

Jesus in Islam

Many people, most often Christians, are surprised to know that Muslims believe in Jesus. In the Quran, Jesus is called the Word of Allah and the Messiah. Muslims also believe that Allah sent Jesus to the Children of Israel and that he preached to them until Allah raised him up to Heaven before the disbelievers amongst the Jews killed him. Yet although there exists a shared belief in the man, Muslims see him as a Prophet and Messenger of Allah and not as God or the son of God.

Why Don't Muslims believe that Jesus is God?

The Quran speaks in detail about the absolute Oneness of Allah as mentioned previously. To say that Jesus is God violates this rule as it means that Allah has a partner in His Kingdom and Rule. Also this concept is described in the Quran as being not reasonable or even realistic.

Sometimes Muslims try to explain to Christians why Jesus is not God by referring to certain verses from the Bible. This approach will only be briefly mentioned in this book because this is not the approach used by Allah in the Quran to answer this question. Some of the verses sometimes mentioned include:

God specifically states in the Bible that He is not God

God is not a man, that He should lie. Nor a son of man that He should repent
[Numbers 23:19]

The Knowledge of Jesus and God is not the same

No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. [Mark 13:32]

God is All-Knowing but Jesus was not

The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. [Mark 11:12-13]

No One has ever seen God, but many saw Jesus

No one has ever seen God [John 1:18]

Jesus himself has a God, the God of us all

I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. [John 20:17]

There are many other examples in both the Old and New Testament that indicate with clarity the difference between the One God and Jesus, but it is not the purpose of this

book to be a commentary on the Bible or to attack it. What then does Allah say in the Quran about why He is not Jesus?

Jesus called upon his people to worship his God and their God

They do indeed blaspheme, those who say: "Allah is the Messiah the son of Mary." But the Messiah said, "O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord." Whoever joins other gods with Allah, Allah will then forbid him entry into Heaven, and the Hellfire will be his end. [5:72]

Jesus never told people to worship him or his mother

And behold! Allah will say: "O Jesus the son of Mary! Didst you say unto men, worship me and my mother as gods besides Allah?" He will say: "Glory to You! Never could I say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing, you would indeed have known it. You know what is in my heart, though I know not what is in Yours. For You know in full all that is hidden.

"Never did I say to them except what You did command me to say, 'worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord'; and I was a witness over them while I dwelled amongst them; when You did take me up You then were the Watcher over them, and You are a witness to all things.

"If You decide to punish them, they are Your servants, and if You decide to forgive them, then indeed You are the Exalted in Power, the Wise." [5:116-118]

Jesus used to eat food while Allah does not eat

The Messiah, son of Mary, was not other than a Messenger, like Messengers who had passed away before him. And his mother was a saintly woman. And they both used to eat (earthly) food. See how We make the revelations clear for them, and see how they are turned away! [5:75]

Allah is independent of any need. He does not eat or drink or sleep. These are all human characteristics, characteristics of need and weakness and God can never be characterized by need or weakness. Upon Him does the entire Universe depend and from Him do all receive their sustenance. This is why He is deserving of worship. If he were like us, a human who eats and drinks and desires and lusts; someone who forgets and makes mistakes or depends upon others – how they could He be a God, and what should make us worship Him in such a case?

Allah does not sire children, nor was He born

*Say: He is Allah, the One and Only;
Allah, the Eternal and Absolute;
He begets not, nor is He begotten;
And there is none comparable to Him. [112:1-4]*

We are His creation, yet nothing is comparable to Him. It is difficult to understand how we are born into existence, yet He was not born nor does He have children to carry on His work or to share in His Kingdom. Continuing with the theme presented above, it is important to ask if we should worship an entity that was hidden within the womb of a mother being sustained by her only to be born through her privates amidst blood and filth, then onwards to crying for food and needing someone to clean him from urine and stool. Is such a being deserving of worship or is the One who creates all and has no need or weakness deserving of our worship?

Why Don't Muslims believe that Jesus is the Son of God?

Similar to the reasoning presented above, Muslims adhere to the belief in Allah as One without partner, without associate. Similar to the above outline I will try to make the bulk of this presentation a discussion of the logic presented in the Quran. Yet as before, let me make mention of a few verses that are often cited from the Bible to show that Jesus is not the Son of God in the sense that the Lord of the Universe actually sired him.

The Sons of God throughout the Bible

Israel is my son even my first born. [Exodus 4:22]

Adam, which was the son of God [Luke 3:38]

Blessed are the peace-makers for they shall be called sons of God. [Matthew 5:9]

So was God then having children throughout time? How can so many be called His "sons"? The answer comes in understanding what this term actually means, and that is someone close to God or one of his servants.

