

A Question That Demands an Answer

Abd al-Masih



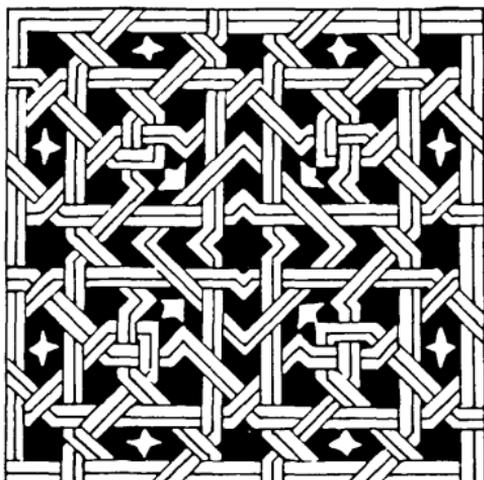
A Question That Demands an Answer

**A Summary
of an Actual Conversation**

Abd al-Masih

(Translated from the Arabic)

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Introduction

In our fast-paced age, the airlines have brought distant continents closer together. Many move freely among countries. We have become a “Global Village” – the daily output of books, television and radio programs has influenced the minds of all, sometimes causing confusion and frustration. The world is abuzz with all kinds of problems. Despite incredible advances in technology, the old question remains: What is eternal truth? If we listen to one another we can broaden our horizons and find an answer to this baffling question.



I

A THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTION

A servant of the Lord was allowed to visit a prison frequently in an Arab country; here he declared the way of life to the imprisoned criminals. He had a legal permit to visit all who wanted to hear the peaceful message of Truth which can purify the heart and change the mind. That man of God would enter the prison rooms without a watchman, refusing to be guarded. He believed that the prisoners would open themselves freely in an honest discussion only if they were not watched. He entered into their rooms boldly and sat with them privately.

Once, he entered into a room packed with hardened criminals who were sentenced for longer terms. They knew him from his previous visits and were accustomed to hearing his messages. After his visits, they discussed his messages for days with great enthusiasm.

When he visited them this time, they closed the door behind him suddenly, saying, "We will not let you go until you honestly answer our question." He replied: "I came to you voluntarily, without the company of an armed guard. I am ready to answer your questions from

the Word of God according to my knowledge. I cannot answer what I do not know." They said to him: "We do not ask you about the mysteries of the universe. We only ask you, as an upright man, to give us a clear answer to the comparison that has stirred us up: Who is greater, Muhammad or Christ?"

When the minister heard this question, he stopped a moment to take a breath, and said to himself: "If I say, 'Muhammad is greater,' the Christian prisoners may oppose or attack me. And if I say, 'Christ is greater,' the Muslim prisoners could attempt to kill me." He knew that an insult or a harsh word against Muhammad was considered an offense worthy of death. The man of God prayed in his heart, asking the Lord to grant him a wise and convincing answer to those prisoners. And the Holy Spirit guided this minister who stood alone among the prisoners, behind the closed doors, to humbly present a straight and clear answer.

When the servant of the Lord did not answer quickly, for he was praying silently, the prisoners urged him: "Do not dodge your responsibility. Do not be a coward. Tell us the truth. We promise that no harm will come to you, no matter what you say. Do not lie to us, nor conceal your inner thoughts on this subject. Tell us the whole truth."

The servant of God replied: "I am ready to tell you the real facts. The question you are confronting me with is not the lecture I have prepared for you. However, if you have decided to listen to a comparison between Muhammad and Christ, I will not conceal the truth from you. Anyway you should understand that I am not responsible for any negative outcome that could result from our study today. You are the ones responsible, for you have demanded that I should answer a question I neither raised nor intended to mention."

The minister continued: "I myself will not say who the greatest is. I will leave this decision to the Quran and the Islamic Traditions. They have already given a decisive and convincing answer. You may ponder what the Quran has to say about the hidden truth, and the truth shall set you free."



II

THE BIRTHS OF MUHAMMAD AND CHRIST

It is common knowledge that the father of Muhammad was Abdallah; and his mother, Amina. Muhammad was a man born of an acknowledged father and a respected mother. Neither the Quran nor Muslim scholars claim that Muhammad was born in a supernatural way. His birth was not announced by an angel, nor was he born by the Word of God. He was born in a natural way as we all are, from a human father and a human mother.

As for Christ, the Quran states several times that He was not born in the normal way, as we are. His Father was not a human being. He was conceived in the Virgin Mary without the interference of a human father, for Allah breathed His spirit into her. This makes Christ – exclusively – the only one in the whole world who was born of the Word of God and His spirit.

Truly, the Messiah, Isa, Son of Mariam, the ambassador of Allah, is His word that He bestowed upon Mariam; and He is Spirit of Him (Women 4:171).

«إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرَوْحٌ مِنْهُ» (النساء ٤: ١٧١).

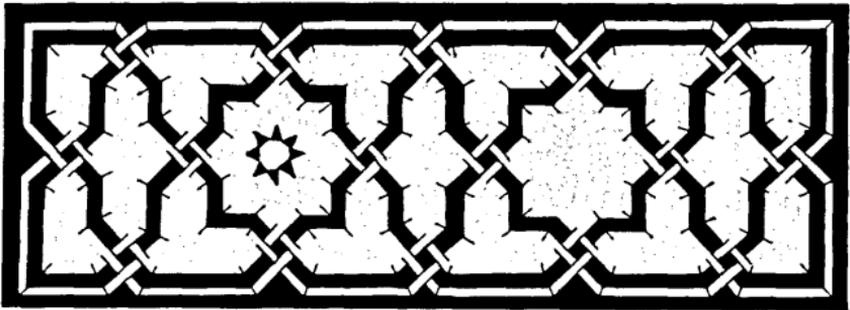
We breathed in her of our Spirit (The Prophets 21:91).

«فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا» (الأنبياء ٢١:٩١).

We breathed in Him of our Spirit (The Forbidding 66:12).

«فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِنَا» (التحریم ١٢:٦٦).

Christ is not a usual man, but the divine Spirit incarnated in human flesh. Thus He was born of the Spirit of God and the Virgin Mary. In contrast, Muhammad was born of a father and a mother, like all humans. He was not born of the Spirit of God.



