

Jesus The Messiah: What Does Islam Say About Him?

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To a sincere seeker of wisdom...

Preface

It confers upon me and any Muslim in the world a great honor and privilege to write about one of the greatest messengers who walked on this earth.

My aim with this concise booklet is to briefly highlight the most important aspects of this great messenger of Allaah, Jesus the Messiah (peace and blessing be upon him), and the message with which he came.

I would like you, the respected reader, to know that throughout the booklet I will refer to Almighty God as 'Allaah'. Allaah is a unique name and an exclusive title that no one except Him has been called throughout history.

Abdullah

Prophethood: To Convey The Divine Message

Islam is a religion and a way of life in tune with the reason and logic endowed on us humans by our Creator. There is no mystery and no ambiguity in the final divine message that has been sent to all mankind.

"Allaah wishes to make clear (what is lawful and what is unlawful) to you, and to show you the ways of those before you, and accept your repentance, and Allaah is All-Knower, All-Wise. Allaah wishes to accept your repentance, but those who follow their lusts, wish that you (believers) should deviate tremendously away from the Right Path. Allaah wishes to lighten (the burden) for you; and man was created weak (cannot be patient to leave sexual intercourse with woman)." [An-Nisaa' (4):26-28]

Islam is the submission to the Creator of the heavens and earth by performing righteous deeds and avoiding prohibitive actions. A person who submits his will to the will of Allaah is therefore a Muslim:

"Whoever submits himself to Allaah, and is a doer of good, has grasped indeed the most trustworthy hand-hold: and with Allaah rests the end and decision of (all) affairs." [Luqman (31):22]

As Muslims, we believe in all the prophets of Allaah, as this is one of the six pillars of faith in our religion. The six pillars of faith are:

- 1.The belief in Allaah
- 2.The belief in His angels
- 3.The belief in His books
- 4.The belief in His prophets
- 5.The belief in the Day of Judgment.
6. The belief in Predestination, whether good or bad.

The Belief In The Prophets Of Allaah

Islam links us with all the noble prophets of Allaah since it is based on their pure teachings. Muslims believe in all the prophets of Allaah making no distinction in the belief towards them.

"The messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the believers. Each one (of them) believes in Allaah, His angels, His books, and His messengers. "We make no distinction (they say) between one and another of His messengers." And they say: "We hear, and we obey: (We seek) Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the end of all journeys." [Al-Baqarah (2):285]

Consequently it is a major sin in Islam to disbelieve in any of the prophets of Allaah: from Adam to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon them). It is with the concept of the unity of God and the unity of Prophethood that their religion is described as one, for they all called people to believe in One God, Allaah i.e. to devote worship sincerely to Him Alone (Monotheism). Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"The prophets are like brothers from one father; their mothers are different but their religion is one" [Bukhaaree (3443)].

With regards to laws, each of them had his own given law that was amenable and apt for a particular time and for a specific community to run their lives accordingly. Allaah says:

"To each among you, We have prescribed a law and a clear way."
[Al-Maa'idah (5):48]

Out of all the prophets of Allaah, Allaah (may He be exalted) has favored five prophets i.e. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and finally Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon them) referring to them as the messengers of great-will. This is in consideration to the enormity of the task and mission that Allaah had bestowed upon them:

"The same religion has He established for you (O Muhammad) as that which He enjoined on Noah – that which We have sent by inspiration to you - and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: Namely, that you should remain steadfast in religion, and make no divisions therein." [Ash-Shoorah (42):13]

The Virgin Mary

Jesus' mother, Mary (peace be upon her), received special attention in the noble Qur'aan even though all the prophets with the exception of Adam had mothers.

"And when the angels said: O Mary! Surely Allaah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the world."
[Aal-Imraan (3):42]

Interestingly, an entire chapter in the glorious Qur'aan is dedicated to, and named, after Mary (Chapter 19 'Maryam').

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him) has said:

"Mary is the best among the women during her time" [Bukhaaree (3531)].

Mary (peace be upon her), received the glad tidings that Allaah would bestow upon her a child, whom He would create with the word 'Be' and 'it is'.

"O Mary! Allaah gives you glad tidings of a word from Him: his name will be Jesus the Messiah, the son of Mary, held in honour in this world and the Hereafter and of (the company of) those nearest to Allaah. "He shall speak to the people the cradle and in maturity. And he shall be (of the company) of the righteous." [Aal-Imraan (3):45-46].

