289868 - The Lineage of Prophet Muhammad

the question

I have heard that there is a difference of scholarly opinion regarding the lineage of the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), about the name of Ilyas, and that there are some who say that his name is Alyas or Liyas. I hope that you can tell me who regarded each view as more correct, and tell me the most correct of the scholarly views.

Summary of answer

Ilyas is one of the ancestors of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), as is proven and well known, and is agreed upon among the scholars.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Our Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) is the noblest of the children of Adam in descent and lineage, on both his father's and mother's sides, as is well-known and well-established among the scholars, both their elite and their rank and file.

Muslim (2276) narrated that Wathilah ibn Al-Asqa` (may Allah be pleased with him) said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: "Allah chose Kinanah from among the children of Isma`il, and He chose Quraysh from among Kinanah, and He chose Banu Hashim from among Quraysh, and He chose me from among Banu Hashim."

The Prophet's lineage as far as `Adnan is agreed upon; as for his lineage between `Adnan and Isma`il ibn Ibrahim (peace be upon both of them), there is a difference of scholarly opinion regarding that.

Adh-Dhahabi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“His name is Muhammad ibn `Abdullah ibn `Abd Al-Muttalib (and the given name of `Abd Al-Muttalib was Shaybah) ibn Hashim (whose given name was `Amr) ibn `Abd Manaf (whose given name was Al-Mughirah) ibn Qusay (whose given name was Zayd) ibn Kilab ibn Murrah ibn Ka`b ibn Lu’ayy ibn Ghalib ibn Fihr ibn Malik ibn An-Nadr ibn Kinanah ibn Khuzaymah ibn Mudrikah (whose given name was `Amir) ibn Ilyas ibn Mudar ibn Nizar ibn Ma`add ibn `Adnan, and `Adnan was one of the descendants of Isma`il ibn Ibrahim (blessings and peace of Allah be upon them both and upon our Prophet) – according to the consensus of the scholars.

However, they differed concerning the ancestors between `Adnan and Isma`il. It was said that there were nine between them, or seven, then they differed regarding the names of some of these ancestors. It was also said that there were fifteen between them, or that there were forty between them, but that is far-fetched. That was narrated from some of the Arabs.

`Urwah ibn Az-Zubayr said: We have not found anyone who knew the lineage beyond `Adnan and Qahtan except on the basis of speculation.

Abu Al-Aswad, the orphan of `Urwah, said: I heard Abu Bakr ibn Sulayman ibn Abu Hathmah, who was one of the most knowledgeable of the lineages and poetry of Quraysh, say: We have not found anyone who knows what is beyond Ma`add ibn `Adnan, whether in the poetry of a poet or in the knowledge of a scholar.

Abu `Umar ibn `Abd Al-Barr said: The view of the leading scholars on this issue is that his name is `Adnan ibn Udad ibn Muqawwim ibn Nahur ibn Tayrah ibn Ya`rub ibn Yashjub ibn Nabit ibn Isma`il ibn Ibrahim Al-Khalil ibn Azar (whose name was Tarih) ibn Nahur ibn Saruh ibn Ra`u ibn Falakh ibn `Aybar ibn Shalakh ibn Arfakhshadh ibn Sam ibn Nuh (peace be upon him) ibn Lamik ibn Mattushalakh ibn Khanukh ibn Yard ibn Mahlil ibn Qaynan ibn Yanish ibn Shith ibn Adam, the father of humanity, peace be upon him.

This is the genealogy given by Muhammad ibn Ishaq (may Allah have mercy on him) in As-Sirah. The companions of Ibn Ishaq disagreed with him regarding some of the names.

