

11069 - Why does the Qur'aan not mention the story of Haajar and Zamzam?

the question

Why does the Quran, whereas the Bible does, not make a mention of the institution of circumcision as well as the story of Hagar and the miraculous well of Zamzam?

Detailed answer

You might as well ask, why does the Qur'aan not explain the number of prayers during the day and night, and the number [of rak'ahs in] each prayer, and what should be recited in the prayer, and how the prayer should be done... And why does it not speak in detail about zakaah, and Hajj, and fasting, and so on?

Allaah has made the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) the detailed explanation of that which is mentioned in general terms in the Qur'aan. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And We have also sent down unto you (O Muhammad) the Dhikr [reminder and the advice (i.e. the Qur'aan)], that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them”

[al-Nahl 16:44]

The matters which you mention are explained in the Sunnah, and both of them – the Sunnah and the Qur'aan – are wahy (revelation) from Allaah.

Shaykh Sa'd al-Humayd

There follows the story of Haajar and Zamzam from the Sunnah, so that you will have no need of the Bible, of which we cannot be sure that the content is correct.

Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) narrated the story of Haajar, the wife of Ibraaheem and the mother of his son Ismaa'eel. He said:

Ibraaheem brought her and her son Ismaa'eel while she was suckling him, to a place near the Ka'bah under a tree on the spot of Zamzam, at the highest place in the mosque. During those days there was nobody in Makkah, nor was there any water. So he made them sit over there and placed near them a leather bag containing some dates, and a small water-skin containing some water, and set out homeward. Ismaa'eel's mother followed him saying, "O Ibraaheem! Where are you going, leaving us in this valley where there is no person whose company we may enjoy, nor is there anything (to enjoy)?" She repeated that to him many times, but he did not look back at her. Then she asked him, "Has Allah ordered you to do this?" He said, "Yes." She said, "Then He will not neglect us," and returned while Ibraaheem went on his way. When he reached al-Thaniyyah, where they could not see him, he faced the Ka'bah, and raising both hands, prayed to Allaah in the following words:

“O our Lord! I have made some of my offspring to dwell in an uncultivable valley by Your Sacred House (the Ka'bah at Makkah) in order, O our Lord, that they may perform As.Salaah (Iqaamat-as.Salaah). So fill some hearts among men with love towards them, and (O Allaah) provide them with fruits so that they may give thanks”[Ibraaheem 14:37 – interpretation of the meaning]

Ismaa'eel's mother went on suckling Ismaa'eel and drinking from the water (she had). When the water in the water-skin had all been used up, she became thirsty and her child also became thirsty. She started looking at him (i.e. Ismaa'eel) tossing in agony (or he said: kicking with his heels). She left him, for she could not endure looking at him, and found that the mountain of al-Safa was the nearest mountain to her on that land. She stood on it and started looking at the valley keenly so that she might see somebody, but she could not see anybody. Then she descended from al-Safa and when she reached the valley, she tucked up her robe and ran in the valley like a person in distress and trouble, till she crossed the valley and reached al-Marwa where she stood and started looking, expecting to see somebody, but she could not see anybody. She repeated that (running between al-Safa and al-Marwa) seven times.

Ibn 'Abbaas said: the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, "This is the source of the tradition of the walking between them (i.e. al-Safa and al-Marwa). When she

reached al-Marwa (for the last time) she heard a voice and she asked herself to be quiet and listened attentively. She heard the voice again and said, "O (whoever you may be)! You have made me hear your voice; have you got something to help me?" And she saw an angel at the place of Zamzam, digging the earth with his heel (or his wing), till water flowed from that place. She started to make something like a basin around it, using her hand in this way, and started filling her water-skin with water with her hands, and the water started flowing out after she had scooped some of it."

Ibn 'Abbaas said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) added, "May Allah bestow Mercy on Ismaa'eel's mother! Had she left the Zamzam alone (flowing without trying to control it) (or had she not scooped from that water) (to fill her water-skin), Zamzam would have been a stream flowing on the surface of the earth." The Prophet further added, "Then she drank (water) and suckled her child. The angel said to her, 'Don't be afraid of being neglected, for this is the House of Allah which will be built by this boy and his father, and Allah never neglects His people.' The House (i.e. Ka'bah) at that time was on a high place resembling a hillock, and when torrents came, they flowed to its right and left. She lived in that way till some people from the tribe of Jurhum or a family from Jurhum passed by her and her child, as they (i.e. the Jurhum people) were coming through the way of Kada'. They landed in the lower part of Makkah where they saw a bird that had the habit of flying around water and not leaving it. They said, 'This bird must be flying around water, though we know that there is no water in this valley.' They sent one or two messengers who discovered the source of water, and returned to inform them of the water. So, they all came (towards the water)."

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) added, "Ismaa'eel's mother was sitting near the water. They asked her, 'Do you allow us to stay with you?' She replied, 'Yes, but you will have no right to possess the water.' They agreed to that." Ibn 'Abbaas said: the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) further said, "Ismaa'eel's mother was pleased with the whole situation as she used to love to enjoy the company of the people. So, they settled there, and later on they sent for their families who came and settled with them so that some families became permanent residents there. The child (i.e. Ismaa'eel) grew up and learnt Arabic from

them and (his virtues) caused them to love and admire him as he grew up, and when he reached the age of puberty they made him marry a woman from amongst them.

After Ismaa'eel's mother had died, Ibraaheem came after Ismaa'eel's marriage in order to see his family that he had left before...

Then Ibraaheem came back later on. He saw Ismaa'eel under a tree near Zam-zam, sharpening his arrows. When he saw Ibraaheem, he stood up to welcome him, and they greeted each other as a father does with his son and a son does with his father. Ibraaheem said, 'O Ismaa'eel! Allah has given me an order.' Ismaa'eel said, 'Do what your Lord has ordered you to do.' Ibraaheem asked, 'Will you help me?' Ismaa'eel said, 'I will help you.' Ibraaheem said, 'Allah has ordered me to build a house here,' pointing to a hillock higher than the land surrounding it." The Prophet added, "Then they raised the foundations of the House (i.e. the Ka'bah). Ismaa'eel brought the stones and Ibraaheem was building, and when the walls became high, Ismaa'eel brought this stone and put it for Ibraaheem who stood on it and carried on building, while Ismaa'eel was handing him the stones, and both of them were saying, 'Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily, You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower' [al-Baqarah 2:127 – interpretation of the meaning]. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) added, "Then both of them went on building and going round the Ka'ba saying: 'Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily, You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower' [al-Baqarah 2:127 – interpretation of the meaning] . Saheeh al-Bukhaari, 3113