But then Mary replied surprisingly,

"My Lord! How can I have a child when no man has touched me?"
[Aal-Imraan (3):47]

The reply was:

"Even so (it will be), Allaah creates what He pleases; when He has decreed a matter, He only says to it, Be, and it is." [Aal-Imraan (3):47]

Therefore we believe that Jesus was born miraculously without any male intervention. Ibn Abbaas (a companion of Prophet Muhammad) narrates:

"When the signs of pregnancy appeared on her, with her was a righteous man from among her relatives who worshipped in the temple with her, he was called Joseph the carpenter. When he saw that her belly had become swollen he found it strange. Then he decided to think well of her because of what he knew of her innocence, honour, religious commitment and worship. But he could not stop thinking about this matter. So he said, speaking indirectly: "O Mary, I am going to ask you about something, so do not get alarmed." She said, "What is it?" He said: "Has any tree or plant ever grown without a seed? Has any child ever been born without a father?" She said: "Yes, I understand what you are referring to. As for whether any tree or plant has ever grown without a seed, when Allaah first created trees and plants He created them without seeds. And has any child ever been born without a father? Allaah created Adam without either a father or a mother." So he believed her and left her alone." [Ibn Katheer (3/117)]

Allaah is absolutely perfect in His powers of creation. He creates what He wills, how He wills, when He wills. He created Adam without a father or a mother, He has caused the descendents of Adam to have both a father and a mother, and He created Jesus from his mother without a father. Glory be to the All-Knowing Creator:

"The similitude of Jesus before Allaah is as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him: "Be". And he was. The Truth (comes) from Allaah alone; so be not of those who doubt." [Aal-Imraan (3):59-60]

The Status Of Jesus In Islam

His Miracles:

Mary (peace be upon her) gave birth to Jesus in the valley of Bethlehem, away from her people, after which she then returned. When they saw her with her new born child (Jesus), they said:

"O sister of Aaron! Your father was not a man of evil, nor was your mother an unchaste woman!" [Maryam (19):28]

She didn't say a single word but what she did instead was:

"Then she pointed to him. They said: How can we talk to one who is in the cradle, a young boy?" [Maryam (19):29]

Then came the first miracle of Jesus (peace be upon him), which astonished everyone:

"He said (as a child in the cradle): "I am indeed a servant of Allaah: He has given me revelation and made me a prophet; And He has made me blessed wheresoever I be, and has enjoined on me prayer and charity as long as I live; "(He) has made me kind to my mother, and not overbearing or miserable; So peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life (again)" [Maryam (19):30-33].

In the time of Jesus (peace be upon him), the son of Mary (may peace and blessings be upon both of them), the children of Israel were known for their knowledge of medicine. Consequently Jesus (peace be upon him) came with medical cures that could not be bettered by anyone in his time (indeed, up until today). He was supported by his Lord with great miracles and clear signs to prove he was a truthful messenger e.g. he gave life to the dead by Allaah's permission and he healed those born blind and the lepers by Allaah's permission.

"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 of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allaah's leave: And I heal those born blind, and the lepers, and I quicken the dead, by Allaah's leave; and I declare to you what you eat, and what you store in your houses. Surely therein is a Sign for you if you do believe." [Maryam (3):49]

His Message:

Allaah (may He be exalted) revealed to Jesus (peace be upon him) through the angel Gabriel:

"We gave Jesus the son of Mary clear (signs) and strengthened him with the holy spirit (i.e. angel Gabriel)." [Al-Bararah (2):253]

The Gospel to preach to his people with:

"And in their footsteps We sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the Law that had come before him: We sent him the Gospel: therein was guidance and light, and confirmation of the Law that had come before him: a guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allaah."
[Al-Maa'idah (5):46]

Jesus, the son of Mary, called his nation, as all the prophets did, to worship Allaah (alone). According to the noble Qur'aan, these were his words:

"I have come to you with a sign from your Lord. So fear Allaah, and obey me. It is Allaah Who is my Lord and your Lord; then worship Him. This is a way that is straight." [Aal-Imraan (3):50-51]

"Verily Allaah is my Lord and your Lord: Therefore serve Him: this is a way that is straight." [Maryam (19):36]

His Prophecy:

According to the Qur'aan, Jesus has foretold that a messenger would be sent from Allaah after him by saying:

"And Jesus, the son of Mary, said: "O Children of Israel! I am the messenger of Allaah (sent) to you, confirming the law (which came) before me, and giving glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name shall be 'Ahmad'". But when he came to them with Clear Signs, they said, "this is evident sorcery!" [As-Saff (61):6]

The names 'Muhammad' and 'Ahmad' are synonyms from the same root, which mean 'worthy of praise'.

