While the mother of Isma‘īl was breastfeeding her son Isma‘īl, Ibrahīm brought them to a place near the House; under a tree on the spot of Zamzam and the highest place in the Mosque. During those days there was nobody in Makkah nor was there any water

Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: “While the mother of Isma‘īl was breastfeeding her son Isma‘īl, Ibrahīm (peace be upon him) brought them to a place near the House (the Ka‘bah); under a tree on the spot of Zamzam and the highest place in the Mosque. During those days there was nobody in Makkah nor was there any water. He settled them there and placed a leather bag containing some dates and a small waterskin containing some water near them, and then set off homeward. Isma‘īl's mother followed him saying: ‘O Ibrahīm, where are you going and leaving us in this valley where there is no one whose company we may enjoy nor is there anything here?’ She repeated it many times, but he did not look back at her. So she asked him: ‘Has Allah ordered you to do this?’ He said: ‘Yes.’ She said: ’Then He will not neglect us.’ She returned and Ibrahīm proceeded onwards, and, on reaching the Thaniyyah where they could not see him, he faced the Ka‘bah and raising both hands, invoked Allah with the following supplications: {Our Lord, I have settled some of my descendants in an uncultivated valley near Your sacred House, our Lord, that they may establish prayer. So make hearts among the people incline toward them and provide for them from the fruits that they might be grateful} [Sūrat Ibrahīm: 37]. Isma‘īl's mother continued breastfeeding him (Isma‘īl) and drinking the water (she had). When the water in the waterskin had all been used up, she became thirsty and her child also became thirsty. She started looking at him tossing in agony. She left him, because she could not endure looking at him, and found that Mount Safa was the nearest mountain to her in that area. She stood on it and started looking down the valley keenly to see if she could see anybody, but she could not. She descended from Safa and when she reached the valley, she lifted up her robe and ran along the valley like a person in distress, until she had crossed the valley and reached Mount Marwah, on which she stood and started looking, expecting to see somebody, but she did not see anybody. She repeated that (running between Safa and Marwah) seven times. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: ‘This is the source of the tradition of walking between them (Safa and Marwah).’ When she reached Marwah (for the last time) she heard a voice and she told 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 behold, she saw an angel in the Zamzam area, digging the earth with his

heel (or his wing) until water flowed from that place. She started to make something like a basin around it, using her hand in this way, and started using her hands to fill her waterskin with water. The water was flowing out after she had scooped some of it. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) commented: ‘May Allah bestow Mercy on Isma‘īl's mother! Had she let Zamzam (to flow without trying to control it or had she not scooped that water to fill her waterskin), Zamzam would just have been a stream flowing on the surface of the earth.’ The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) further added: ‘Then she drank and breastfed her child.’ The angel said to her: 'Do not be afraid of being neglected; this is the House of Allah, which will be built by this boy and his father, and Allah never neglects His people.' The House (the Ka‘bah) at that time was on a high place resembling a hillock, and when torrents (of rain) came, they flowed to its right and left. She lived that way until some people from the tribe of Jurhum - or a family from Jurhum - passed by her and her child, as they (the Jurhum) were coming through the Way of Kadā'. They settled in the lower part of Makkah where they saw a bird hovering. They said: 'This bird must be flying around water; although we know that there is no water in this valley.' They sent out one or two messengers, who discovered the source of water and returned to inform them of it. So, they all came (towards the water). They arrived while Isma‘īl's mother was sitting near the water and asked her: 'Would you allow us to stay with you?' She replied: 'Yes, but you will have no right over the water.' They agreed to that. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) further said: ’Isma‘īl's mother was pleased with the whole situation, as she loved having the company of people.’ So, they settled there and later they sent for their families, who came and settled with them, so some of the families became permanent residents there. The child (Isma‘īl) grew up and learnt Arabic from them and (his virtues) caused them to love and admire him as he grew up. When he reached the age of puberty, they made him marry a woman from among them. After Isma‘īl's mother had died and after Isma‘īl's marriage, Ibrahīm arrived to see the family that he had left there previously, but he did not find Isma‘īl there. When he asked Isma‘īl'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 greetings to him and tell him to change the threshold of the door (of his house).' When Isma‘īl came back, he 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 told him (how you were). He also asked how we were living, and I told him that we were living in hardship and poverty.' So Isma‘īl asked: 'Did he advise you of anything?' She replied: 'Yes, he told me to convey his greetings to you and to tell you to change the threshold of your door.' Isma‘īl said: 'That was my father and he has told me to divorce you. Go back to your family.' So Isma‘īl divorced her and married another woman from among them (the Jurhum). Ibrahīm stayed away from them for a period that lasted as long as Allah wished and then called on them again, but again did not find Isma‘īl. So he went to Isma‘īl's wife and asked her about him. She said: 'He has gone in search of our livelihood.' Ibrahīm asked her: 'How are you getting on?' asking her about their sustenance and living. She replied: 'We are prosperous and well-off (we have everything in abundance).' Then she thanked Allah. Ibrahīm asked: 'What kind of food do you eat?' She said: 'Meat.' He asked: 'What

