



## Let Us Be the Real Children of Ibrahim (Abraham) Peace Be Upon Him

By Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi

Ex-Director at Islamic Center of Orange County, Garden Grove, California  
Chairman of Fiqh Council of North America (Islamic Jurisprudence)

Islam is the way of all the Prophets and Messengers of Allah. We believe in all Prophets, respect them, honor them, love them and try to follow their examples as explained to us in the most authentic way by Allah's last Prophet and Messenger Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him and upon all the Prophets and Messengers of Allah). Among the Prophets, Abraham (peace and blessings be upon him) has a very significant place in the history of humanity. Three major religious communities, Jewish, Christian and Muslim, call themselves "the children of Abraham." But let me tell you what it means as Muslims to be "the children of Abraham."

According to Islam, Prophet Abraham's children are not only his biological children, but all those who follow him are also his children. Allah addressed all Muslims and told them that Islam was the religion of your "father" Abraham. (Al-Hajj 22: 78) The people who are closest to Prophet Abraham, according to the Qur'an, are not those who claim that he was their father, but those who follow him. Almighty Allah says: **(Without doubt, among people, the nearest of kin to Abraham, are those who follow him, as are also this Prophet and those who believe: and Allah is the Protector of those who have Faith.)** (Al-Imran 3: 68)

The Qur'an speaks extensively about Prophet Abraham. He is given many beautiful names and titles. He is called the Leader (*imam*, 2:142), the Friend of Allah (*khalil Allah*, 4:125), a righteous person (*siddiq*, 19:41), a Prophet, a Messenger (*nabi*, *rasul* 19:41; 57:26), one who surrendered to Allah (*muslim*, 2:131), a gentle, imploring and penitent person (*halim*, *awwah*, *munib*, 11:74-75). He is often called *hanif*. It means not only a monotheist but a straight non-deviant monotheist. Whenever the title *hanif* for Prophet Abraham is used in the Qur'an, it is coupled with the statement that **(he was not one of the idolaters.)** (2:135; 3:67; 3:95; 6:161; 16:120; 123; the only exception is 4:125). Prophet Abraham is also called an *ummah* (a community in himself, 16:120). He was elected by Allah (3:33) and was a fine example (*uswah*, 60:4). Prophet Muhammad and his followers are commanded in the Qur'an to follow Prophet Abraham's way. (3:95; 4:125; 6:161) and it said that only a fool will turn away from the way of Prophet Abraham (2:130).

So the question is what it means to be the children of Abraham. What should those who claim to be the children of Abraham do to become his real children? When we study the Qur'an, we find the following answers:

1. Have a pure and sincere heart. Allah mentions in the Qur'an that Prophet Abraham was a man

of pure and sincere heart. Allah Almighty says, **(Behold, he approached his Lord with a sound heart.)** (As-Saffat 37: 84)

Allah called his heart "*qalb salim.*" It is a heart that is pure, clean, undivided, undistracted and wholesome. It is a heart that is totally directed to Allah and keeps no malice, no hate and no evil against anyone. Prophet Abraham's heart was sincerely devoted to Allah and loved good for all people.

**To be the children of Abraham is to have a good and pure heart.**

**2. Surrender to Allah.** Prophet Abraham fully surrendered to Allah and submitted to him. Allah says: **(Behold! His Lord said to him: "Surrender." He said: "I surrender to the Lord and Cherisher of the Universe.")** (Al-Baqarah 2: 131)

Prophet Abraham's surrender was so perfect that whenever we pray or sacrifice we have to keep in mind his prayer: **(I have set my face, firmly and truly, towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I give partners to Allah.)** (Al-An'am 6: 79)

**To be the children of Abraham is to surrender to Allah, to accept Him alone as the Lord and Master.**

**3. Fulfill the commands of Allah.** Prophet Abraham lived by the commands of Allah. Whatever his Lord told him, he did. He suffered many trials and tribulations, but he did not give up his commitment to his Lord. Allah says: **(And remember that Abraham was tried by his Lord with certain commands, which he fulfilled. He said: "I will make thee an Imam to the Nations." He pleaded: "And also (Imams) from my offspring!" He answered: "But My Promise is not within the reach of evil-doers.)** (Al-Baqarah 2: 124)