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him) said:

"... I am Muhammad and Ahmad ..." [Bukhaaree (732)].

The Plot:

When a number of people had plotted to kill him, Allaah caused another man to look exactly like Jesus:

"And they plotted and planned, and Allaah too planned, and the best of planners is Allaah." [Aal-Imraan (3):54]

So consequently the soldiers arrested him, thinking that he was Jesus, and crucified him instead.

"That they said (in boast), "We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the messenger of Allaah," - but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not: - Nay, Allaah raised him up unto Himself; and Allaah is Exalted in Power, Wise." [An-Nisaa' (4):157-158]

Therefore Allaah saved his noble prophet, Jesus (peace be upon him) from this plot.

He Will Return:

One of the major signs that will precede the Day of Judgment is that Allaah will send down Jesus (peace be upon him) to this world. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said:

"Jesus will descend to Damascus, by the white minaret." [Abu Dawood (4/117)]

and he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) also said:

"By the One in Whose hand is my soul, the son of Mary will descend among you as a just judge." [Muslim (155)]

During this time, beneficial objectives shall be accomplished by him such as the spread of justice in this world.

His Eventual And Actual Death:

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"I am the closest of people to Jesus the son of Mary because there was no prophet between him and me..." [Ahmed (9349)]

Then he mentioned his descent at the end of time and followed this by saying:

"...And he will remain for as long as Allaah wills , then he will die and the Muslims will offer the funeral prayer for him and bury him." [Ahmad (9349)]

Final Remark:

Islam regards Jesus the Messiah as one of the most pious men to have walked on the earth:

"And Zechariah and John (the Baptist), and Jesus and Elias: all in the ranks of the righteous." [Al-An'aam (6):85]

Prophet Jesus, through Mary, is a descendant from a blessed and honoured family:

"Surely Allaah chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of Imraan (Mary's father) above the nations. Offspring one of the other; and Allaah is Hearing, Knowing."
[Aal-Imraan (3):33-34]

The Islamic teachings honour this mighty messenger of Allaah and the Muslims have not fallen short over the past fourteen centuries in doing the same. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"If anyone testifies that none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah alone who Has no partners, and that Muhammad is His servant and His apostle, and that Jesus is Allaah's servant and His apostle and His word which He bestowed on Mary and a spirit created by Him, and that Paradise is true, and Hell is true, Allaah will admit him into Paradise with the deeds which he had done even if those deeds were few" [Bukhaaree (644)]

Frequently Asked Questions

Below are answers to the five most commonly asked questions to Muslims:

[Q]: Why do Muslims use the word 'Allaah' and not God?

[A]: The Encyclopaedia of Britannica states under 'Allaah':

"The name's origin can be traced back to the earliest Semitic writings in which the word for god was Il or El, the latter being an Old Testament synonym for Yahweh. Allaah is the standard Arabic word for "God" and is used by Arab Christians as well as by Muslims".

We can also read in the English Bible edited by Rev C. I. Scofield, D.D (Page 28):

"Elohim, (sometimes El or Elah) ... is uni-plural noun formed from El- strength or the strong one, and ' Alah'...". **"Say: He is Allaah, the One and Only. Allaah the eternal, the absolute. He begets not, nor is He begotten, and there is none like unto Him."** [Qur'aan 112:1-5].

The term 'Allaah' is very significant since we know from the Bible that people were given titles 'God' and 'Lord', such as:

"just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear."
[1 Peter 3:6]

"Then the LORD said to Moses, "See, I make you as God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet." [Exodus 7:1]

"Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and he will be as a mouth for you and you will be as God to him" [Exodus 4:16]

"I said, "You are gods, And all of you are sons of the Most High." [Psalm 82:6].

Interestingly in Jesus' own language, Aramaic: God is 'Allaha', Jesus is 'Eesho' where in the Noble Qur'aan it's 'Eesa', and Mary is 'Maryam' (exactly how the noble Qur'aan mentions her name!) Please notice the similarities.

[Q]: What does Islam say about the Bible?