III

THE DIVINE PROMISES ABOUT MUHAMMAD AND CHRIST

We will recite from the Quran the divine promises to Mary (Mariam) about Christ who was to be born to her:

“O Mariam, Allah gives you good tidings of ‘a Word from Him’ whose name shall be the Messiah, Isa, the son of Mariam, highly honored in this world and the next; and he shall be one of those brought near ‘to Allah’” (The House of Imran 3:45).

«يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ» (آل عمران ٤٥:٣).

The Most High Himself evangelized Mary and informed her personally about the birth of Christ, calling Him “A Word from Him.” All the prophets heard the Word of God and transcribed it sincerely. As for Christ, He not only heard the inspired Word, He Himself was the incarnation of the divine Word. In Him dwelt the full authority of the Word of God, with all its creative, healing, forgiving, comforting and renewing power. Regarding this unique fact, Allah foretold the birth of Christ

to Mary personally, confirming to her the reality of that great miracle.

We cannot read in the Quran that Muhammad was the incarnate Word of God. He only heard the Word of God from an angel and recited it to his listeners. God did not announce the birth of Muhammad to his mother; neither was the spirit of God breathed into her. On the other hand, Mary personally faced the Angel Gabriel, who was sent of God to kindly explain to her the work of the Holy Spirit in her. She is the only one chosen among all women, as the Quran states:

“O Mariam, God has chosen you and purified you; He has chosen you above all women” (The House of Imran 3:42).

«يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَأَصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ»
(آل عمران ٤٢:٣).

The name of Mary (Mariam) is repeated 34 times in the Quran; in contrast, the name of Muhammad's mother is never mentioned in the Quran – not even once. When Muhammad requested forgiveness for her after she had died, Allah stopped him; this made him weep bitterly.

IV

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF MUHAMMAD AND CHRIST

It is said that when Muhammad was a child, two angels came and purified his heart. Muslim scholars support this story following the Quranic verse:

“Did we not open (expand) your breast and take out from you your burden (*wizr*), that weighed down your back?” (The Expanding 94:1-3).

«أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ وَوَضَعْنَا عَنكَ وِزْرَكَ الَّذِي أَنقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ» (الشرح ٩٤:١-٣).

From that time on, Muhammad assumed the honorable title *al-Mustafa*, “The Chosen One.” He was not pure and righteous in himself, for the two angels had to lift up the burden from his heart to purify him. Muhammad needed “heart surgery” to be purified and to become a prophet and messenger of Allah.

On the other hand, we read in the Quran that the Son of Mary would be “most pure” from the moment of His birth; the angel said to her:

“I am but a messenger from your Lord, to give you a boy most pure” (Mary 19:19).

«إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا» (مریم ۱۹:۱۹).

The Muslim scholars al-Tabari, al-Baidawi, and al-Zamakhshari agreed that the expression “most pure” means blameless, guiltless and sinless. Before Christ was born, divine inspiration declared that the one who was to be born out of the spirit of God would always live pure, without a single sin. There was no need to purify His heart, for He was holy in Himself. The Son of Mary did not hear the Word of God only; He was it. There was no difference between His actions and His words. He remained blameless and without sin.

The Quran testifies several times that certain prophets committed specific sins – except Christ, who lived always blameless and pure. The Spirit of God kept Him, from His birth, in perfect holiness, despite the fact that He was human. He did not fall into temptation because He was the Spirit of God incarnate.

Muhammad confesses openly three times in the Quran that he had to ask for the forgiveness of Allah:

“Ask forgiveness for your sin and praise your Lord at evening and at dawn” (The Believer 40:55).

«وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لِدُنُوبِكُمْ وَسَبِّحِ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ»
(المؤمن ٤٠:٥٥).

“Ask forgiveness for your sin, and for the believers, men and women. God knows your goings to and fro, and your lodging” (Muhammad 47:19).

«وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لِدُنُوبِكُمْ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ» (محمد ٤٧:١٩).

“We granted you a clear victory, to forgive your sins from the past and in the future” (Victory 48:1-2).

«إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُبِينًا لِيُغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ» (الفتح ٤٨:١، ٢).

Some Muslims refuse to accept these verses which the Quran clearly reveals in its pages. Others try to explain the truth away.

Muhammad was a normal man, born of two parents. He lived a natural life and sinned as we sin. He asked Allah for the forgiveness of his sins. Christ, however, was born of the Spirit of God; He was the Word of God incarnate, living purely and in holiness from His birth.

V

THE INSPIRATION OF MUHAMMAD AND CHRIST

Muhammad claimed to have received his inspiration through the Angel Gabriel, the faithful spirit. It is mentioned in many Traditions that whenever the inspiration came upon him, Muhammad went into a semi-coma. In the book *al-Rewayah*, it is mentioned that he changed from his normal state and looked like a drunkard, almost passing out. Some Muslim scholars said that he was taken out of this world. Abu Huraira said, "When inspiration came down on Muhammad, he was stricken with dread." In the book *al-Rewayah*, it is written: "Depression showed on his face, and his eyes sank. Sometimes he fell into a deep sleep." Omar b. al-Khattab said, "When the inspiration came upon him, a noise like the humming of bees could be heard around his face." Muhammad was asked how he received the inspiration; he answered: "Sometimes it comes upon me like the ringing of bells, which is the hardest form of inspiration for me; and when I come through, I remember what was said."

Muslim scholars agreed that Muhammad “felt heavy every time the inspiration came upon him; his forehead dripped with cold sweat; sometimes he fell into a deep sleep, with his eyes turning red.” Zaid b. Thabit said: “When the inspiration came down upon Muhammad, he himself became heavier. One time, his thigh fell against my thigh, and I swear to God, I have never found anything that was heavier than the thigh of Muhammad. Whenever the inspiration came upon him, while he was on his camel, it limped, and its leg was thought to be broken; and sometimes it squatted” (*Mastery in the Quranic Sciences*, by al-Soyouti; 1:45-46). According to Muslim scholars and their testimonies, Allah did not speak to Muhammad directly but dealt with him only through the Angel Gabriel. Allah remained far away from him, even at the time of the inspiration.

In contrast, God never sent the Angel Gabriel to Christ, and Christ never received inspiration through a third party. He Himself was the Truth incarnate (Mary 19:34), the eternal Word of God, and a Spirit from Him, from within God, full of knowledge of His will. If anyone wants to study the will of God in depth, he should study the life of Christ carefully, for He is the incarnate will of the Almighty. The Quran tells us further that Allah Himself taught Christ the Book, wisdom, the Torah and the Gospel, before His incarnation:

“And He will teach Him the Book, the Wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel” (House of Imran 3:48).

«وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ»

(آل عمران ٣: ٤٨).

Christ knows all the secrets of heaven and earth, because Allah told Him all that had been written in the Heavenly Book (*al-Lauh al-Mahfudh*), including the whole Torah, The Wisdom of Solomon and the Gospel. So Christ was full with the Word of God. He did not speak anything but the words of God. According to the Quran, He uttered words of comfort and guidance to His mother, immediately after His birth, like an adult:

“But the one that was below her called to her, ‘Do not be sorrowful; see, your Lord has set below you a great person. Shake the palm-trunk, and there shall come tumbling around you dates fresh and ripe. Eat therefore, and drink, and be comforted; and if you see anyone, say: ‘I have vowed to the All-Merciful a fast. Today I will not speak to any man’” (Mary 19:24-26).

«فَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا وَهُزِّي إِلَيْكِ بِجِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطُ عَلَيْكَ رَطْبًا جَنِيًّا فَكُلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا فَمَاذَا تَرَيْنَ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا» (مریم ١٩: ٢٤-٢٦).

According to the Quran, Christ spoke the words of God when He was still an infant. He did not need an angel or middle-man, because He is the Word of God and His Spirit. For this reason, the power of God worked in the Son of Mary, creating, healing, forgiving, comforting and regenerating.

The conclusion of the inspiration to Muhammad in the Quran and the Traditions was summed up in the Sharia (Islamic Law), which contains all the divine commands and prohibitions. The final form of the inspiration to Muhammad took shape as “books”: the Quran and the Traditions, which are summarized in the Sharia.

The inspiration of Christ is “His own self.” His Gospel is not a law but the revelation of His life, the description of His Person. Moreover, Christ granted His followers the power of the Holy Spirit, so that they can fulfill His commandments. His disciples do not believe in a book or a religion primarily, neither do they live under a law; much more, they believe in a person. They hang on to Christ tightly, personally and follow Him. Christ is the very inspiration of God.



VI

THE SIGNS OF MUHAMMAD AND CHRIST

Muslim scholars claim that the miracles Allah granted to Muhammad were the verses of the Quran in the Suras. Therefore, the wonders of Muhammad were not deeds but words.

The Quran testifies on behalf of Jesus, describing His unique works and supreme acts of healing. Christ did not curse His enemies, nor did He behave as a tyrant. He revealed Himself as the fountain of kindness and the source of love and mercy. The power of God emanated from Him by the many wonderful signs that He performed.

The Blessed, Greatest Physician

The Quran confirms that Christ healed blind men without surgical procedures or medicine. He healed them by uttering powerful words. His word proved to have healing power – then as well as now. Christ says according to the Quran:

“He made me blessed wherever I shall be,” (Mary 19:31).

«وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ» (مریم ۱۹:۳۱).

He is the true fountain of blessing to all people in all ages (The House of Imran 3:49; The Table 5:110).

The Son of Mary did not fear those afflicted with leprosy, but touched their ailing skin and healed them with His purifying Word. Christ is the greatest Physician of all times. He loved the poor and received the sick. He created hope and faith in them. He healed every sick person that was presented to Him.

He Raised the Dead

One of the greatest wonders of Christ was that He raised the dead; this is confirmed in the Quran as well as in the Gospel. He raised a young girl, a young man, and an adult from the dead. Who can raise the dead but God alone! It is of utmost importance for us to grasp the depth of the meaning in several Quranic verses that declare the undeniable fact that Christ raised the dead repeatedly (The House of Imran 3:49; The Table 5:110).

Some superficial critics say that the Son of Mary was not able to perform miracles on His own, but that it was God who strengthened Him through the Spirit of the Holy, enabling Him to accomplish the different wonders. They base their claim on the following Quranic verses:

“We gave Isa the son of Mariam the clear signs, and strengthened Him with the Spirit of the Holy” (The Cow 2:87).

«وَأَتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ»
(البقرة ٢: ٨٧).

“Those Messengers, we have preferred some above others; some there are to whom Allah spoke, and some He raised in rank, and we gave Isa, the Son of Mariam, clear signs and strengthened Him with the Spirit of the Holy” (The Cow 2:253).

«تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ» (البقرة ٢: ٢٥٣).

“When Allah said, Isa Son of Mariam, remember My blessing upon you and upon your mother, when I strengthened you with the Spirit of the Holy, to speak to men in the cradle, and as an adult; and when I taught you the Book, the Wisdom, the Torah, the Gospel; and when you created the likeness of a bird out of clay, by My leave; then you breathed in it, then it was a (real) bird, by my leave; and you healed the blind and the leper by

My allowance, and you raised the dead by My allowance'...And the unbelievers among them said, 'This is nothing but sorcery manifest'" (The Table 5:110).

«إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ اذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى
وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدتُّكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا
وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَإِذْ مَخَّلَقُ مِنْ
الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنْفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتُبْرِئُ
الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي
إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنْكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنْ
هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ» (المائدة ٥: ١١٠).

What a surprise! The Quran testifies repeatedly to the perfect cooperation among Allah, the Christ and the Holy Spirit. The three cooperated in a complete unity, performing the miracles of Christ together. Christians, too, believe in the cooperative action of the Holy Trinity.

The Young Creator

We read in the Quran – not in the Gospel – that Jesus, as a boy, formed from clay the likeness of a bird, and breathed into it; then it became a living bird, flying in the sky:

“I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, I will create for you out of clay as the likeness of a

bird; then I will breathe into it, and it will be a bird by the allowance of God. I will also heal the blind and the leper, and bring to life the dead by the allowance of God" (The House of Imran 3:49).

«أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ» (آل عمران ٤٩:٣).

In this verse, we find the unique phrase, "I will create for you," which indicates that Christ is the able Creator. A human can neither create something out of nothing, nor breathe life into something that was lifeless.

The Quran testifies to the ability of Christ to give life by His quickening breath. He breathed into a clay bird and it became a living bird, exactly as God breathed into Adam earlier. This means that Christ has a life-giving Spirit in Himself; He is capable of breathing life into lifeless clay.