**To be the children of Abraham is to live by the commands of Allah.**

**4. Be hospitable, kind and compassionate.** Prophet Abraham was a great host. He was a very caring and kind person. The Qur'an mentions the story of Prophet Abraham's guests. Total strangers came to his home and he went out of his way to welcome them and treated them well. Almighty Allah says: **(Has the story reached thee, of the honoured guests of Abraham? Behold, they entered his presence, and said: "Peace!" He said, "Peace!" (and thought, "These seem) unusual people." Then he turned quickly to his household, brought out a fatted calf, and placed it before them. He said, "Will ye not eat?")** (Adh-Dhariyat 51: 24-27)

**To be the children of Abraham is to be good even to strangers.**

5. Be caring, forbearing and penitent. Prophet Abraham even cared for the sinners. He pleaded with Allah for the sake of the people Sodom and Gomorrah. Allah says: **(When fear had passed from (the mind of) Abraham and the glad tidings had reached him, he began to plead with Us for Lot's people. For Abraham was, without doubt, forbearing (of faults), compassionate, and penitent.)** (Hud 11: 74-45)

**To be the children of Abraham is to have care and concern for all people.**

6. Be active, build and do positive work. Prophet Abraham was a man of action. He worked for Allah's message and for his mission constantly. He accepted all sufferings for his mission. When his own father and his people refused to accept his message, he left his homeland and kept traveling from place to place. The Qur'an says: **"He said: 'I will go to my Lord! He will surely guide me!'"** (As-Saffat 37: 99)

In his old age, he and his young son worked hard to build a house for the worship of Allah. Allah loved that House and called it "*Baiti*" (My House). **(And remember Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House (with this prayer): "Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us: for Thou art the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.)** (Al-Baqarah 2: 127)

**To be the children of Abraham is to be active, dynamic and continue doing good works.**

7. Be a community builder. Prophet Abraham was so much a community builder that Allah called him "Ummah," a community in himself. He was a man of unity who tried to unite all people. Allah says about him: **(Abraham was indeed a community, devoutly obedient to Allah, (and) true in faith, and he joined not gods with Allah.)** (An-Nahl 16: 120)

**To be the children of Abraham is to work for unity and community.**

8. Be willing to sacrifice. Prophet Abraham was willing to sacrifice anything and everything, even the dearest thing to him, for the cause of Allah. Today we are gathered here to commemorate his most dramatic act of sacrifice. He was willing to sacrifice his only son for the sake of Allah. Allah loved this act of Prophet Abraham so much that he made the humanity to remember it forever. Allah says: **(We called out to him, "O Abraham! "Thou hast already fulfilled the vision!" Thus indeed do We reward those who do right. For this was obviously a trial, and We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice, and We left (this blessing) for him among generations (to come) in later times: - "Peace and salutation to Abraham!" Thus indeed do We reward those who do right. For he was one of Our believing Servants.)** (As-Saffat 37: 104-111)

**To be the children of Abraham is to be ready for sacrifice for Allah and for the cause of**

**truth, righteousness and justice.**

**9.** Love Allah. Prophet Abraham loved Allah with all his heart, all his mind, and all his soul. Allah also loved him and called him His Friend. Allah says: **(Who can be better in religion than one who submits his whole self to Allah, does good, and follows the way of Abraham the true in faith? For Allah did take Abraham for a friend.)** (An-Nisa' 4: 125)

**To be the children of Abraham is to love Allah and to become the friend of Allah.**

There are many who claim Abraham and his inheritance, but who are his real children? Humanity needs real children of Abraham, not those who pretend to be his children and follow not his way. The true children of Abraham will be the true followers of Allah's Prophets and Messengers: Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon them all). This is the message of this `Eid. This is the message of Islam, and this is the message that the world needs. The Ummah needs this message and humanity needs it.

Let us remember: Be sincere, surrender to Allah, obey His commands, be kind and caring, be active and dynamic, be a community builder, be willing to sacrifice and love Allah. This is the way of Prophet Abraham and this is the way of Prophet Muhammad.

I pray to Allah to help us follow this way. We have many challenges and the world has many challenges at this time, but with the right spirit and right action, all problems can be resolved. **(O ye who believe! persevere in patience and constancy; vie in such perseverance; strengthen each other; and be conscious of Allah; that ye may prosper.)** (Aal-`Imran 3: 200)