[A]: Muslims believe in all the Divine scriptures, but in their original form. Allaah (may He be exalted) sent a prophet as a Warner to each nation, and some of them with a scripture as a guidance for that particular nation only. The Suhuf (Scrolls) were brought by Abraham, the Tawrat (Torah) by Moses, the Zabur (Psalms) by David, and the Injil (Gospel) by Jesus (peace and blessing of Allaah be upon all of them). Finally, Allaah sent Muhammad (peace and blessing of Allaah be upon him) as the seal of all prophets and the Qur'aan as a guidance for all mankind, regardless of time and location.

"And verily, you (O Muhammad) are receiving the Qur'aan from the One, All-Wise, All-Knowing" [An-Naml (27):6]

In a study done by a former Christian, published on www.islamtomorrow.com, it is concluded that:

"Both the Bible and the Qur'aan have come to us by way of Almighty God, then through His angel Gabriel and then to the prophets (peace be upon them). However, when the next step comes into play (that of the human beings faithfully transmitting it on to others and future generations) we find out that Allaah has only preserved His Last and Final Revelation for all times. And He certainly did not need the humans to do that."

"Verily We: It is We Who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur'aan) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption)." [Al-Hijr (19):9]

The glorious Qur'aan is the 'Criterion' and the 'Quality Control' of all the previous scriptures.

"And unto you, We have revealed the Scripture with the truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it, and a watcher over it. So judge between them by that which Allaah has revealed, and follow not their desires away from the truth which has come unto you.."
[Al-Maa'idah (5):48]

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him said:

"If you do ask the people of the Scripture - as is inevitable - then consider what agrees with Allaah's Book (i.e The Qur'aan) and accept it, and whatever contradicts Allaah's book reject it [Al-Musannaf (6/112)]

[Q]: Why does Islam not deify Jesus?

[A]: The Qur'aan says:

"Say: O People of the Scripture! Come to an agreement between us and you: that we shall worship none but Allaah, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords beside Allaah. And if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him)." [Aal-Imran (3):64]

Interestingly, nowhere in the Bible did Jesus say in a clear and explicit passage that he is God and nowhere did he call his nation to worship him. Jesus (peace be upon him) said:

"It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only'" [Luke 4:8].

On the contrary, there are many passages undoubtedly proving he was not God, as apparent in the following points (please consider them carefully):

(i) God is all-knowing: "Would not God find this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart" [Psalms 44:21], "for the LORD is a God who knows" [1Samuel 2:3], and "He reveals deep and hidden things" [Daniel 2:22], but Jesus was not all-knowing: "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." [Mark 13:32] and "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].

(ii) God is immortal: "As surely as I live forever" [Deuteronomy 32:40], but Jesus was not immortal: "We believe that Jesus died" [1 Thessalonians 4:14].

(iii) God is all-wise: "the only wise God" [1 Timothy 1:17] and all-powerful: "I am the Almighty God" [Genesis 17:1], but Jesus: "grew in wisdom and stature" [Luke 2:52].

(iv) God has full authority: "For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God" [Deuteronomy 10:17], but

Jesus said: "I do nothing of my own authority" [John 8:28] and "By myself I can do nothing" [John 5:30].

(v) God can not be seen or heard "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live" [Exodus 33:20], "No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only" [John 1:18], "You have never heard his voice nor seen his face" [John 5:37] but Jesus was heard and seen by his people.

(vi) God said "I put to death and I bring to life" [Deuteronomy 32:39], but Jesus did not raise himself; he was raised by God: "and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead" [Romans 10:9].

(vii) God and Jesus had two different wills: "yet not My will, but Yours be done" [Luke 22:42], "Yet not as I will, but as you will" [Matthew 26:39], and "not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me" [John 6:38].

(viii) God is the 'Mighty One' and Jesus will be sitting at his right hand in the future "But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven" [Matthew 26:64].

(ix) God does not get tempted "For God cannot be tempted by evil" [James 1:13] but Jesus was: "The Temptation of Jesus" [Matthew 4:1-11].

(x) "God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man" [Numbers 23:19], but Jesus was a man and a son of man. Jesus said, referring to himself: "a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God" [John 8:40] and "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know" [Acts 2:22].

In addition to the above, Jesus (himself) said: "They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men. You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men." [Mark 7:7-8].

And please don't be misled by the 'miracles' you hear or read about claiming to be done in Jesus' name, as Jesus (himself) said : "Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" [Matthew 7:22-23].