Ibn Sa`d (may Allah have mercy on him) said: In our view, it is better to abstain from discussing

the genealogy beyond `Adnan to Isma`il. (As-Siyar, 1/143-145)

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

“At-Tabarani narrated with a good Isnad (chain of narrators) from `A’ishah, who said: The lineage of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that people narrate is sound and valid up to Ma`add ibn `Adnan." (Fath Al-Bari, 6/529)

Imam Ibn Hibban (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“The lineage of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) is correct as far back as `Adnan. As for the genealogy beyond `Adnan, they have nothing valid concerning it on which I can rely. It is:

May Allah send blessings and peace upon Muhammad ibn `Abdullah ibn `Abd Al-Muttalib (and the given name of `Abd Al-Muttalib was Shaybah) ibn Hashim (and the given name of Hashim was `Amr) ibn `Abd Manaf (and the given name of `Abd Manaf was Al-Mughirah) ibn Qusay (and the given name of Qusay was Zayd) ibn Kilab (who was Al-Muhadhdhab) ibn Murrah ibn Ka`b ibn Lu’ayy ibn Ghalib ibn Fihr ibn Malik ibn An-Nadr (who was Quraysh) ibn Kinanah ibn Khuzaymah ibn Mudrikah ibn Ilyas ibn Mudar ibn Nizar ibn Ma`add ibn `Adnan.

Up to this point, there is no difference between the genealogists, but from `Adnan to Ibrahim, there is a difference of opinion among the scholars." (As-Sirah An-Nabawiyyah wa Akhbar Al-Khulafa’, 1/39)

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

“He is Abu Al-Qasim Muhammad ibn `Abdullah ibn `Abd Al-Muttalib (and the given name of `Abd Al-Muttalib was Shaybat Al-Hamd) ibn Hashim (whose given name was `Amr) ibn `Abd Manaf (whose given name was Al-Mughirah) ibn Qusay (whose given name was Zayd) ibn Kilab ibn Murrah ibn Ka`b ibn Lu’ayy ibn Ghalib ibn Fihr ibn Malik ibn An-Nadr ibn Kinanah ibn Khuzaymah ibn Mudrikah ibn Ilyas ibn Mudar ibn Nizar ibn Ma`add ibn `Adnan.

Here the sound lineage concerning which there is no doubt ends."(As-Sirah p. 4)

See also: Dala’il An-Nubuwwah by Al-Bayhaqi (1/177); Sharaf Al-Mustafa by Abu Sa`d An-Nisaburi (2/12); A`lam An-Nubuwwah by Al-Mawardi (p. 202); Al-Iktifa’ by Al-Kala`i (1/8); `Uyun Al-Athr by Ibn Sayyid An-Nas (1/26); As-Sirah An-Nabawiyyah by Ibn Kathir (1/20).

As-Suhayli (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Ilyas: Ibn Al-Anbari said regarding this name:

Ilyas with this pronunciation is similar to the name of a prophet called Ilyas. There were several views concerning the derivation of this name, one of which is that it is derived from the words Al-Als, which means trickery. Another view is that Al-Als means confusion in the mind, or that it means a brave man who does not flee.

What was suggested by someone other than Ibn Al-Anbari is that the correct pronunciation is Alyas, which means despair; the first two letters form the definite article (Al-) and the Hamzah is Hamzat Al-Wasl. This was stated by Qasim ibn Thabit in Ad-Dala’il." (Ar-Rawd Al-Unuf 1/57).

Al-Qastalani (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Al-Mawahib Al-Laduniyyah (1/61).

“Ilyas, according to Ibn Al-Anbari, or Alyas, according to Qasim ibn Thabit, means the opposite of hope (despair). The first two letters form the definite article (Al-) and the hamzah is hamzat Al-wasl.”

Az-Zarqani (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Sharh Al-Mawahib (1/147):

“The well-known view is that Ilyas is his name. In Sirat Mughultay it says that his name was Habib. In Al-Khamis it says that he was called Ilyas because his father was old and no children had been born to him, then he was born despite his father’s old age and despair (Al-ya’s), so he was called Ilyas. His kunyah was Abu `Amr.”

In conclusion, Ilyas is one of the ancestors of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), as is proven and well known, and is agreed upon among the scholars. There is no difference

of opinion concerning this.

Rather the difference of opinion has to do with pronunciation of his name. Is it Ilyas with Hamzat Al-qat`, or Alyas with Hamzat Al-Wasl, according to the two scholarly views? The matter is simple, as explained above.

As for whether the name has no Hamzah at all, as mentioned in the question (Liyas), we do not know of any scholar who mentioned or suggested that.

For more details, please see the following answers: 147601 , 47072 , 75395 , 197199 , and 47170 .

And Allah knows best.