do you drink?' She said: 'Water.' He supplicated, 'O Allah, bless their meat and water.' The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) added: 'At that time they did not have grain, and if they had had grain, he would have also invoked Allah to bless it.' The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) added: 'If somebody has only these two things for sustenance, his health and disposition will be badly affected, unless he lives in Makkah.' In another narration: [Ibrahīm] came and asked: 'Where is Isma'īl?' His wife said: ''He went to hunt.' His wife said: 'Will you not come in to eat and drink?' He said: 'What is your food and drink?' She said: 'Our food is meat and our drink is water.' He said: 'O Allah, Bless their food and drink.' The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'Such is the blessing of the prayer of Ibrahīm.' Then Ibrahīm said to Isma'īl's wife: 'When your husband comes back, give my regards to him and tell him that he should keep the threshold of his door firm.' When Isma'īl came back, he asked his wife: 'Did anyone call on you?' She replied: 'Yes, a good-looking old man came to see me,' and she praised him and added: 'He asked about you, and I told him, and he asked about our livelihood and I told him that we are in a good condition.' Isma'īl asked her: 'Did he give you any advice?' She said: 'Yes, he told me to convey his regards to you and said that you should keep firm the threshold of your door.' On that Isma'īl said: 'That was my father, and you are the threshold (of the door). He has told me to keep you with me.' Then Ibrahīm stayed away from them for a period that lasted for as long as Allah wished and called on them after that. He saw Isma'īl under a tree near Zamzam, sharpening his arrows. When he saw Ibrahīm, he rose up to welcome him (and they greeted each other as a father does to his son or a son does to his father). Ibrahīm said: 'O Isma'īl, Allah has given me an order.' Ishmael said: 'Do what your Lord has ordered you to do.' Ibrahīm asked: 'Will you help me?' Isma'īl said: 'I will help you.' Ibrahīm said: 'Allah has ordered me to build a house here,' pointing to a hillock higher than the land surrounding it. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) added: 'They then raised the foundations of the House. Isma'īl was bringing the stones and Ibrahīm was building them, and when the walls were high, Isma'īl brought this stone and placed it for Ibrahīm who stood over it and carried on building. While Isma'īl was handing him the stones, both of them were saying: {O our Lord! Accept (this service) from us, Verily, You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.} In another narration: ''Ibrahīm took Isma'īl and the mother of Isma'īl and went away. They had a waterskin with them containing some water. Isma'īl's mother would drink water from the water-skin, so her milk would flow for her child. When Ibrahīm reached Makkah, he told her to stay under a tree and afterwards returned home. Isma'īl's mother followed him, and when they reached Kadā', she called to him from behind: 'O Ibrahīm, to whom are you leaving us?' He replied: 'To Allah.' She said: 'I am pleased to be with Allah.' She returned to her place and started drinking water from the waterskin, and her milk flowed for her child. When the water had all been used up, she said to herself: 'I should go and look to see if I can see somebody.' She ascended Mount Safa and looked in vain, hoping to see somebody. When she came down to the valley, she ran until she reached Mount Marwah. She ran to and fro (between the two mountains) many times. Then she said to herself: 'I should go and see how the child is,' she went and found him in a state; on the point of dying. She could not endure to watch him dying and said (to herself): 'If I go and look, I might find somebody.' She ascended Mount Safa and looked for a long while, but could not see anybody. In this way, she completed seven rounds (running) between Safa and Marwah.