Then, who is Jesus? The Bible says: "When God raised up his servant" [Acts 3:26], "has glorified his servant Jesus" [Acts 3:13], and "your holy servant Jesus" [Acts 4:27]. Therefore Jesus is the servant of God and His messenger: "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." [John 17:3].

Only through the last divine revelation (the Qur'aan), confusion can be removed and pure monotheism be restored. The Qur'aan tells us:

"Jesus the son of Mary was no more than a messenger; many were the messengers that passed away before him. His mother was a woman of truth. They had both to eat their (daily) food. See how Allaah made His signs clear to them; yet see in what ways they are deluded away from the truth!" [Al-Maai'dah (5):75]

and:

"Yet have they taken, besides Him, gods that can create nothing but are themselves created; that have no control of hurt or good to themselves; nor can they control death nor life nor resurrection." [Al-Furqan (25):3]

[Q]: Why don't Muslims believe that Jesus is the son of God?

[A]: The Qur'aan says:

"Such (was) Jesus the son of Mary: (it is) a statement of truth, about which they (vainly) dispute. It is not befitting to (the majesty of) Allaah that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him! When He determines a matter, He only says to it, "Be", and it is." [Maryam (19):34-36]

Interestingly, the Bible refers to many prophets and other people as sons and children of God: "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel is

My son, My firstborn." [Exodus 4:22] and "I will be his Father, and he shall be My son." [II Samuel 7:14]. According to the Bible, David is the 'begotten' son of God: "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You" [Psalms 2:7]. Therefore, we should not take the word 'son' literally. We can understand it to mean the beloved and the chosen one.

This rational argument is mentioned in the Qur'aan:

"The Originator of the heavens and the earth! How can He have a child, when there is for Him no consort, when He created all things and is Aware of all things?" [Al-An'am (6):101]

How can God have a son when he has no consort? He must have created Jesus, and then he would be a created god. A created God is not God; a created God has a beginning. But God has neither beginning nor end!

[Q]: Why does Islam not teach that Jesus died for our sins?

[A]: Islam teaches that all humans are innocent at birth (i.e. born sinless) and they become sinful only when they consciously commit a sin.

"Every soul is held in pledge for what it earned." [Al-Muddaththir (74):38]

"On the Day when every soul will come pleading for itself, and every soul will be repaid what it did, and they will not be wronged."
[An-Nahl (16):111]

"Whoever goes aright, for his own soul does he go aright; and whoever goes astray, to its detriment only does he go astray: nor can the bearer of a burden bear the burden of another, nor do We chastise until We raise a messenger." [Al-Israa' (17):15]

"Nay, is he not acquainted with what is in the Books of Moses - And of Abraham who fulfilled his engagements? - Namely, that no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another." [An-Najm (53):36-39]

The Bible says: "The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself" [Ezekiel 18:20], "Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor shall sons be put to death for their fathers; everyone shall be put to death for his own sin" [Deuteronomy 24:16], "But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge." [Jeremiah 31:30], and "The LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin" [2 Chronicles 25:4].

Children are born sinless and because of this Jesus said: "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." [Matthew 19:14]. Jesus, interestingly, told the Pharisees to: "go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice'" [Matthew 9:13]. Therefore, the doctrine of the 'original sin' and 'sacrifice' clearly seem to be a latter addition to the message of Jesus Christ, since it is inconsistent with several passages of the Bible and Jesus came not to abolish the law or the prophets [Matthew 5:17-18].

We all agree that Jesus (peace be upon him) was a righteous and a pious man and the Bible says that the wicked will take his place: "In the work of his own hands the wicked is snared" [Psalm 9:16], "The wicked is a ransom for the righteous, And the treacherous is in the place of the upright" [Proverbs 21:18], and "The righteous is delivered from trouble, But the wicked takes his place" [Proverbs 11:8].

Then, how can sin be forgiven? The Qur'aan tells us:

"And those who, having done an evil deed, or wronged their own souls, earnestly remember Allaah, and ask for forgiveness for their sins, - and who can forgive sins except Allaah? - and are never obstinate in persisting knowingly in (the wrong) they have done. For such the reward is forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens with rivers flowing underneath, - an eternal dwelling: How excellent a recompense for those who work (and strive)!" [Aal-Imraan (3):35-36]

"But seek the forgiveness of Allaah; for Allaah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful" [An-Nisaa' (4):106]

The Bible says : "But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die" [Ezekiel 18:21], "Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon" [Isaiah 55:6-7], and "If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" [2 Chronicles 7:14]. And so did Adam (peace be upon him): **"Then Adam received from his Lord words (of revelation), and He relented toward him. He is the relenting, the Merciful."** [Al-Baqarah (2):37].

