

Zamzam - the king of all waters

Introduction

Zamzam stems from the best possible source, the feet of the prophets of Allāh. It is a living miracle till the Day of Judgement. It is totally different to other water, as proven by modern science. It is the best water on earth, spiritually and medically.

Certainly Zamzam is a miracle of Allāh, in a country where there is no river, lake, reservoir or stream. A small well measuring 18 feet by 14 feet has served millions of eager pilgrims for thousands of years.

The history of Zamzam

Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) came to Makka with his wife Hājira and his son Ismā'īl, who was only a child at the time. At the time, Makka was a barren place and there certainly was no water there. Ibrāhīm left his wife and son in this valley and walked away. His wife called out 'Where are you going, leaving us here where there is no one?' She asked repeatedly and Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) did not reply. Eventually she asked, 'Has Allāh ordered you to do this?' He replied in the affirmative. She replied, 'In that case, Allāh will never desert us' (*Zamzam miracles and secrets*, 14).

She began to look for water for her child, and walked frantically between Safa and Marwa seven times. Ismā'īl (peace be upon him) dug his heels in the ground and eventually, water gushed out. Other reports suggest it was Jibrīl who dug the hole in the ground. Since that day, thousands of years ago, the most purest water in the world has gushed from that exact spot.

The superiority of Zamzam

a. The prerequisite to an answered supplication

قال رسول الله صلي الله عليه و سلم ماء زمزم لما شرب له فان شربته تستشفى به شفاك الله و ان شربته مستعيذا
اعاذك الله و ان شربته لتقطع ظمأك قطعاه الله (الحاكم)

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said: "The water of Zamzam is what it is drunk for. So if you drink it seeking cure from Allāh, He will provide you with a cure. And if you drink it seeking refuge with Allāh, He will provide you with refuge. And if you drink it so that it quenches your thirst, He will quench it (*Mustadrak al-Hākim*).

Based on this hadīth, the Companions and Ulamā have offered their own supplications upon drinking Zamzam. For example:

*Ibn Abbās (may Allāh be pleased with him read the following supplication when he drank it (*Zamzam miracles and secrets*, 31):

اللهم اني اسألك علما نافعا و رزقا واسعا و شفاء من كل داء و اغسل به قلبي و املاه من حكمتك

‘O Allah! Indeed I ask You for beneficial knowledge, an abundance of provisions and a cure from all illnesses. And wash my heart with it and fill it with your wisdom.’

*When Ibn al-Mubārak drank it, he prayed to Allāh to quench his first on the Day of Judgement.

*Ibn Asākir reported that ‘When al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī performed the Pilgrimage he took three sips of Zamzam water and made three supplications. The supplications he made were to be able to narrate the *History of Baghdad* in that city, to teach hadīth in al-Mansūr Mosque [Baghdad], and to be buried near Bishr al-Hāfī. He obtained all three’ (al-Dhahabī 1994, 35: 94).

*Hāfiz Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī said he drank it when he was young and prayed to Allāh to grant him the rank of al-Dhahabī in the memorisation of hadīth. Ibn Hajar himself commented ‘I achieved more than that rank’ (*Zamzam miracles and secrets*, 31).

*Imām Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūtī said that when he performed Hajj and drank Zamzam, he prayed that he would reach the rank of Imām al-Bulqinī in Fiqh and Ibn Hajar in hadīth (*Zamzam miracles and secrets*, 31).

*Imām al-Shāfi‘ī prayed to be a good marksman. Observers say thereafter, he would hit nine targets out of ten (*Zamzam miracles and secrets*, 31).

In short, the pious from the past came across Zamzam only infrequently, but they did value it and believe in it. To a large extent, we are surrounded by it and thus value it less.

b. Zamzam is the Prophet’s ﷺ leftover water

Ibn Abbās (may Allāh be pleased with him) reports that, ‘The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came to the Zamzam well. We retrieved some water for him and he drank it. Then he place this blessed saliva in it. We then put it back into the well. He then said, ‘Were it not so busy I would have retrieved the water myself’ (*Zamzam miracles and secrets*, 16). When we drink Zamzam, we are drinking left-over water from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). This makes it the best water in the world.

c. Zamzam was used to clean the Prophet’s ﷺ heart

Zamzam water was used to wash the heart of the Prophet (peace be upon him) on the occasion of *Shaqq Sadr* (splitting of the chest). This happened at least twice, when he was a young boy and just before his Night Journey (*al-Isrā wa’l Mi’rāj*). The Sufis say the Zamzam did not wash the heart of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Rather, his heart cleaned the Zamzam water.

d. Zamzam is like food

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) indicated that one of the key features of Zamzam is that a person can suffice on it. In other words, it can act as a substitute for food too. Imām Muslim reports that Abū Dharr (may Allāh be pleased with him) did not eat any food of thirty days and lived off Zamzam alone (*Zamzam miracles and secrets*, 39). He never

felt hungry and in fact he became better. When he told the Prophet (peace be upon him) about this, he replied that it is blessed and can act like food:

انها مباركة انها طعام طعم

e. Zamzam is a cure for illnesses

Abū Jamra reports that 'I used to sit with Ibn Abbās (may Allāh be pleased with him) in Makka. Once I had a fever and he said to me 'Cool your fever with Zamzam water, for Allāh's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, 'Fever is from the heat of the hell-fire. So cool it with water or Zamzam' (*Sahīh al-Bukhārī, Beginning of Creation*).

