

Surah 2. Al-Baqara

Asad: Nay, but you [yourselves, O children of Israel,] bear witness¹⁰⁷ that when death was approaching Jacob, he said unto his sons: "Whom will you worship after I am gone?" They answered: "We will worship thy God, the God of thy forefathers Abraham and Ishmael¹⁰⁸ and Isaac, the One God; and unto Him will we surrender ourselves."

Malik: Were you present when death approached Ya'qoob (Jacob)? He asked his sons: "Who will you worship after me?" They replied: "We will worship the same One God Who is your Rabb and the Rabb of your forefathers Ibrahim, Isma`il and Ishaq (Isaac), and to Him we all submit as Muslims."

Mustafa Khattab:

Or did you witness when death came to Jacob? He asked his children, "Who will you worship after my passing?" They replied, "We will continue to worship your God, the God of your forefathers—Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac—the One God. And to Him we all submit."

Pickthall: Or were ye present when death came to Jacob, when he said unto his sons: What will ye worship after me? They said: We shall worship thy God, the God of thy fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, One God, and unto Him we have surrendered.

Yusuf Ali: Were ye witnesses when death appeared before Jacob? Behold he said to his sons: "What will ye worship after me?" They said: "We shall worship thy Allah and the Allah of thy fathers of Abraham Isma`il and Isaac the one (true) Allah to Him we bow (in Islam)." ^{131 132}

Transliteration: Am kuntum shuhadaa ith hadara yaAAqooba almawtu ith qala libaneehi ma taABudoona min baAAadee qaloo naABudu ilahaka wailaha abaika ibraheema waismaAAeela waishaqa ilahan wahidan wanahnu lahu muslimoona

Author Comments

107 - I.e. "In the religious traditions to which you adhere". It is to be noted that the conjunction am which stands at the beginning of this sentence is not always used in the interrogative sense ("is it that...?"): sometimes - and especially when it is syntactically unconnected with the preceding sentence, as in this case - it is an equivalent of bal ("rather", or "nay, but"), and has no interrogative connotation.

108 - In classical Arabic, as in ancient Hebrew usage, the term ab ("father") was applied not only to the direct male parent but also to grandfathers and even more distant ancestors, as well as to paternal uncles: which explains why Ishmael, who was Jacob's uncle, is mentioned in this context. Since he was the first-born of Abraham's sons, his name precedes that of Isaac.

131 - The whole of the Children of Israel are called to witness one of their slogans, that they worshipped "the God of their fathers." The idea in their minds got narrowed down to that of a tribal God. But they are reminded that their ancestors had the principle of Islam in them - the worship of the One True and Universal God. The death-bed scene is described in Jewish tradition.

132 - "Fathers" means ancestors, and include uncles, grand-uncles, as well as direct ascendants.

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