149310 - Why is Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) singled out for mention in the Tashahhud?

the question

Why do we send blessings and peace upon Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) in the prayer, and not upon the other Prophets? He is one of the five Messengers of strong will, but he is not the first or last of them, so why him, and if it is because he is the first one mentioned, why do we not send greetings upon ‘Eesa, Nooh and Moosa as well?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, singled out Sayyiduna Ibraaheem (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) for great favours and honour. He was described in the Qur’an as an imam (leader), an ummah (a nation in himself), a haneef (monotheist), and devoted to Allah, may He be glorified and exalted; all the Prophets who came after him were descended from him and the followers of all religions (Muslims, Christians and Jews) believe in him.

Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) is the best of the Prophets and Messengers after our Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). Hence Allah has told us that He took him as a close friend. “And Allah did take Ibrahim (Abraham) as a Khaleel (an intimate friend)” [an-Nisa’ 4:125].

All the Prophets who came after him are descended from him via Ishaaq and Ya‘qoob, apart from Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), who is descended from Ismaa‘eel ibn Ibraaheem.

Our Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) is closer to Ibraaheem than anyone else. So Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) is the father of the Arabs and the forefather of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in terms of descent.

Ibraaheem is the one whom the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) instructed his community to follow. “Then, We have inspired you (O Muhammad SAW saying): "Follow the religion of Ibraheem (Abraham) Haneefa (Islamic Monotheism - to worship none but Allah)” [an-Nahl 16:123].

Hence our Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) is the closest of people to Ibraaheem (peace be upon him), and so are we, as his followers.

Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibraheem (Abraham) are those who followed him, and this Prophet (Muhammad SAW) and those who have believed (Muslims)”

[Aal ‘Imraan 3:68].

And He says, refuting the Jews and the Christians:

“Ibraheem (Abraham) was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Haneefa (Islamic Monotheism - to worship none but Allah Alone) and he was not of Al-Mushrikoon”

[Aal ‘Imraan 3:67].

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked: Why is Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) singled out for the call of Tawheed, when all the Prophets called people to Tawheed (belief in the Oneness of Allah)?

He replied:

All the Prophets brought the message of Tawheed. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad SAW) but We inspired him (saying): La ilaha illa Ana (none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah)), so worship Me (Alone and none else)”

[al-Anbiya’ 21:25].

But Ibraaheem was the father of the Arabs, and the father of the Israelites, and he called people to pure Tawheed. The Jews and the Christians claimed to be his followers, but the Muslims are the ones who are his followers. He (peace and blessings be upon him) was chosen to be the father of the Prophets; he is the promoter of pure monotheism and we are instructed to follow him, because we are closer to Ibraaheem, as Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibraheem (Abraham) are those who followed him, and this Prophet (Muhammad SAW) and those who have believed (Muslims)”

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“Ibraheem (Abraham) was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Haneefa (Islamic Monotheism - to worship none but Allah Alone) and he was not of Al-Mushrikoon”

[Aal ‘Imraan 3:67].

Liqa’ al-Baab al-Maftooh, 189/question no. 7

Al-‘Allaamah Badr ad-Deen al-‘Ayni al-Hanafi (may Allah have mercy on him) noted another point with regard to this issue, as he said:

If it is said: Why was Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) singled out from among all the other Prophets (peace be upon them) to be mentioned during the prayer?

I say: That is because on the night of the Mi‘raaj, the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) saw all the Prophets and Messengers, and he greeted each Prophet with salaam, but none of them sent greetings to his ummah apart from Ibraaheem (peace be upon him). Hence the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) instructed us to send blessings upon him at the end of every prayer until the Day of Resurrection, in response to his kindness.

It was also said that when Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) had finished building the Ka‘bah, he prayed for the ummah of Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), saying: O Allah, whoever performs pilgrimage to this House from the ummah of Muhammad, give him greetings from me; and his family and children also offered this supplication, so we are instructed to remember them in the prayer, in response to their kind deed. End quote.

Sharh Sunan Abi Dawood by al-‘Ayni, 4/260

And Allah knows best.