The story of Ibrahim (alayhi salaam)

Ibrahim (as) and the idols.

Prophet Ibrahim was a very special prophet, chosen by Allah to teach and guide people to worship Allah alone. He grew up in a community of people who had forgotten about Allah, and had started to worship idols instead.

Ibrahim (as) knew that this was wrong. An idol cannot see, eat, hear or speak; it cannot help or harm anything at all. Ibrahim (as) knew that worshipping idols was not something that would make Allah happy. So, he set about trying to tell his people that what they were doing was wrong.

One day, when all the people in the village went away for a festival, Ibrahim (as) stayed behind to teach the people an important lesson. Ibrahim (as) picked up an axe; he went to the area where all the idols were kept and smashed all of the idols with the axe. When he came to the very last idol, Ibrahim (as) stopped. He hung the axe around the neck of the biggest idol and walked away.

When the people returned to their village and found that all of their idols had been destroyed, they were enraged. They demanded that Ibrahim (as) tell them who was responsible for the deed. Calmly and cleverly, Ibrahim (as) suggested that the people should ask the biggest idol for answers. Of course, Ibrahim (as) knew that idols were made of stone and could not speak, but he wanted his people to realise the same thing. If an idol cannot see nor speak, then it certainly could not be God! This is how Ibrahim (as) tried to teach his people to worship Allah alone, and that He alone can be the Creator.

The people of the town were angry and refused to listen to Ibrahim (as), despite his wisdom. They wanted to punish Ibrahim (as) for what he had done, so they sentenced him to burn alive. The villagers gathered together a big pile of wood and set it on fire. The flames were went higher and higher, until they reached the sky. The villagers then threw Ibrahim (as) into the flames! But fire is also Allah’s slave; Allah ordered the fire to be cool and the fire obeyed. Miraculously, Ibrahim (as) was kept safe even in the middle of the burning flames. The villagers were amazed, but still they did not heed Ibrahim (as)’s advice.
Ibrahim (as) and Isma’eel

After years of preaching by Ibrahim (as), his people still refused to leave their idols. The few people who believed in Allah included Ibrahim (as)’s wife Sara and his nephew Lut (as), who was also a Prophet of Allah.

After being rejected by his people, Ibrahim (as) was asked by Allah to make hijrah to the blessed land of Palestine, to the city of Jerusalem which was known as Al-Quds. Ibrahim (as) obeyed Allah and made Jerusalem his new home. All the while, he continued calling people to worship Allah alone.

When Ibrahim (as) was an old man, he married Hajar and they had a son called Isma’eel. When Isma’eel was a young boy, Ibrahim (as) saw a dream, in which he was sacrificing his beautiful son Isma’eel. Ibrahim (as) knew that Allah was sending him a message to sacrifice his child, Isma’eel. Ibrahim (as) Isma’eel was very special to his father, but Ibrahim (as) realised that this was a test from Allah. If Ibrahim (as) loved Allah more than anything else in the world, then he would obey Him. Ibrahim (as) told Isma’eel about the dream. Isma’eel, whom Allah would also bless with Prophethood, was a wise child who loved Allah dearly. Isma’eel said that he was happy as long as his father followed Allah’s commandments, and agreed for his father to sacrifice him.

Allah is merciful. Both Ibrahim (as) and Isma’eel had passed Allah’s test by showing that they both loved Him more than anything else. Miraculously, just as Ibrahim (as) was about to sacrifice his son Allah replaced the boy with a sheep. Isma’eel was saved!
Allah does not test us in the same ways as He tested His Prophets. But, every year on Eid al-Adha we sacrifice an animal for Allah. This is to remember and honour Ibrahim (as)’s readiness to sacrifice his most beloved son out of love and obedience to Allah.

When Isma’eel was older, Ibrahim (as) and Isma’eel built the Ka’bah together, in Makkah where Isma’eel lived.

_Ibrahim (as) and Ishaq (as)_

When Ibrahim (as) was ninety nine years old, Allah blessed him again with another son from his first wife Sara. The child was named Ishaq, and Ishaq would also grow to be a Prophet of Allah.

Ishaq was born in Palestine, and spent his life in the blessed city of Jerusalem. Masjid al-Aqsa, which was originally built by Adam (as), had fallen into disrepair after many generations. When Ishaq was older, Ibrahim (as) and Ishaq rebuilt Masjid al-Aqsa together.

Ibrahim (as) is known as the ‘Father of the Believers.’ This is because all of the major Prophets of Allah including Musa (as), Isa (as) and Muhammed (saw) were descendants of Ibrahim (as).

Ibrahim (as) spent most of his life in Jerusalem, and is buried very near Masjid al-Aqsa in a town called Khalil. May Allah’s peace be upon him.