The Kind Provider

The multitudes in Palestine noticed the unlimited ability of the Son of Mary and followed Him, even into the desert, disregarding the time and ignoring difficult circumstances. They listened to Him until dark. The Quran testifies that Christ provided a table of food,

which He brought down from heaven to satisfy the crowd in the desert:

“The Apostles said, O Isa the Son of Mary, is your Lord able to send down on us a Table out of heaven?’ He said, ‘Fear God, if you are believers.’ They said, ‘We desire that we should eat of it and our hearts be at rest; and that we may know that you have spoken true to us, and that we may be among its witnesses.’ Said Isa the Son of Mary, ‘O God, our Lord, send down upon us a Table out of heaven, that shall be for us a festival, the first and last of us, and a sign from you. And provide for us; You are the best of providers.’ Allah said, ‘Truly I will send it down on you. Whoever of you afterwards will disbelieve, I shall chastise him with a chastisement with which I chastise no other being’” (The Table 5:112-115).

«إِذْ قَالَ الْخَوَارِثُونَ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَّقْتَنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيداً لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً مِنْكَ وَآرْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مُنزِلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بَعْدُ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنِّي أُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَاباً لَا أُعَذِّبُهُ أَحَداً مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ» (المائدة 5: 112-115).

Muslim scholars have discussed from all angles the quantity and quality of the food provided on that table in the desert, rather than examining the Person who provided it. According to the Gospel, Christ used five loaves of bread and two fish, gave thanks, and with these articles fed five thousand men, besides the women and children. In this He demonstrated His unlimited authority as Creator in a practical way. Christ never uttered empty words; He did what He taught and manifested His will and love through great and mighty miracles.

The Revealer of Secrets

In the Quran, Muhammad declares:

“I do not say to you that I possess the treasures of God. I know not the unseen” (Cattle 6:50).

«لَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ» (الأنعام:٦٠٠).

But with Christ, the case is different. Muhammad pointed at Jesus Christ and said that He is the one who knows the secrets of men and sees the unseen; these abilities are reserved for God alone. Muhammad quotes Christ in the Quran:

“I will inform you of what you eat, and what you treasure up in your houses. Surely in that is a sign

for you, if you are believers” (House of Imran 3:49).

«وَأَنْبِئِكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ» (آل عمران ٤٩:٣).

Muhammad described the capacity of Christ as the All-knowing, in order to reproach and to warn some of his egotistic followers. He was disgusted with some of his Muslims from Medina because they had hidden food and treasures in their homes, refusing to share all their fortune with the immigrants from Mecca. So he warned them that Christ would come back soon as a Judge, to rule on the Day of Judgement. Muhammad confessed that Christ would know all that they had done in the privacy of their homes. He would know not only what they had eaten, but also what they had hidden. There would be no escape from His eyes on the Judgement Day. There is hardly a greater proof or better admission on the part of Muhammad for the deity of Christ than this one. He confessed that Christ knows the hidden truth and can read the secrets in the hearts of men. He knows all your secrecies in detail. He will manifest your deeds whether good or evil, for He is the All-knowing. No one can hide anything from Him.



The Wise Legislator

We read in the Quran that Christ permitted His followers what was forbidden under the Law of Moses. Christ did not force them to fulfill all the orders of Moses. In the Gospel, Christ made it clear that all the food which enters the stomach does not defile us; it is the thoughts that come out of our hearts that make us unclean: "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts: murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, blasphemy" (Matthew 15:19). Christ revealed a legislative revolution, for He was the divine Lawgiver and Legislator who assumed the right and authority to perfect and complete the Law. The Quran confirms this unique privilege of Christ; that He was not subject to the Law, but rules above it and perfects it. Moses, all the prophets, and everyone else in the Old Testament lived under the Law. They were expected to fulfill the Law, but Christ had the authority and the power to perfect and complete it. For this reason, He declares in the Quran:

"I came confirming what is in my hands from the Torah, and to permit you some of what had been forbidden to you" (House of Imran 3:50).

«وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيِّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَلِأَجَلٍ لَّكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ» (آل عمران ٣: ٥٠).

In the Gospel, Christ says: "You have heard that it has been said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth...' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you..." (Matthew 5:38-44).

The Renewer of Hearts and Minds

Blessed is he who realizes that Christ is not merely an ordinary human or a mere prophet but the divine Legislator with the authority of God. Muhammad, however, was commanded by the angel to seek the counsel of the people of the Book, so that he could understand the meaning of the revelation given to him:

"If you are in doubt concerning that which we have sent down to you, ask those who have been reading the Book before you" (Jonah 10:94).

«فَإِنْ كُنْتَ فِي شَكٍّ مِمَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ فَاسْأَلِ الَّذِينَ يُقْرَأُونَ
الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ» (يونس ١٠:٩٤).

Christ did not need to ask the teachers of the Old Testament about the mysteries of the Law of Moses, neither did He require details of its message, for He Himself was the Word of God and the Legislator of the Law. Christ was actually the Law incarnate. He has the

right that obedience be paid to Him. The Quran quotes Christ as having said:

“Fear God, and obey me” (House of Imran 3:50).

«فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ» (آل عمران ٥٠:٣).

All men, Hindus, Jews, Muslims and Christians, should study the Gospel carefully, keep it by heart, and follow Christ in all aspects of their lives. Christ has the right and authority to demand obedience from every individual!

Christ did not lead His disciples to God only, He called them to follow Him and to apply His teachings. For this reason, the Quran portrays the followers of Christ with the best of descriptions, such as: Helpers of God, believers, Muslims, His followers and martyrs (The House of Imran 3:52-53). We read of His followers in the Quran:

“We sent finally Isa, the Son of Mariam, and entrusted to Him the Gospel. And We inserted into the hearts of those who follow Him compassion and mercy” (The Iron 57:27).

«مَّمَّ قَفَيْنَا عَلَى آثَارِهِمْ بَرُسُلِنَا وَقَفَيْنَا بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَأَتَيْنَاهُ
الْإِنْجِيلَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَرَحْمَةً»

(الحديد ٥٧:٢٧).

In the Quran, Allah says:

“O Isa I will cause you to die, and will raise you up to Me, and will purify you of those who believe not. I will set your followers above the unbelievers till the Resurrection Day. Then to Me shall you return” (House of Imran 3:55).

«يَا عِيسَىٰ إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ» (آل عمران ٣:٥٥).