Was Jesus then different than these other "sons"? Some Christians state that he is different because he was begotten by God. The word "begotten" implies the idea of originating from or being produced by someone else; to procreate or sire. We will discuss the implications of this statement momentarily but first let us examine whether the claim that Jesus was begotten of God actually has truth to it by taking a closer look at the verse in question, John 3:16:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

So clearly in this verse it appears that this claim might have some validity since it says, "only begotten son". Yet it must be remembered that the English Bible that most westerners read is actually the translation of the Greek and Hebrew Bible manuscripts. The central question then is if these manuscripts state that Jesus was begotten. ***The answer to that question is actually no.***

The Reality behind the term the Begotten Son

Deacon Bob Williams and Professor Paul Duff, both prominent day Christian teachers have commented on this whole issue in a very lengthy and scholarly treatise that I

recommend those of interested in this matter to read. I will though reproduce here their conclusions for you to understand from their words the fact that the word begotten is a clear addition to the text of the Bible. The following quote is concerning the origin of the word begotten and why it has been used in many English Bibles (any emphasis is mine).

First, the term came about because of *translation errors*. Most modern translators have correctly identified the original language and its intent, and thus have something similar to "one and only Son" (the NASB retains "only begotten" in the text, but some NASB publishers include a footnote which states the *literal translation is "unique, only one of His kind"*). But some ancient translators apparently erroneously thought that the root of the second part of monogenes was gennao instead of genos. Remember genos means "of the same kind," but gennao does indeed mean "to beget," from which comes "begotten."

However, if gennao was indeed the true root, an additional "n" would apparently have to be added to read monogenNes. Hugo McCord used to advocate the "only begotten" translation; but then he wrote, "I, too, was in the same error. I did not realize I had to add to the Greek to get 'only begotten' into the New Testament. ***One added letter in a word lowers Jesus from being the only Son of God to being only a son of God***" (Gospel Advocate, 3/30/86). ***Instead of being begotten, being truly unique relegates Him to merely being a created being like everyone else!***

Second, it appears that the term came about because of doctrinal reasons. Somewhere in the 3rd century, Origen promoted the doctrine of eternal generation (that Christ eternally came from the Father; not sure what all was meant by such, but the phrase and doctrine evidently caught on). This idea was furthered in the 4th century by Jerome and others to battle against the growing Arian heresy (Arius taught that Jesus was indeed begotten or created by God).

The next step was the formation of creeds and the inclusion of such phraseology in those creeds. And because it was in certain creeds, it then made its way into certain translations. Lewis Kash writes, "The translators of the King James Version (1611) were Anglican churchmen and theologians who subscribed to the doctrines of the 39 Articles of the Church of England (1563), which state that the Son was 'begotten from everlasting of the Father' (Art. II). 'Begotten from everlasting' is a clear reference to the doctrine of the eternal generation. In 1604, the same year in which the translators for the KJV were selected, all English clergymen were required 'by His Majesty's authority' to pledge, 'I ... do willing and from my heart subscribe to the 39 Articles of Religion.' When King James appointed his translators to revise the Bishops' Bible of 1568, he gave them instructions to make as few changes as possible, to keep 'the old ecclesiastical words,' (such as 'church') and, 'when any word hath divers significations,' to keep that 'which hath been most commonly used by the most eminent fathers.'"

Notice that these translators were not consistent in the way they translated monogenes. Look at Luke 7:12, 8:42, and 9:38. In all these verses, the KJV

translators left out "begotten" and just put "only." In all these places, they were faithful to translating the original language as it really ought to be done. So why here and not the other passages? Because none of these are referring to Christ. *It is obvious that the KJV translators inserted their theology into their work.*

Pagan beliefs or the Truth from the One God?

Now we have to address the entire question of God begetting children in of itself. It must be understood that such a statement is very insulting to God because it implies that he would take to himself a woman from Earth and have a child with her – outside of marriage nonetheless! This is what we read from the pagan stories of Greek mythology where Zeus becomes interested in a woman and decides to have a child with her. Hercules is one example of such pagan lore, but shall we now ascribe to the Lord of the Universe such ideas? Shall we liken our belief to that of the pagans by saying such things?

With this understanding maybe you can then see the meaning in the following hadith of the Prophet Muhammad wherein he reports the words of the All-Mighty in saying:

The son of Adam has insulted Me, and he has no right to do so ... As for his insulting Me, he says, 'Allah has begotten a son,' while I Am the One, the Sustainer of All.'
[Recorded in Bukhari & Muslim]

Thus it is a great insult to Allah in His Majesty to say that He would take for Himself a son for this means He must also have taken a woman to have this son. Furthermore, there comes the pertinent question of why does Allah need a son to begin with?

Of course in Christianity, God's taking of a son is for the purpose of saving humanity by sacrificing him. So, the answer from that perspective is that God needed to have a son to forgive mankind of their sins and admit them to Heaven; his blood washing away their sins. Yet, the Quran comes with a most beautiful response to this idea:

And they say: "The Most Gracious has begotten a son!"

