

The Islamic View of Jesus

(peace be upon him)

Ibn Katheer

نظرة الإسلام إلى عيسى عليه السلام

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The Birth of Jesus

(peace be upon him)

Ibn Katheer states: He is Jesus, the son of Mary. He is Allah's bondman and Messenger. In the beginning of *Surah* (a chapter of the Qur'an) Ali `Imraan, Allah, Exalted be He, revealed eighty three verses to refute the claims of Christians who called Jesus the son of Allah, far be Allah from all these claims. Ibn Katheer goes on to say that a Christian delegation from Najraan came to Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. They mentioned that they believe in the Trinity and claimed that Allah is one of three; the Divine Being, Jesus, and Mary. Then Allah, Exalted be He, revealed the beginning of *Surah* Ali-`Imraan pointing out that Jesus is but a servant of Allah whom He created and fashioned in a womb as He did with other creatures; He created him without a human father just as Adam was born without either a human father or mother. Rather Allah just said be and he was. Allah also explains the birth of Jesus' mother, Mary and how she became pregnant with him, a story which was elucidated in *Surah* Maryam.

The Birth of Mary, Peace Be Upon Her:

Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ
عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ
سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ
لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ

world and the Hereafter and of (the company of) those nearest to Allah; he shall speak to the people in childhood and in maturity and he shall be (of the company of) of the righteous.' She said, 'O my lord! How shall I have as son when no man hath touched me?' He said, 'Even so: Allah createth what he willeth: when He hath decreed a Plan, He but saith to it "Be" and it is! And Allah will teach him the Book and Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel, and (appoint him) a Messenger to the Children of Israel (with this message): I have come to you, with a Sign from your Lord, in that I make for you out of clay – as it were, the figure a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave and I heal those born blind, and the lepers, and I quicken the dead by Allah's leave; and I declare to you what ye eat, and what ye store in your houses. Surely therein is a Sign for you if ye did believe. (I have come to you), to attest the Law which was before me. And to make lawful to you part of what was (before) forbidden to you; I have come to you with a Sign from your Lord. So fear Allah, and obey me." It is Allah who is my Lord and your Lord; then worship Him. This is a way that is straight."

(Ali `Imraan: 42-51)

٢٨ فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي
 الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا ٢٩ قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ءَاتَنِي الْكِتَابَ
 وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا ٣٠ وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ
 وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ٣١ وَبَرًّا
 بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا ٣٢ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ
 يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ٣٣
 ذَلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قَوْلَ الْحَقِّ الَّذِي فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ
 ٣٤ مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ مِنْ وَلَدٍ سُبْحَنَهُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ
 أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ٣٥ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ
 فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ٣٦ فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ
 مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ مَّشْهَدِ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ
 [مریم الآیہ ١ تا ٣٧]

Relate in the book (the story of) Mary,
 when she withdrew from her family to a
 place in the East. She placed a screen (to
 screen herself) from them; then We sent to
 her Our angel, and he appeared before her
 as a man in all respects. She said, 'I seek
 refuge from thee to (Allah) Most Gracious:
 (come not near) if thou dost fear Allah.' He
 said, 'Nay, I am only a Messenger from thy
 Lord, (to announce) to thee the gift of a holy
 son.' She said, 'How shall I have a son
 seeing that no man has touched me and I am
 not unchaste?' He said, 'So (it will be): thy
 Lord saith, 'That is easy for Me: and (We

constantly in a state of retreat in the mosque, and that she came from a devout family of Prophets. That was why she was extremely troubled that she wished she had died before that time or that she *"had been a thing forgotten and out of sight!"* meaning she wished she was never born at all.