These Quranic verses state that the true followers of Jesus are a higher, special, and distinct class of people. They are humble, not wanting to boast or become big. Muhammad declared:

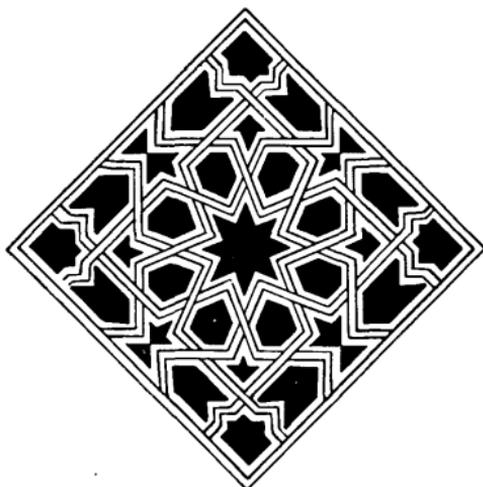
“You will surely find the nearest of them in sympathy to the believers are those who say, ‘We are Christians,’ because some of them are priests and monks, and they do not want to become proud” (The Table 5:82).

«وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُمْ مَوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَىٰ
ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ مِنْهُمْ قِسِّيِينَ وَرُهْبَانًا وَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ»
(المائدة ٥:٨٢).

The Quranic testimonies point to the greatest miracle of Christ, showing His ability to silently cause political and social changes without war or deception. He re-

news and converts disobedient sinners, changing them from egoists to loving people, from boasting chiefs to humble servants of God. Christ Himself confessed that He did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28).

Everyone who compares the wonders of Muhammad with the wonders of Christ discovers that the signs of Muhammad were only words, whereas the signs of Christ were miracles manifested in His works of love and deeds of mercy.



VII

THE DEATHS OF MUHAMMAD AND CHRIST

Ibn Hisham reported in his biography about the Prophet that Muhammad died after suffering from a high fever. Prior to his death, Muhammad claimed that the poison of the Jews had broken his heart. When a Jewish slave-woman laced his food with poison, a guest who was eating with him died! Muhammad himself sensed the poisoned food and spat out what was in his mouth before swallowing it. However, his body absorbed some of the poison, and that is what eventually caused his death.

The death of Christ, however, was clearly prophesied in the Quran, fulfilling the plan of God as a blessing for all men. In the Quran, the Almighty speaks directly to Jesus:

“I will cause you to die, and raise you up to Me”
(The House of Imran 3:55).

«إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ» (آل عمران 3:55).

Even though this quotation is not written in the Gospel, it proves that Christ, according to the Quran, was

not killed accidentally, but died in accordance with the will of God, in peace.

The Quran does not deny the historical death of Christ as some unbelievers claim, for we read the prophecy which Christ uttered about His own death, in Sura Mariam 19:33:

“Peace be upon me, the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I am raised up alive.”

«وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا»

(مریم ۱۹:۳۳).

This great confession of the Quran confirms that Christ was born, died and rose from the grave. With this declaration, Muhammad supported the teachings of the Gospel. Everyone who believes in the sequence of this historical event shall live with Him who is alive now and for evermore!

When Christ returns to this earth, He will never die again. He did not indicate in Sura Mariam that He would die in the distant future but in a near future, after His birth and lifetime. The Quran testifies that Christ was born, that He died, and that He rose again in a sequential chain of events. Christians are certain about the historicity of the death and resurrection of the Son of Mary.

Christ died voluntarily and in perfect peace. We read this in the Gospel and in the Quran. Christ knew how He would die beforehand. He even appointed the day and the hour of His own death to coincide with the festivities of the Passover, according to the Law of Moses. He revealed that He would die as an atonement, saving all who believe in Him from their sins and the everlasting fire. All people die because they have sinned, but Christ never sinned. The Quran affirms this several times. Christ did not die for His own sins but took our sins upon Himself and died instead of us. There is a divine peace and a significance that surrounds His death, according to Sura Mariam, for He, the Lamb of God, carried the sins of the world away in His great love.



VIII

MUHAMMAD AND CHRIST, AFTER THEIR DEATHS

Muhammad was buried in Medina, and his grave is still there to this day. Muslims believe that his soul is in an intermediate place for the dead (*Barzakh*), awaiting the Day of Judgement.

We read in the Quran that God raised Christ to Himself, promising Him:

“O Isa, I will cause you to die, and will raise you up to Me” (The House of Imran 3:55).

«يَا عِيسَىٰ إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ» (آل عمران ٣: ٥٥).

This promise is confirmed in the Quran as a fulfilled fact:

“Allah raised Him up to Himself” (Women 4:158).

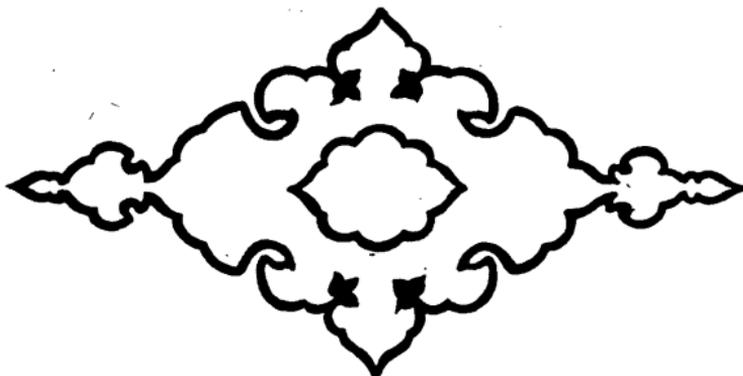
«رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ» (النساء ٤: ١٥٨).

In other words, God called the Son of Mary out of the grave and raised Him up to Himself. He now lives near God, being honored highly on earth and in eternity. The Quran testifies:

“O Mariam, God gives you good tidings of a Word from Him whose name is the Messiah, Isa, the Son of Mary; highly honored, in this world and the next, and brought near to Allah” (The House of Imran 3:45).

«يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ»
(آل عمران ٤٥:٣).

The grave of Christ is empty, for He indeed has risen, as He proclaimed beforehand. But the remains of Muhammad are still in his grave. Christ lives. Muhammad is dead; he has never been resurrected from the grave, neither has he risen up to heaven. There is an unbridgeable difference between life and death. As life is greater than death, so Jesus is greater than Muhammad. Jesus is eternal life in person. The Quran itself clearly portrays the living Christ for all who search after eternal life.