Again she said (to herself): 'I should go back and see how the child is.' Suddenly she heard a voice and she said to that strange voice: 'Help us if you can offer any help.' Lo and behold, it was Jibrīl (whose voice she had heard). Jibrīl hit the earth with his heel like this, and water gushed out. Isma'īl's mother was astonished and started scooping..."

[Authentic hadith] [Narrated by Bukhari]

Ibn 'Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that Ibrahīm (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) brought the mother of Isma'īl,— Hajar, the Copt, whom the King of Egypt had gifted to his wife Sarah — and her son Isma'īl - who was then being breastfed - to the vicinity of the Ka'bah. He left them near a big tree over Zamzam, on a high place upon which the Sacred Mosque would later be built. At that time there were no people there nor was there any water. He left them a leather container of dates and a waterskin. Then Ibrahīm departed to the Levant. The mother of Isma'īl followed him and wondered where he was going and leaving them in a valley with no people or anything to eat and drink. She asked that many times, but Ibrahīm did not turn to her and instead continued on. Then she asked if Allah had asked him to do this and Ibrahīm said: 'Yes.' She said that Allah would not let them down and returned to her son, while Ibrahīm moved on. When he reached the Thaniyyah near Al-Hajūn, where they could not see him, he stood in the direction of the Ka'bah and supplicated, raising his hands, saying that he had left his offspring behind in a valley in Makkah with no vegetation, so they would be devoted to worshipping Allah at the Sacred House (where it is forbidden to hunt, cut trees, and fight) and do their prayers. He supplicated to Allah to make people's hearts quick to love them and to provide them with fruit, so they might thank Allah for His blessings. Allah answered the prayers of Ibrahīm. Hajar breastfed Isma'īl, drank the water, and ate the dates that she had until there were no more water or dates. She and her son became thirsty then, so she looked at her son writhing in pain, hitting the ground, and rolling around on it. Hajar left as she could not look at him in such a state. She found Safa, the closest mountain to her, and stood on it. Then she looked towards Makkah trying to find people. When she reached the low valley, she did not want to look at her son, so she hastened like an exhausted person, arriving on Marwah. She went seven times between Safa and Marwah in the hope that she would find someone, but she did not. This is the origin of the Sa'i ritual that people perform during Hajj and 'Umrah. When she stood on Marwah, she heard a voice and told herself to listen. As she stayed silent, she heard something again. So, she knew that she had really heard it and needed relief. It was the Archangel Jibrīl in the Zamzam area. He dug with his heel or with his wing until water emerged. So Hajar made something like a basin and scooped water into her waterskin and the water gushed forth as she was scooping. Ibn 'Abbās reported that the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "May Allah bestow Mercy on Isma'īl's mother! Had she not scooped that water, Zamzam would just have been a stream flowing on the surface of the earth." By this the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) meant that the water would have been a stream. Hajar drank and let her child drink. The angel told her: "Do not be afraid of being neglected; this is the House of Allah, which will be built by this boy and his father, and Allah never neglects His people.'' The place for the House was elevated like a hillock. Torrents would come down from both sides, but would not submerge it. Later, some people from the tribe of Jurhum passed by Hajar and Isma'īl. They were coming by the Way of Kadā' and stopped in the low area of Makkah. They saw a bird hovering over a place and concluded that the bird was hovering over water, although they