(Maryam: 23)

Allah the Almighty says, *"But (a voice) cried to her from beneath the (palm tree),"* Mujahid and Al-Hasan state that it was her son, Jesus, peace be upon him, who called her, whereas As-Souddy, Qatadah and Ibn `Abbaas maintain that it was Gabriel, peace be upon him, who did and that the first time Jesus ever talked was in the presence of the people. *"Grieve not: for thy Lord hath provided a rivulet beneath thee;"* Ibn `Abbaas explains that the rivulet is actually a small river. Ibn Katheer maintains: And the majority of scholars agree with him, and that is the most likely interpretation, that *"and shake towards thyself the trunk of the palm tree;"* means resort to it for support *"the trunk of the palm tree;"* It is suggested that it was a dry palm tree; others think that it was a fruitful tree but it is most likely that the tree was not in its fruiting season. Therefore, it was out of Allah's Grace that Mary would find there food and water. *"It will let fall fresh ripe dates upon thee. So eat and drink and cool (thine) eye."* `Amr Ibn Maymoon once explicated this saying that no food is better for a woman undergoing her postnatal bleeding than dry dates and fresh ripe dates, then he recited this verse.

claim, has cursed and condemned, as Allah elsewhere says,

﴿وَيَكْفُرُهُمْ وَقَوْلُهُمْ عَلَى مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَنًا عَظِيمًا﴾

[النساء: ١٥٦] ﴿١٥٦﴾

"That they rejected Faith; that they uttered against Mary a grave false charge."

(Al Nisaa': 156)

Jesus, peace be upon him, said, ***"And He has made me blessed wheresoever I be,"*** because he calls on people to worship only Allah Who has no partner, to deem Him far from any defect and from having a wife nor a child. ***"And has enjoined on me Prayer and Charity as long as I live:"*** It is the duty of the people to perform their obligations towards Allah the Almighty the Praiseworthy by praying and by being charitable to people through paying the Zakah (obligatory charity). This purifies one's soul from vice and purifies one's money and riches by means of giving charity to the needy, who may fall under various categories. Then, he said, ***"(He) hath made me kind to my mother"*** Many a time has Allah, Exalted be He, linked the commandment to worship Him with that of being dutiful to one's parents. ***"And not overbearing or miserable;"*** i.e. I am not harsh or coarse. Some of the predecessors say, whoever is not dutiful to his or her parents is always a wretched tyrant.

﴿وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا﴾

[مریم: ٣٣] ﴿٣٣﴾

Nestorians, claim that Jesus is the son of Allah. Others still maintained that Jesus is the third party of the Trinity: Allah is a god, he is a god, and his mother is a god. They are the Israelites, kings of the Christians. Others believe, he is Allah's bondman, Messenger, spirit and word. This view is adopted by the Muslims.

Allah Almighty says,

﴿فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ مَّشْهَدِ
يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾ (٣٧) [مريم الآية: ٣٧]

*"and woe to the Unbelievers, because of the
(coming) Judgment of a momentous Day!"*

(Maryam. ٣٧)

This is a strong threat and an ultimatum to whoever ascribes false allegations to Allah claiming He has a son. Allah the Almighty has given them a deadline till the Day of Judgment out of patience and confidence in His ability to subdue them. Allah, Exalted be He, never hastens the punishment of those who disobey him. Thus, it was mentioned in the two authentic books that Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him, said,

"Allah gives respite to a "zalim" (polytheist, wrong-doer, oppressors, etc.) but when He seizes (catches) him, He never releases him."

Then Abu Musa, the narrator, may Allah be pleased with him, recited,

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ أَخْذُ رَبِّكَ إِذَا أَخَذَ الْقُرَىٰ وَهِيَ ظَالِمَةٌ إِنَّ أَخْذَهُ
أَلِيمٌ شَدِيدٌ﴾ (١٠٢) [هود: ١٠٢]

a son when He has no consort? He created all things, and He has full knowledge of all things. That is Allah, your Lord! There is no god but He, the Creator of all things; then worship ye Him; and He hath power to dispose of all affairs. No vision can grasp Him. But His grasp is over all vision: He is above all comprehension, yet is acquainted in all things."

(Al An`aam: 100-103)

Allah thus explains that He is the Creator of everything, He is Unique, and therefore can never have a child.

Allah the Almighty says, "Say,

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ﴾ [الإخلاص]

He is Allah, the One and Only;" i.e. Allah is peerless, "Allah, the Eternal, Absolute;" i.e. He is the Master Whose Knowledge, Wisdom and Mercy are perfect, "He begetteth not," i.e. He has no child, "Nor is He begotten;" i.e. He was not born, "And there is none like unto Him." meaning He has no equal, thus Allah can never have a child.

(Al Ikhlaas)

Allah the Almighty says,

Gospel.