IX

THE PEACE OF MUHAMMAD AND CHRIST

All Muslims pray every time they mention the name Muhammad:

“May Allah pray over him and grant him peace.”

«صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ»

Their prayer indicates that the peace of Allah has not yet come to Muhammad, even though his followers have prayed for him all these centuries! Muhammad is the prophet who constantly needs the intercession of his people, instead of the other way around. The Quran testifies that Allah Himself, all angels and all Muslims, should pray fervently for Muhammad, in order to save him on the Day of Judgement:

“Truly Allah and his angels pray for the Prophet. O you who believe pray for him and greet him with the greeting of peace” (The Confederates 33:56).

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا» (الأحزاب ٥٦:٣٣).

In Sura Mariam, Christ testifies: "Peace be upon me, the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I am raised from the dead." The Son of Mary is the Prince of Peace who lived His earthly life at peace with God from beginning to end. Nothing separated Him from His eternal blessing.

The birth of Christ from the Virgin Mary happened according to the will and the power of God. He was born without sin. The real peace of God rested upon Him from the beginning of His life. In evidence of this fact, the heavens opened and the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests" (Luke 2:14).

Christ died a real death. He did not die for His own sin, but as a substitute for our sins. Even in His death, Christ experienced peace with God. People die because of their loathsome sins, "for the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). But God was highly pleased when Christ died, because His substitutionary death has reconciled Him with mankind. Therefore the peace of God presided over the death of Christ.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the greatest proof of His holiness. If Christ had committed only a single sin during His whole lifetime, death would have found legitimate power over Him and would have

kept Him in its grip, as has happened with Muhammad. But Christ never committed a single sin, big or small! For this reason, He has overcome death and has arisen as a victor from the dark power. Christ is alive – Muhammad is dead! All the Muslims confess this reality when they mention the name of Christ, saying:

“Peace is upon Him.” «عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام»

They know well and testify that He lives in full peace with God.

Muhammad experienced bitter persecution in Mecca, but when he became politically and socially powerful, he launched severe attacks and bloody wars against his enemies. He sometimes became intolerant and unforgiving. In the Quran, he commands more than sixteen times that his enemies, all unbelievers, and those who have slipped away from Islam should be killed:

“Kill them wherever you come upon them. Expel them from where they expelled you; sedition is more grievous than slaying. Fight them not by the Holy Mosque until they should fight you there; then, if they fight you, kill them; such is the recompense of the unbelievers” (The Cow 2:191).

«وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ
وَأَلْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنْ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا تَقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتَّى
يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ فَإِنْ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ
الْكَافِرِينَ» (البقرة ٢: ١٩١).

“Take not to yourselves friends of them, until they emigrate in the way of God; then if they turn away seize them and kill them wherever you find them and take no friend nor helper from among them” (Women 4:89).

«فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّى يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ
تَوَلَّوْا فَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ
وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا» (النساء ٤: ٨٩).

“Fight them, till there is no persecution, and the religion is Allah's entirely” (Spoils 8:39).

«وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ»

(الأنفال ٨: ٣٩).

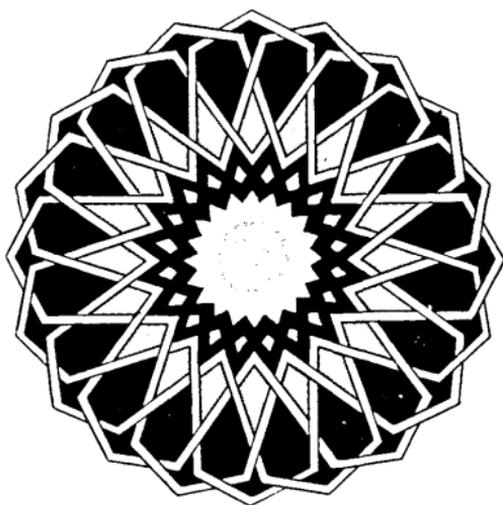
“When the sacred months are drawn away, slay the idolators wherever you find them, and take them, and confine them, and lie in wait for them at every place of ambush” (Repentance 9:5).

«فَإِذَا أُنْسِلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرْمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ
وَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَحْضِرُوهُمْ وَأَقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصِدٍ» (التوبة ٩: ٥).

Muhammad did not bring peace to the world, but many wars. He sent his followers into raids and holy wars more than thirty times. He himself participated in such attacks and expeditions twenty-nine times. He commanded his people to shed the blood of his enemies. He was the example of the believers and the political leader of the Arabian peninsula.

As for the gentle and humble Christ, the Jews persecuted Him violently, but He did not defend Himself with the sword. He forbade His followers to shed the blood of His enemies, commanding Peter: "Put your sword into its place, for all who take the sword shall perish by the sword" (Matthew 26:52). Any Christian who fights for the spread of Christianity with deadly weapons, shedding the blood of other people, is violating the will of God; he will be judged as disobedient of the commands of the Prince of Peace. Muslims, however, are promised that whoever shall die in a holy war will ascend immediately to paradise. Christ is the only one who has established real peace without fighting and killing. Muhammad made it the duty of every Muslim to fight against his enemies. (See also Sura Women 4:95,96; Salvation 25:52.) Christ preferred to shed His own precious blood in order to save His enemies, that they may not perish. He even prayed for them: "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke

23:34). Jesus was the only true Muslim, if we consider the definition of the word "Muslim" to be a derivation of the Arabic word *Salam*, meaning "peace." A true Muslim is a peace-maker who has surrendered himself to the God of Love, serving Him alone.



X

THE UNIQUE SIGN OF GOD

Islamic inspiration appoints Jesus as a “Sign of Allah” (*Ayatollah*). According to Islam, God has made Jesus and His mother a sign unto men:

“We have appointed Him a sign unto men” (Mary 19:21).

«لِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ» (مریم ۱۹:۲۱).

“We breathed into her of Our spirit, and appointed her and her son to be a sign for all men” (Prophets 21:91).

«فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَجَعَلْنَاهَا وَأَبْنَهَا آيَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ»

(الأنبياء ۲۱:۹۱).

