145516 - Can a non-Arab say “the religion of our father Ibraaheem”?

the question

One of the saheeh Prophetic adhkaar is as follows: “*Asbahna ‘ala fitrat il-Islam wa kalimat il-ikhlaas wa ‘ala deeni nabiyyina Muhammad sall-Allahu ‘alayhi wa sallim wa ‘ala millati abeena Ibraaheema haneefan musliman wa maa kaana min al-mushrikeen* (This morning we affirm our adherence to the path of Islam and the word of sincerity and the religion of our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the religion of our father Ibraaheem, pure monotheism and submission to Allah, and he was not of those who associate others with Allah).”

My question is: if the one who is offering this supplication is a non-Arab, like me, does he have to say: “Abeena Ibraahim (our father Ibraaheem)”? or is it sufficient for him to say “ ‘ala millati Ibraaheem (following the religion of Ibraaheem)”, without the word “abeena (our father)”, because he knows for sure that he is not one of the descendants of Ibraaheem (peace be upon him)?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Imam Ahmad (14938) narrated from ‘Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Abza (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to say in the morning and in the evening: “*Asbahna ‘ala fitrat il-Islam wa 'ala kalimat il-ikhlaas wa ‘ala deeni nabiyyina Muhammad sall-Allahu ‘alayhi wa sallim wa ‘ala millati abeena Ibraaheema haneefan wa maa kaana min al-mushrikeen* (This morning we affirm our adherence to the path of Islam and the word of sincerity and the religion of our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the religion of our father Ibraaheem, pure monotheism, and he was not of those who associate others with Allah).”.

According to another report, it was narrated from ‘Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Abza, that Ubayy ibn Ka‘b (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to teach us to say when morning came: “*Asbahna ‘ala fitrat il-Islam wa kalimat il-ikhlaas wa sunnati nabiyyina Muhammad sall-Allahu ‘alayhi wa sallim wa millati abeena Ibraaheema haneefan musliman wa maa kaana min al-mushrikeen* (This morning we affirm our adherence to the path of Islam and the word of sincerity and the way of our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the religion of our father Ibraaheem, pure monotheism and submission to Allah, and he was not of those who associate others with Allah).” And when evening came, we were to say something similar.

It was also narrated by at-Tabaraani in *ad-Du‘aa’* (293), and by ‘Abdullah ibn Ahmad in *Zawaa’id al-Musnad* (20641); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *as-Saheehah* (2989).

What is prescribed for every Muslim, whether he is Arab or non-Arab, is to recite this supplication with the phrase {*abeena Ibraaheem* (our father Ibraaheem).” That is for the following reasons:

1.. Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) is not a father to the Arabs only; rather he is also a father to the Bani Israa’eel (Children of Israel), and Israa’eel is Ya‘qoob ibn Ishaaq ibn Ibraaheem (peace be upon them all).

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Ibraaheem is the father of the Arabs and the father of the Israelites. End quote.

Liqa’ al-Baab al-Maftooh (189/16).

2.. Every Prophet was like a father to his nation and his followers.

As it says in the verse in which Allah, may He be exalted, tells us that His Prophet Loot (peace be upon him) said (interpretation of the meaning):

{O my people, these are my daughters; they are purer for you} [Hood 11:78].

Mujaahid said: They were not actually his daughters; rather they were part of his nation (ummah),

and every prophet is a father to his nation.

Tafseer at-Tabari (15/414).

Ibn Katheer said:

He was referring to their womenfolk, because the prophet is like a father to his nation, both men and women. End quote.

Tafseer Ibn Katheer (4/337).

According to one recitation, *{The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are [in the position of] their mothers, and he is [in the position of] their fathers} [al-Ahzaab 33:5]*.

Ibn Katheer said: It was narrated from Ubayy ibn Ka'b and Ibn 'Abbaas that they recited: *{The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are [in the position of] their mothers, and he is [in the position of] their fathers} [al-Ahzaab 33:5]*. Something similar was also narrated from Mu'aawiyah, Mujaahid, 'Ikrimah and al-Hasan. End quote.

Tafseer Ibn Katheer (6/381). See also: *al-Jaami' li Ahkaam al-Qur'an* (9/76) and *Fath al-Qadeer* (2/745).

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

According to the recitation of Ubayy, {*and he is [in the position of] their fathers*}. The more well-known recitation indicates that, for his wives are only mothers to the believers because they are his wives. If he were not like a father to them, his wives would not be like mothers. End quote.

Minhaaj as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah (5/161).

Allah, may He be exalted, has commanded us to follow the religion of Ibraaheem (peace be upon him), as He, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{Then We revealed to you, [O Muhammad], to follow the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth; and he was not of those who associate with Allah} [an-Nahl 16:123]

{He has chosen you and has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty. [It is] the religion of your father, Abraham} [al-Hajj 22:78].

Thus Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) is like a father to all the believers, whether they are Arabs or non-Arabs.

Al-Qaari (may Allah have mercy on him) said in al-*Mirqaat* (8/292):

"*wa 'ala millati abeena Ibraaheem* (and upon the religion of our father Ibraaheem)," who is the father of the Arabs, for they are the descendants of Ismaa'eel, who are the majority of the Arabs. Or the prophets are like fathers, hence Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are [in the position of] their mothers} [al-Ahzaab 33:5].

According to a lesser-known recitation: {*and he is [in the position of] their fathers*}. End quote.

3.. Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) is the father of the prophets who came after him.

Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, did not send any Prophet after him except he was from his progeny, as He, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{and [We] placed in his descendants prophethood and scripture} [al-'Ankaboot 29:27]

{And We have already sent Noah and Abraham and placed in their descendants prophethood and scripture } [al-Hadeed 57:26].

End quote.

Tafseer Ibn Katheer (3/297).

Ibraaheem (upon him) was a [comprehensive] leader, who combined all good qualities and righteous deeds, a monotheist who was not one of those who associate others with Allah. The prophets are the teachers of goodness to their nations, so it is appropriate that the father of the prophets should be a father to their nations in this regard, for he is a father in the sense of being their leader and teacher.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The shaykh, teacher and educator is like a father in a spiritual sense, and a person's actual father is a father in a physical sense. End quote.

Madaarij as-Saalikeen (3/70).

He also said:

It is well known that a person is obliged to obey his teacher who calls him to what is good and instructs him to do what Allah has enjoined. It is not permissible for him to obey his father in going against this call to good, because his teacher is telling him what will benefit him and bring him closer to his Lord, and by following him he may attain eternal bliss. This highlights the superiority of the father in a spiritual sense over the father in a physical sense; what comparison can there be between the two? End quote.

Mukhtasar al-Fataawa al-Masriyyah (1/168).

Conclusion:

Every Muslim may recite this supplication and say "*millati abeena Ibraaheem* (the religion of our father Ibraaheem)," following the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and affirming his respect and veneration for Ibraaheem (peace be upon him), basing that on the fact that he is his father in the sense of being an example to follow in religion.

And Allah knows best.