Allah next says, "*And behold! Thou makest out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird by My leave. And thou breakest into it and it becometh a bird by My leave.*" That is to say Jesus managed, by Allah's leave, to shape clay into the form of birds and then breathed into it and it became a real bird. The phrase "*by My leave*" emphasizes the fact that he used to do those things only by the will and power of Allah.

Allah then says,

﴿إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ اذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ عَلَيَّ وَآلَدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدْتُكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَقْعِدِ وَكُنْتَ عَلَمًا إِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ إِذْ أَخَذْتُ مِنَ الطَّيْرِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ مَرَّأً بِإِذْنِي وَتَبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ عَنْكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِن هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١١٠﴾﴾ [المائدة: ١١٠]

"And thou healest those born blind and lepers by My leave. And behold! Thou bringest forth the dead by My leave. I did restrain the children of Israel from (violence to) thee when thou didst show them the Clear

﴿فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي
إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ
وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ (آل عمران: ٥٢)

"When Jesus found unbelief on their part, he said, 'Who will be my helper to (the works of) Allah?'"

(Ali `Imraan: 52).

That is to say when the Israelites insisted on disbelief and arrogance, Jesus said, "Who will follow me in the way of Allah?" By ***"helpers"***, Jesus meant the people who would help and support him to call people to the way of Allah, as it was the custom of Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, before the Hijra to address the pilgrims in the following manner: who will shelter me so that I can convey the message of my Lord, as Quraish has prevented me from doing so. This was his custom until he migrated to Madinah and Al-Ansaar gave him shelter, defended him, consoled and protected him against anyone who was to do him harm. By the same token, Jesus, the son of Mary, chose a company of the Israelites who believed in his message, helped and defended him, as well as followed the light which was sent down to him. In this respect, Allah says, ***"Said, the Disciples, 'We are Allah's helpers: We believe in Allah, and do thou bear witness that we are Muslims. Our Lord! We believe in what Thou hast revealed and we follow the Messenger; then write us down among those who bear witness.'"*** Ibn `Abbaas states: This is a reference to the nation of

لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبِيثَاتِ وَيَضَعُ
عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
فَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا
النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ مَعَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾
[سورة الأعراف، الآية: ١٥٧]

"Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet whom they find mentioned in their own (Scriptures), in the Law and the Gospel; for he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure); he releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them. So it is those who believe in him, honor him, help him, and follow the Light which is sent down with him, it is they who will prosper."

(Al A`raaf: 157)

Thus Jesus was the last Prophet sent to the Israelites. He gave them glad tidings about the seal of Prophets who would succeed him pointing out his name and attributes so that they might know him and follow his guidance.

ourselves may be witnesses to the miracle" i. e., we will bear witness that it is a Sign from Allah and a cogent argument of your Prophethood and that you are telling the truth.

When the disciples insisted to have their wish fulfilled, Jesus, peace be upon him, went to his place of worship, closed his eyes and burst into tears. He then raised his hands to the sky and humbly prayed to Allah to answer his prayers and send down the table spread for his disciples. In this respect, Allah the Almighty says, "*Said Jesus the son of Mary, " O Allah our Lord! Send us from heaven a table set (with viands), that there may be for us- for the first and the last of us – a solemn festival.*" As- Soudey states: It means that we will make that day a feast to be glorified by us and those who will succeed us. It may also mean, as some state, that the table will be enough for our first and our last. "*And a Sign from thee*" John Katheer explains: i.e., a clear proof of your power and might and of your answer to my prayers, so that they may believe in what I convey about You. "*And provide for our sustenance, for Thou art the Best Sustainer (of needs)*" meaning provide for us an easy food without discomfort or hardship. Allah then says, "*I will send it down unto you: But if any of you after that resisteth faith, I will punish him with a penalty such as I have not inflicted on any one among all the peoples*" i.e. in all times.