Indeed you have put forth a terrible lie!

At it the skies are ready to burst, the earth to split asunder, and the mountains to crumble in utter ruin,

That they should invoke a son for the Most Gracious.

For it is not consistent with the majesty of the Most Gracious that He should beget a son.

Not one of the beings in the heavens and the earth but must come to the Most Gracious as a servant.

He does take an account of them (all), and has numbered them (all) exactly.

And everyone of them will come to Him singly on the Day of Judgment.

So as for those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, upon them will the Most Gracious bestow love. [19:88-96]

Now in this passage I have highlighted in bold the name, the Most Gracious, because there is a reason why Allah continues to call Himself by this title throughout this section of the Quran. Why? He is saying in response to the above statements that He does not need a son to forgive His creation, because He is already the Most Gracious,

the Most Merciful, the Most Forgiving! He is capable and ready to forgive His servants when they ask Him for forgiveness!

Christian readers should ask themselves if they would presume to be able to do something that God is incapable of. Of course no Christian, or Muslim for that matter, would dare say that they could do something that God could not – yet we forgive people everyday. Sometimes our spouses say things that they don't mean, or our kids misbehave, or our friends forget to keep their promises – but in all these cases we forgive them yet we don't need to kill someone in order to forgive them. Consider that and remember then how Allah is more perfect than all of us combined – how perfect then is His Forgiveness and Mercy?

How then do Muslims view Salvation?

As has been mentioned throughout this book, Islam is the religion that all the Prophets preached since it is submission to the One God. It would make sense then that the matter of salvation should be consistent throughout all the scriptures that Allah has revealed. This system of salvation can be summarized throughout all scriptures in one word – repentance.

This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says "In repentance and rest is your salvation ... [Isaiah 30:15]

I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. [Luke 5:32]

From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." [Matthew 4:17]

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out [Acts 3:19]

Salvation from the Quran and Hadith

And turn in repentance to Allah all of you, O' believers, so that you may be successful. [24:31]

Say: "O my Servants, those of you who have sinned against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins: indeed He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful. [39:53]

The Prophet Muhammad also advised the believers thus, "O people! Turn to Allah in repentance and seek His forgiveness, for surely I make repentance to Him a hundred times every day." [Recorded in Muslim]

Some people have the false notion that in Islam salvation lies only in doing righteous deeds, but this is not at all the case. Without doubt, performing good deeds is a sign of someone's faith and brings one closer to Allah and His Mercy, but salvation itself lies in the Grace and Mercy of Allah as is clear from the following statement of the Prophet Muhammad:

"Do good deeds properly, sincerely and moderately; and rejoice, but know that no one's good deeds will put him in Paradise." The Companions asked, "Not even you O' Messenger of Allah?" He replied. "Not even me, unless and until Allah covers me in His Grace and Mercy." [Recorded in Bukhari]

Blind Faith?

Often times when we get this deep into the conversation some people become confused since the evidence as has been often said is very logical to them yet goes against everything they have ever been taught. Could it be right? Those who are intent in following the truth wherever it is will then seek to learn more, but others will retreat to the fort of blind faith.

"You just have to believe." "It's a mystery." And with this statement they close their mind and throw away the key having convinced themselves that it doesn't have to make sense to be true. Could this be the case then? Is there any possible evidence against this notion? Yes, there are many evidences that such people neglect in their haste.

For God is not a God of confusion, but of peace. [1 Corinthians 14:33]

Everywhere around us we look and see order and organization. Everyday people study the natural sciences of chemistry, physics and geology amongst other things – sciences which are built entirely upon the order and constant laws that the Creator has set up the Universe with. Does it make sense then that we should find reason, logic and order in everything but religion? Absolutely not! And once again, this idea is not supported anywhere. Consider the following verse dear seeker of the Truth:

Since what may be known about God is *plain* to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for *images* made to look like *mortal man* and birds and animals and reptiles.

Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served *created things* rather than the **Creator**—who is forever praised. [Romans 1:19-25]

So even in the Bible it states that the nature of God is clear and plain, yet people still seek to worship created beings and images as opposed to the Creator. Why? Because they have been misled by the idea of blind faith, an idea that is not supported anywhere in any book of religion for the Creator has shown us the signs for both His existence and His nature in the world around us and in the words He sent down to us.

The Quran states it most clearly where Allah asks mankind the simple question:

Do they not consider the Quran (with care)? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy and contradiction. (4:82)

Yet Allah does not author confusion and He has blessed humanity with minds with which to reason and reflect. He has made His signs clear, plain and abundant for anyone who truly desires to understand. Consider also these clear and logical verses from the Quran:

Do they associate with Allah those who created nothing and who are themselves created? (7:191)

If there were in the heavens and the earth gods besides Allah, then there would be absolute chaos. (21:22)

Jesus in Islam

Some people still unfortunately think that if they were to become Muslim that they would have to "turn their back on Jesus" or "deny him", and hence decide against accepting Islam. Such people have sadly not realized that in Islam Jesus has been given his due respect, honor and praise without exaggeration or falsehood.

