

Was Azar the Father of Prophet Abraham?

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

And when Ibrahim said to his sire, Azar: Do you take idle for gods ? Surely I see you and your people in manifest error. (Qur'an: Surah Al Anaam, Verse 74)

And Ibrahim asking forgiveness for his sire was only owing to a promise that he made to him; but when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of Allah, he declared himself to be clear of him; most surely Ibrahim was very tenderhearted and forbearing. (Qur'an: Surah Al Tauba, Verse 114)

In the above verses, the word 'Ab' has been used for Azar. However, 'Ab' has different meanings and does not necessarily mean 'Walid' (biological father).

The Holy Prophet (S) has said that the essence of his existence had been transmitted and ultimately conveyed to his immediate parents through a pure, a holy and sanctified progeny.

Now the word 'Ab' in Arabic language may mean father as well as ancestor or even uncle as Ishmael (Ismail) the uncle of Jacob (Yaqoub) has been addressed as 'Ab' in the following Qur'anic verse ...

Nay! were you witnesses when death visited Yaqoub, when he said to his sons: What will you serve after me ? They said: Well will serve your God and the God of your fathers, Ibrahim and Ismail and Ishaq, one God only, and to Him do we submit. (Qur'an 2: 113)

Since Ishmael was not the father of Jacob, and yet Qur'an uses the word 'Ab' for him as uncle, then the usage of this word for other than biological father is established...

Besides Prophet Abraham prays for his biological father (Walid) along with the other believers, which clearly indicates that his biological father was not a polytheist. This is evident from the following Qur'anic verse ...

O our Lord! grant me protection and my parents (Walidayn) and the believers on the day when the reckoning shall come to pass. (Qur'an 14:41)

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ

But what is surprising, that knowing for fact Ibrahim's (as) father was 'Tarakh' and not 'Azar' as stipulated by some Sunni historians, which is in total conformity with the opinion of Shi'a. Ibn Katheer in his work on history writes:

Ibrahim (as) was the son of Tarakh. When Tarakh was 75 years of age, Ibrahim (as) was born to him.

Sunni reference: al-Bidaya wan Nahaya, by Ibn Katheer, v 1 p 139

This is also confirmed by Tabari, as he gives the lineage of Ibrahim's (as) family in his history collection, but then also in his Commentary of the Qur'an he states that 'Azar' was NOT the father of Ibrahim (as).

Sunni references:

- History of al-Tabari, v 1 p 119
- Tafsir Tabari, by Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, v 7 p 158

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