Christ did not receive this unique title from men, but from God directly. He did not receive the title, “The Sign of God,” for having succeeded in higher education in a university, but has carried this distinguished title from the very day He was born into this earth. In contrast, the highest ranks of the Shiite Muslims are reserved for outstanding scholars who have earned the title of

Ayatollah, which means “the sign of Allah.” Many Muslims overemphasized their honoring of Khomeini, because they called him not only “Ayatollah” (the Sign of God) but also *Ruhullah* (“The Spirit of Allah”). Christians have had their “Sign of God” for 1990 years, in Jesus Christ! The Shiites had their famous Ayatollah in recent years. What is the difference between Khomeini and Christ? The gap between these two men is unbridgeable. Christ healed the sick, purified the lepers, raised the dead, fed the hungry, comforted the afflicted, blessed His enemies, established peace between men and God, and saved millions from doom on the Day of Judgement. Khomeini, on the other hand, led his people into two disastrous wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, where millions of Muslims were killed, maimed, bereft, having lost their homes and livelihoods. He cursed everyone whom he considered to be the enemy of Islam, especially the United States. What an unspeakable difference between the Ayatollah of the Christians and that of the Shiites!

Sunni Muslim scholars felt offended by Ayatollah Khomeini when he allowed his followers to call him “The Spirit of Allah” (*Ruhu-Allah*) or “The Spirit of the Holy” (*Ruhul-Qudsi*). Even Muhammad did not accept such titles for himself. Sunni scholars from different Arab countries met in Casablanca (Morocco) and agreed to

condemn this practice. The King of Morocco, Hassan II, announced publicly that if Khomeini would not stop his followers from calling him Ruhullah or Ruhul-Qudsi, he (Ayatollah Khomeini) should be expelled from Islam and should no longer be regarded as a Muslim. The King based his declaration on the Quranic evidence that there is only one man in world history who has the right to call himself "The Spirit of the Holy": Isa, the Son of Mary, because He was born of the Holy Spirit. To condemn the Shiites, the Sunnites plainly confessed the truth that Jesus is the only person ever born by the Spirit of God.

Khomeini was appointed by men as a sign of God to the Shiites who live primarily in Iran. Christ however was the real "Sign of God" to all men. He was not only the "Sign of God" to the Christians or the Jews, but also to Hindus, Buddhists, atheists, Muslims and all others. Whoever studies the life of Christ in depth will find that He is the perfect Ayatollah, the true "Sign of God."



XI

THE MERCY OF GOD

We read in the Quran that Allah called Jesus:

“A sign unto men and a Mercy from Us” (Mary 19:21).

«لِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا» (مریم ۱۹:۲۱).

Muhammad is also called a “mercy” in the Quran:

“We have not sent you except as a mercy to the worlds” (Prophets 21:107).

«وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ» (الأنبياء ۲۱:۱۰۷).

We have recognized that the inspiration of Muhammad differs essentially from that of Christ; likewise, the meaning and content of mercy in those two men differ fundamentally.

The Angel Gabriel is supposed to have dictated the Quran to Muhammad. Christ did not need the agency of an angel, for He Himself was the incarnation of the eternal Word of God. Just as the difference between the inspiration of the Gospel and that of the Quran is vast, so too is the difference between the mercy of

Christ and Muhammad unbridgeable. The inspiration to Muhammad can be found in the verses of the Quran, in his tens of thousands of declarations in the Hadith (Islamic Traditions), and in the practical ways of his daily conduct (al-Sunna). These sources were united and compiled into Islamic law (Sharia), consisting of commands and prohibitions. This Law organizes all facets of the life of a Muslim, including the daily prayer, with the obligatory washing beforehand, fasting in Ramadan, religious taxes, pilgrimage and even circumcision and burial. The Sharia covers also the family order, inheritance, contracts, holy war and severe punishments. The life of a Muslim is governed by Islamic Law which, according to Islamic theology, is the final manifestation of the mercy of God to the Muslims.

The Gospel warns us that no man can be justified by observing the Law, for not a single person can fulfill all its demands precisely. Even Islamic Law is constantly violated by the Muslims. Millions have neglected the command to pray five times each day; other millions did not consistently practise fasting during Ramadan; others did not give the total amount of the religious tax they were obligated to pay; and most do not complete their pilgrimage without mistakes. Moreover, how many times does a man sin against his wife and children, and how many times has a business contract been broken

by fraud or coercion; how often have the lips of a person uttered lies? There has not been one single man that has not been stained and polluted with pride, grudges, hatred, and inner filth. The Law of God condemns everyone in his deeds, words and intentions. The final aim of the Law is the judgement of every sinful man for his failures, his guilt and his corruption. Yes, the law of Muhammad organized the Islamic people, as the Law of Moses centered the lives of the children of Abraham on God and His Word. The Law demands full surrender and complete submission to the Creator. But no law can justify the sinner, nor can it set the guilty free. The Law was given to judge the transgressor and destroy him. Because of the Law, the destination of everyone is hell. The Law is the just judge. No human is able to satisfy it.

Every religious-minded person hopes and aspires to receive the forgiveness of God. The Muslim thinks that:

“The good deeds will drive away the evil deeds”
(Hood 11:114; Angels 35:29-30).

«إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ» (هود 11:114).

But according to Islam, no Muslim can be sure of the forgiveness of his sins until Judgement Day. Their law does not offer a substitute sacrifice, nor does it present

free salvation to them. Every Muslim will receive his exact wages on Judgement Day, when all his iniquities and complete failure is then uncovered. The Law shall finally condemn its followers. Muhammad admitted that all his followers will definitely enter hell:

“We shall gather them, and the devils, then we shall bring them around hell (Gehenna) on their knees...there is not one of you, but he shall come into it; that was upon your Lord a determined decree” (Mary 19:68,71).

«فَوَرَّبَكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ وَالشَّيَاطِينَ ثُمَّ لَنُحْضِرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ جِثِيًّا... وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَقْضِيًّا»
(مریم ۱۹:۶۸، ۷۱).

“To that end He created them. And the word of your Lord will be executed: ‘I shall surely fill Gehenna with spirits (jinn) and men all together” (Hood 11:119, 120).

«وَلِذَلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ وَوَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لِأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ» (هود ۱۱:۱۱۹).

We admit that all Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims are real sinners by nature. No human is good, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

Christ alone lived according to the Law and demanded that we should fulfill the commandment of His love, too. However, His ultimate goal was not to establish a law that will condemn mankind but to declare the grace of God to all sinners and to justify them freely. Christ lived what He taught, and He Himself completed the Law, proving that He was worthy to be the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29).