had never seen water in that valley before. They sent one or two messengers to check it out. Those who were sent came back with the news of there being water. So the people went to the place and Isma'īl's mother was sitting by the water, so they asked her permission to camp in her area. She allowed them to do so, on condition that they would have no right to the water; meaning that she had full rights to the water and that she could give or withhold it if she wished. They agreed. Isma'īl's mother was comfortable with them being there, as she hated staying alone. So the Jurhum sent for their families to come and stay there too. They all lived together and increased in numbers. Isma'īl grew up and learned Arabic from them and their liking for him grew. When he attained puberty, they married him to a woman from their tribe. Isma'īl's mother later died. Ibrahīm came to visit his son after he had married, but did not find him. So he asked his wife where he was and she told him that he had gone out to hunt for them. He asked her about their livelihood and condition, and she told him that they were living in a terrible condition. Finding her complaining and dissatisfied with what Allah was testing them with, Ibrahīm feared that his son would develop the same feelings, so he told him to divorce her by saying to the woman: "When your husband returns, convey my greetings to him and tell him to change the threshold of the door (of his house)." This is a metaphor for divorce, as a woman is to her husband like a threshold to a door. When Isma'īl came back from hunting, he felt as if something had happened at his home. So he asked his wife if someone had visited them. She told him that a man had been. She described him and said that he asked her about their condition and that she had told him that they were in distress. Isma'īl asked her if the man had given her any advice. She said that the man had sent him his greetings and asked him to change the threshold of his door. Isma'īl recognized the man to be his father and realized that he had told him to divorce his wife. So he asked the woman to rejoin her family; meaning that she was divorced. He married another woman from the Jurhum tribe. After a while, Ibrahīm came to visit Isma'īl but did not find him. His wife said that he had gone out to seek provisions. Another report says that she invited Ibrahīm to come and have some food and water. He asked her about their condition and she said that they were doing well and thanked Allah. He asked her what kind of food they ate and she said meat and the water of Zamzam and rain water was what they drank. So Ibrahīm prayed that Allah would bless their meat and water. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said that if they also had grain at that time, Ibrahīm would have invoked divine blessings on it too. Ibn 'Abbās said that if anyone outside Makkah only eats meat and water, they would suffer from stomachaches and a bad temperament. Then Ibrahīm asked the woman to convey his greetings to Isma'īl and told him to keep the threshold of his door. When Isma'īl returned from hunting, he felt as if something had happened. Another narration says that he perceived the scent of his father. He asked his wife what had happened, so she told him, speaking in good terms of an old man and reporting his questions about their livelihood. She also told him that the old man had greeted Isma'īl and asked him to keep the threshold of his door. Upon this, Isma'īl said that that man had been his father who had told him to keep his wife. After a while, Ibrahīm came again while Isma'īl was under a tree close to Zamzam repairing his arrow before attaching the arrowhead to it. When he saw him, he stood up and welcomed him. They did as a son and a father would do; shaking hands and embracing. Ibrahīm told Isma'īl that Allah had given him an order to build a house on an elevated place; on the hillock. Ibrahīm raised the foundations of the House there and built on them. Isma'īl brought the stones and Ibrahīm would descend from the Maqām to take the stones from him and climb up to put them where appropriate. When the

building was very tall, he brought the Maqām stone. When he reached the corner, he put it in its place, thus making the Maqām connected to the House. While he was building and Isma'īl was handing him the stones, they were both praying that Allah would accept their building of the House, as Allah heard their prayers and knew their work. The statement that Isma'īl learned Arabic is strong proof that the Arabic language is an ancient language and that it existed even before Ibrahīm. However, Isma'īl was the first to have pronounced clear Arabic. A Hadīth says: "The first (person) whose tongue spoke clear Arabic was Isma'īl when he was a fourteen-year old boy.'' [Ash-Shirāzi; classified as Sahīh by Al-Albāni]

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