Just a thought: If believing in a divine Jesus dying for the sins of the world is necessary in order to go Paradise, before and after him, then why is it not mentioned clearly in every single book of the Bible? Why was it not stated in

plain words by every single prophet to his nation? Why would this message be given in such a hidden and cryptic way? Why wouldn't Almighty God be clear on this issue considering that the consequences of not believing in it would lead to Hell? These questions are addressed because Almighty God, according to the Bible, had forgiven people for centuries before Jesus: "You forgave the iniquity of your people and covered all their sins." [Psalm 85:2], "Pardon, I pray, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your loving kindness, just as You also have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now" [Numbers 14:19], and "I have been blameless before him and have kept myself from sin. The LORD has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight" [Psalms 18:23-24].

A Journey Into Islam

I read with great interest the story of an Italian scientist, Dr. Emanuel (Mahdi) Gullo, who works in the UK. I was very delighted to meet him few years ago and I would like to take this opportunity to share with the respected reader a few passages from his story:

"I was raised as a Roman Catholic, although not a very typical one. I remember being a sort of a pain to priests because of too much enthusiasm and persistence in asking them plenty of questions, which they considered was the result of a sort of "lack of faith". I always wondered about the nature of God since I was very young, as young as 5, and also was very aware of His One-ness. My idea of God has always been of an all-encompassing Being above everything."

"I always found that the very best of my worship to God was by myself, in the silence, with nothing in between, and no middle men! I was slowly reaching the conclusion that the true religion was... simply no religion! Just a personal relationship with the Almighty."

"The encounter with Islam came through friendship with a few colleagues, during a research contract in a Chemistry Department in one of the University of London colleges. The thing that struck me the most was the way they treated each other and treated strangers. I was impressed with the commitment to their daily prayers, to their fasting in Ramadaan, fitting perfectly in their day of study or work and, strangely to me, in their jobs as people of Science!"

"The more I read the Gospels, the more I realised how the original Message in it was so much simpler than the doctrine I had been taught."

"Getting rid of the prejudice was the first stage, then came interacting with Muslims and starting reading about the true Islam, its true history and the true meaning behind all that devotion and discipline. Getting to know Islam was like uncovering the Truth which had been hidden from my eyes all my life; an authentic cover-up."

"In fact, as soon as all those things started to make sense in my mind and in my heart, I started hating Islam and the Muslims! Simply because everything pointed out the foolishness of the first 30 years of my life. For a couple of years I took any chance to put them and their religion in a bad light, and started living the most carefree party-ish lifestyle free from rules or consideration, probably because it was the opposite of what they represented, probably as a natural instinctive sign of rejection, or maybe, just maybe, because deep inside I knew it wouldn't last for long: I was in denial, but deep inside I knew something was about to change. Only later on I learned that this is a natural process most converts go through. It's the Truth that starts hurting."

"I remembered what Islam and Muslims were about, when I first met them, and how the encounter with them had already opened my eyes once. I remembered thinking to myself: "no matter how shocking the truth can be, no matter what I say or how I act, I know that I believe, I believe that Islam is the Truth". The Truth is right before our eyes, and as soon as a person open his eyes and his heart, without preconception and prejudice, it becomes as clear as reality is compared to a dream. The most beautiful thing was looking at my face in the mirror and smiling, being able to "recognise myself", at last, after a long time."

"When I went to a London Mosque to make my declaration of faith formally, I was impressed with their attitude ... I remember that there was no question that wasn't welcome, that there was no opinion of mine that wasn't valued and there was no pressure on me in doing or saying anything, and most of all I remember them being happy for me, selflessly, truly happy for me. Since then, every day I have been more enthusiastic about my choice and my life. I found inner peace, satisfaction with the true things that life offers, explanation to every single element of human perception, both emotionally and rationally. I found a great community living in true unity and true brotherhood as I never knew it before."

Last but certainly not least, I found perfect conciliation with being a full man of Science and a full believer in the One God, as the scientific miracles in the Qur'aan are still one of the big proofs to mankind hidden from the World. If only people just wanted to look, and see for themselves."

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