Allah then sent down a table spread from heaven and people watched it descending between two clouds. It kept on coming closer and closer, and as it was coming very close, Jesus, peace be upon him, prayed to his Lord

The Raising of Jesus to Heaven under Allah's Protection:

Allah the Almighty says,

﴿وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكِرِينَ
 (٥٤) إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَىٰ إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ
 وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ
 فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ
 مَرْجِعِكُمْ نَآحِكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ
 (٥٥) ۝ آل عمران: ٥٤-٥٥﴾

"And (the Unbelievers) plotted and planned, and Allah too planned, and the best of planners is Allah. Behold! Allah said, 'O Jesus! I will take thee and raise thee to Myself and clear thee (of the falsehoods) of those who blaspheme, I will make those who follow thee superior to those who reject faith, to Day of Resurrection: then shall ye all return to Me and I will Judge between you of the matter where in ye dispute.' "

(Ali `Imraan: 54-55)

Allah the Almighty also says in *Surah*, (Al Nisaa')

said to have been twelve, thirteen, or seventeen, and it was Friday afternoon.

Upon surrounding his house, Jesus felt their presence. As there was no way out, he said to his disciples, "Who amongst you will take my resemblance and be my companion in Paradise?" Thereupon a young man stood up, but Jesus thought he was too young. He repeated his question and the young boy stood up again. Jesus accepted him and Allah made him look exactly like Jesus. Then an opening in the ceiling was made to appear, and Jesus, peace be upon him, fell asleep and was raised up to heaven in such state. In this respect, Allah says,

﴿إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَىٰ إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ
وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ
فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ
مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا أُمِرْتُ بِهِ تَحْلِفُونَ﴾

[آل عمران: ٥٥]

"O Jesus! I will take thee and raise thee unto Myself!"

(Ali `Imraan: 55)

His disciples went out of the house in the still of the night. When the Jews spotted this young man, they thought he was Jesus. They crucified him and stuck thorns in his hand to further humiliate him. People who crucified Jesus, peace be upon him, thought they killed him. Many sects of the Christians accepted their claims out of ignorance and insensibility, with the exception of

years of age. Ibn Katheer states: It was reported that people will be admitted to Paradise beardless, hairless, looking at their best and at the age of thirty-three. According to a different narration, as young as Jesus and as handsome as Joseph. It was mentioned that Ibn `Abbaas said: When Jesus was raised up unto heaven, a cloud approached him till it was close enough for him to sit on. Mary bid him goodbye in tears. Then she watched him being raised up unto heaven. Jesus threw her his garment saying, "This will be our sign till Judgment Day." He threw his hood on Sham`oon. His mother kept waving her hand to him till he totally disappeared. She loved him dearly, as she offered him the love of both parents, because he had no father and she constantly kept him company.

Allah Almighty says

﴿وَإِنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَإِيْمَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ﴾
 وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا ﴿١٥٩﴾ [النساء: ١٥٩]

***"And there is one of the People of the Book
 but must believe in him before his death."***

(Al Nisaa': 159)

Al-Hasan, Qatadah and others explain: This means before the death of Jesus, peace be upon him. Allah has raised him up unto Himself and He will resurrect him before Judgment Day in such a manner that all believers and atheists will believe in him. Ibn Jareer explains: All People of the Book will believe in him before his death (i.e. before the death of Jesus).

give so much milk that a whole party would be able to drink it. The milch camel would give such (a large quantity of) milk that the whole tribe would be able to drink out of that and the milch sheep would give so much milk that the whole family would be able to drink out of that. At that time Allah would send a pleasant wind which would soothe (people) even under armpits and would take the life of every Muslim and only the wicked would survive who would commit adultery like asses and the Last Hour would come to them."

Imam Moslem narrated that a person came to `Abdulallaah Ibn `Amr Ibn Al-`Aas and said, "What is this *Hadith* that you narrated that the Last Hour would come at such and such time? Thereupon he said, "Glory be to Allah! There is no god but Allah. I decided that I would not narrate anything to anyone anymore. I only said that after some time you would witness an important event; the Sacred Mosque (Ka'bah), and so on..."

He then reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said: "*The Dajjal would appear in my Ummah (nation) and he would stay (on earth) for forty – I can not say whether he meant forty days , forty months or forty years. And Allah would then send Jesus son of Mary who would resemble ' Urwa Ibn Mas`ood. He (Jesus the Christ) would chase him and kill him. Then people would live for seven years that there would be no rancor between two persons. Then Allah would send cold wind from the side of Syria that none would survive upon the earth having a speck of good in him or faith in him but he would die, so much so that even if some amongst you were to enter the innermost part of the mountain, this*

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