عن ابي جمرة الضُّبَعِي قال كنت اجالس ابن عباس بمكة فاخذتني الحمي فقال ابردها عنك بماء زمزم فان رسول الله صلي الله عليه و سلم قال الحمي من فيح جهنم فابردوها بالماء او قال بماء زمزم

f. Zamzam is the water of the pious

Ibn Abbās (may Allāh be pleased with him) said 'Perform Salāh at the same place as the best and drink water from the water of the pious.' He was asked 'What is the Salāh place of the best?' He replied, 'Under the Mīzāb.' He was then asked 'What is the drink of the pious?' He replied 'Zamzam water' (*Zamzam miracles and secrets, 38*):

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنه قال صلوا في مصلي الاخيار واشربوا من شراب الابرار قيل لابن عباس ما مصلي الاخيار؟ قال تحت الميزاب قيل و ما شراب الابرار قال ماء زمزم

Manners of drinking Zamzam

*To recite Bismillāh first and praise Allāh.

*To sip in three gulps (like with all water).

*The drinking should always be coupled with a supplication.

*It should be drunk in abundance so that one feels full and satisfied with it. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said that the difference between a hypocrite and a believer is that the former never feel satisfied after drinking Zamzam (Ibn Māja and al-Dāraqutnī):

عن ابن عباس ان رسول الله صلي الله عليه و سلم قال ان آية ما بيننا و بين المنافقين انهم لا يتصلعون من زمزم (ابن ماجه، الدارقطني)

*During Hajj and Umra, it should be consumed abundantly after the tawāf and the two rak'āts of prayer at Maqām Ibrāhīm.

*To stand and drink Zamzam - Ibn Abbās (may Allāh be pleased with him) reports that he provided Zamzam for the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and he drank it whilst standing (*Zamzam miracles and secrets*, 30).

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنه قال سقيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من زمزم فشرب و هو قائم

*It can be poured over the body too, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) poured some over blessed head.

*Can it be transported outside Makka? According to a report of al-Tirmidhī, A'isha (may Allāh be pleased with her) would carry Zamzam outside Makka and reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did the same (*Zamzam miracles and secrets*, 45).

*Can we perform Wudū and Ghusl with it? Reports suggest that ablution is fine but not Ghusl (*Zamzam miracles and secrets*, 47).

The Zamzam well

Normal wells give water for fifty years, some for one hundred. Zamzam water has been providing water for the last four thousand years perhaps.

In the past, the well was covered with a small square building and the water would be extracted using buckets. Then, the taps were located downstairs in the matāf area during the 1955 extensions. In a vast area full of taps, Muslim men and women could drink abundantly there, as well as see the original Zamzam well. Today, this is sealed off, to give maximum space for those performing *tawāf*.

The water level is 3.23m. below the surface. In a recent pumping test, 8000 litres per second for more than a 24 hour period was extracted. As a result, the water level dropped to 12.72 metres to then 13.39m. When pumping stopped, the water level recovered to 3.9m below surface only 11 minutes later (<https://maccacentre.wordpress.com/zamzam-well/>).

Scientific research on Zamzam

Modern research has conclusively proven that Zamzam is like no other water on earth. It is brimmed with healthy minerals. Please view the following short clip for just a small indication on how Zamzam is the most unique water in the world.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3DxELxeSLk>

What we learn (from the clip)

i. The reciting of the religious words has effects on water. This is why Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) taught us to recite Bismillāh before consuming drink and water.

So important it is to recite the name of Allāh on food and water that Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) gave us a du'ā to recite if we forget to recite Bismillāh at the time of commencing food and drinks.

ii. The qualities of Zamzam cannot be changed. It is totally unique. It never decays or attracts fungi. If kept well, its colour, taste and smell never changes. There are no germs in Zamzam. It is sweet-tasting. It's PH is 7.9-8.0, indicating that it is alkaline.

iii. If Zamzam is added to normal water - even a small amount - then it helps to purify that water too.

iv. If the recitation of Qur'ānic verses can affect the purity of water, then

*why cannot it improve our day when we start it with Sūrah Yāsīn?

*why cannot it bring ease to the deceased when we dedicate the reward to them?

Conclusion

Though the paper was specifically on Zamzam, this programme should also be a reminder about the gift of water. We do not truly value and appreciate water. The only time we do is (i) after a 19 hour fast (ii) when we see the monthly water bill.

In the Qur'ān, Allāh refers to water with great significance. Allāh created everything from water (21: 30). Paradise is full of gardens and an abundance of water in the free-flowing streams. The heat and tension of Qiyāma will conclude for the Muslims with a drink of water from the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) *Hawd*. The earth is 70% water.

Bibliography

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