoo with Glucasil™ which nourishes and strengthens any type of hair. It makes hair blossom with beauty because it acts at the very roots.

Only Organics makes your hair intrinsically beautiful, right from the very roots.

ASIATIC MCL