Seven hundred years before Christ, Isaiah the Prophet prophesied that one would come as our substitute, suffering under the judgement of God in our place:

**“Surely He has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed Him stricken,
smitten of God, and afflicted.
But He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
the chastisement of our peace
was upon Him,
and by His stripes we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned, every one, to his own way;
and the Lord has laid on Him
the iniquity of us all.”**

Isaiah 53:4-6

Christ saves His followers from the curse of the Law and frees them from the judgement of the Last Day. He justifies those who receive Him and believe in Him. Surely He has reconciled God with men and granted them eternal peace. The Apostle Paul urged us to accept this spiritual privilege, writing:

**“Be reconciled with God,
for He made Him, who knew no sin,
to be sin for us,
that we might become
the righteousness of God
in Him”**

(2 Corinthians 5:20, 21).



XII

WHO IS THE GREATEST?

This serious question cannot be appropriately directed at Christ and Muhammad. According to a human scale, both have reached a standard of acceptance that no other founder of a religion has reached. Islam has reached 1.2 billion people, 1,370 years after the death of its founder. Those who claim to follow to Christ have surpassed the 1.8 billion mark. No political party, no philosophy, no ideology, ever gathered as many adherents as have Christ and Muhammad in the past centuries.

Muhammad warned his people in Mecca and endured severe persecution for twelve years. But after he emigrated to Medina in AD 622, everything changed. He turned into a leader experienced in politics, legislation and war. In the eyes of his followers, he is the head (Imam) of all believers, and the Ambassador of Allah for the Muslim nation (al-Ummah).

Christ Himself was not ready to accept the question, Who is the greatest? He humbled Himself and declared that He did not come to be served but to serve and to give up his life as a ransom for many. He said to His

followers, "Whoever wants to be first, must ultimately be last, and whoever intends to be a ruler, should be the slave of all" (Matthew 10:42). He promised that only the meek will inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5). Christ did not only preach but also lived out His teachings. Despite His tremendous power, He chose to live humbly, to be rejected by men, and finally to be crushed by evil hands (Isaiah 53:1-3). When Peter tried to defend Him, He rebuked him, commanding him to return his sword to its sheath and not to interfere in the decreed plan of God that demanded His substitutionary death for the salvation of mankind (John 18:11).

Christ also proved His authority when He assured faithful seekers: "**Your sins are forgiven.**" Christ says even today to every repentant sinner: "God loves you; I have reconciled you to Him. The door to Him is wide open for you."

God did not send Christ to declare another unbearable law to man. Christ was the incarnate Mercy of God. In Him, the love of the Holy One was revealed. Therefore, He loved sinners, blessed His enemies and encouraged the despairing. Jesus is the mercy of the All-Merciful, the Compassionate. He proved Himself to be of the same essence as God. In Christ the Spirit of God became flesh (John 1:14). There is no difference between His mercy and the mercy of God. His

atonement is the free offer of God to every lost sinner. Whoever receives His grace and accepts His justification is forever reconciled to God. Those who believe in Him will finally recognize and see the real position of Christ, seated at the right hand of the Almighty. The mercy of Christ will never stop, condemn, or destroy us, since He has justified and redeemed us.

The followers of Christ are not obliged to suffer neither under the Law of Moses nor under the Sharia of Muhammad. They abide in the grace of God as revealed in the Gospel of Christ. Even the Quran confirms this unique privilege to the followers of Christ:

“The people of the Gospel must judge according to what God has sent down to them. Whoever judges not according to what God has sent down – these are the ungodly” (Sura The Table 5:47).

«وَلِيَحْكُمُ أَهْلُ الْأَنْجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ» (المائدة ٥: ٤٧).

The Quran legally frees Christians from the Sharia and confirms them in the grace of the Gospel. The mercy of Christ grants them perfect peace in heart and mind. Their spiritual vigor from the assurance of salvation leads them to services of love, based on an everlasting hope.

Christ humbled Himself more and glorified His Father in heaven, saying: "Truly, truly, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever things He does, these also the Son does likewise" (John 5:19). "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwells in Me, He does the works" (John 14:10). Thus, Christ denied Himself and gave all homage to God His Father. He even confessed: "The Father is greater than I. I and the Father are one" (John 14:8, 10:30).

Therefore, anyone desiring to understand Christ should humble himself and ask the question, **Who is the most humble?** Christ humbled Himself to the point that He made Himself a curse for us that we may become the righteousness of God in Him. He gave Himself as an atonement for every evil man and woman – even for murderers – that they shall be set free from the condemnation of God, being transformed into believers filled with His eternal love.



CONCLUSION

The prisoners listened silently to the words of the minister. Some of them became angry and stared at him with hatred. Others were interested and amazed. A few of them rejoiced silently as they heard this clear answer. They found new hope in this message.

The speaker for the prisoners answered the minister: "We acknowledge that you have spoken clearly with us. You have boldly told us what you really believe. We will think about your words and discuss the points you have raised, comparing them carefully with the Quranic verses and the Traditions. Some of us do not agree with you right now, but we have promised to let you go in peace. We will continue to study this subject diligently.



QUIZ

A Question that Demands an Answer

Dear Reader, if you have studied this book, you will be able to answer the following questions easily. We are ready to send you one of our books, free, as a reward for your efforts. Do not forget to write your complete name and address on your answer sheet as

1. What did the prisoners ask the minister?
2. What was the difficulty in answering that question?
3. What is the difference between the birth of Christ and that of Muhammad?
4. How does the Quran confirm the righteousness of Christ and the sinfulness of Muhammad?
5. How many times does the Quran mention Mary (Mariam) by name? Why was Muhammad's mother not mentioned?
6. Why does the Quran call Christ "The Word of God" six times, and what does this title mean?
7. What is the difference between the signs of Muhammad and those of Christ?

8. What are the ten miracles of Christ mentioned in the Quran?
9. What are the titles of Christ's disciples, mentioned in the Sura al-Imran (The House of Imran)?
10. What is the difference between the death of Muhammad and the death of Christ, according to the Quran and the Traditions (Hadith)?
11. Where is Christ today, according to the Quran? Why do all Muslims pray, interceding for Muhammad?
12. What is meant by "Muslim Peace," and what is the "Peace of Christ"?
13. Can the Law save its followers? Why must Allah send all the followers of the Law to hell?
14. Who is the real "Sign of God," and why does He deserve that title?
15. How did you understand the words, "Christ is the mercy of God"?
16. Who appeared to be the most humble and why?

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