In Islam we know that Jesus is the Word of Allah which means that he was created by the Word of Allah "be". Whenever Allah wishes to create something He simply says 'Be' to it and it is, and when He created Jesus He commanded him to "Be" in the womb of Mary and he was.

Thus, we believe in an absolutely immaculate conception and we honor Mary the mother of Jesus for her piety, righteousness and purity and we don't say that she married or had relations with any man. As regards Joseph the Carpenter, the Prophet Muhammad had taught that Joseph was the caretaker of the house of worship where Mary remained in worship, and that they never had any relations.

We say that Jesus' first miracle was speech as an infant; the first time was to calm his mother during her birth pangs, and the second time was when he spoke in defense of her when her people inquired how she could have a son without marriage.

We believe that Jesus was the Messiah or Christ. Many Christians falsely think that the word Christ or Messiah somehow indicates that Jesus was God or the son, but the word Messiah is only the Hebrew form of the Greek word Christ – both meaning the anointed one. In fact, there are many things in the Bible that are called Christ (in Greek) indicating again that this word means that something is chosen for a specific purpose or anointed.

We believe that Jesus lived a most noble and pious life, preaching to people and performing miracles through the permission of Allah alone. He had many followers amongst which were the disciples whom we believe were very righteous and devoted

to him and Allah. Furthermore, Jesus' message caused such grief to the corrupt ones amongst a number of the Jews (but not all Jews since there were many who believed in Jesus and accepted him as a Messenger and Prophet of Allah) that they conspired to kill him.

In both the Quran and the hadith of the Prophet, it states clearly that although the corrupted Jews sought to kill Jesus that they did not succeed in their evil plan and that Allah rescued him and took him up to Heaven without him having to die. The Jews then crucified someone who took the image of Jesus thinking that they had killed him.

We further believe that Jesus will return near the end of time to kill the Anti-Christ, and that he will remain on Earth as a righteous ruler and that he will marry and have children before his death where he shall be buried next to the Prophet Muhammad. In fact, there still exists till this day a reserved place for him beside the grave of the Prophet Muhammad.

In summary, I would like to here reproduce a passage from the chapter 19 of the Quran entitled Mary which discusses much of what was mentioned above:

*And mention to them the story of Mary in the Book when she drew aside from her family to an eastern place;
So she took a veil (to screen herself) from them; then We sent to her Our spirit, and he appeared to her as a man in all respects.
She said: Surely I seek refuge from you in the Most Merciful, (come not near) if you are one who does fear Allah
He said: I am only a messenger of your Lord coming with the announcement that you shall be given a pure son.
She said: How shall I have a boy and no mortal has yet touched me, nor have I been unchaste?
He said: Even so; your Lord says: It is easy to Me: and that We may make him a sign to men and a mercy from Us, and it is a matter which has already been decreed.
So she conceived him; then withdrew herself to a remote place.
And when the throes (of childbirth) compelled her to betake herself to the trunk of a palm tree. She cried out in anguish: Oh, would that I had died before this, and had been a thing quite forgotten!
Then (the child) called out to her from beneath her: Grieve not, surely your Lord has made a stream to flow beneath you;
And shake towards you the trunk of the palm-tree, it will drop on you fresh ripe dates: So eat and drink and refresh your eye. Then if you see any mortal, say: Surely I have vowed a fast to the Most Merciful, and so I shall not speak to any man today.
And she came to her people with the child, carrying him (with her). They said: O Mary! Surely you have done a strange thing!
O sister of Aaron! Your father was not a man given to evil, nor, was your mother an unchaste woman.
But she pointed to him. They said: How should we speak to one who is yet but a child in the cradle?
He spoke to them saying: Surely I am a servant of Allah; He has given me the Book and made me a prophet;
And He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and He has enjoined on me prayer and charity so long as I live;*

*And also to be dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me insolent, unblessed;
And peace be upon me on the day I was born, and on the day I die, and on the day I
am raised to life.*

Such is Jesus, son of Mary; this is the saying of truth about which they dispute.

*It befits not the Majesty of Allah that He should take to Himself a son, how exalted is
He above all that they ascribe to Him; when He has decreed a matter He only needs
to say to it "Be," and it is.*

*And Jesus said: surely Allah is my Lord and your Lord, therefore serve Him; this is
the right path.*

*But the sects differ among themselves concerning him, so woe be to the disbelievers
because of the (coming) Judgment of a Momentous Day! [19:16-37]*

For more information see the audio lecture: [Jesus in Islam: A Detailed Look at the Islamic Scriptures.](#)