

السَّلَامُ عَلَى عِيسَى نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ

PROPHET 'ĪSĀ [A.S]

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FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

SENIOR LEVEL

Lesson 1: Prophet 'Īsā (as) and Maryam (as)

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand the circumstances of the birth of Prophet 'Īsā (as)
- Discuss the virtues of Maryam (as)
- Discuss the titles of Prophet 'Īsā (as) in the Holy Qur'an
- Understand that the Bible of today is not the Injil that was revealed to Prophet 'Īsā (as)
- Discuss the myth of crucifixion
- Discuss the Christian belief in trinity and understand the reasons why Prophet 'Īsā (as) is not and cannot be God

The Holy Qur'an tells the true story of Prophet 'Īsā (as) and is the only really true source about the life of this great messenger and prophet. The Bible and historians do not give a true version of the story because they were not even present at the time.

Islam is the only non-Christian religion that acknowledges Prophet 'Īsā (as). We believe in him as an infallible messenger of God. Muslims also believe in the great status of Maryam (as) and also in the fact that Prophet 'Īsā (as) will return to earth.

THE TRUTH ABOUT MARYAM (AS)

Perhaps mainly due to the miraculous nature of the birth of Prophet 'Īsā (as), there are too great accusations against Maryam (as):

- the Jews accuse her of not being a chaste woman and that she had a child through adultery
- some Christians- Catholics and Orthodox Christians- say that she was 'the mother of god'- although even in the Bible this title is not given to her
- other Christians- Protestants, Presbyterians etc...- do not give any significance to Maryam (as) and she has no role in their theology

The Holy Qur'an mentions her name 25 times. 16 times she is mentioned in the phrase "Īsā , the son of Maryam'. This is to emphasise and leave no doubt

that Prophet 'Īsā (as) is not the son of God, and also to show that Maryam is not the mother of god.

The Holy Qur'an also mentions that Prophet 'Īsā (as) and Maryam were both worshipping God, and were eating and drinking- making it impossible for them to be gods themselves.

“O Jesus, son of Mary, did you say to people worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allah? Jesus says: ‘Glory be to You, I would not say what I do not have a right to say, I only said what You commanded me to say...” (5:116)

THE VIRTUES OF MARYAM (AS)

Maryam (as) is praised often in the Holy Qur'an and in the narrations of the Ahlul Bayt (as). Some of the following are her virtues

- She is one of the four best women in history. It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (saw):

“Verily, Allah has chosen from among women four ladies: Āsiyah, the daughter of Mezaḥim, the wife of Pharaoh; Maryam the mother of Jesus; Khadijah the daughter of Khowaylid, and Fāṭima (as) the daughter of the Prophet Muḥammad (saw) who is the most honourable of them all.”

- She is the only lady whose name is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an.
- She is the first woman to be 'chosen' by Allah (SWT)
- She is the only woman to have a child without being with a man.
- She is the first infallible woman
- She was a woman who was spoken to by angels.
- She has the right of intercession

THE LIFE OF MARYAM (AS)

Her father's name was 'Imran, and her mother's name was Hanna. She had a sister called Elizabeth, who was married to Prophet Zachariah (as). Both these sisters could not have children. Hanna and 'Imran both prayed for a child sincerely and Hanna vowed that if she had the child, she would dedicate him to the service of Allah. Her husband had had a dream that a boy would be born into his family, and so they

assumed that this was the boy. However, before Maryam (as) was born, her father 'Imran passed away.

When Hanna gave birth, she had a girl, Maryam (as) and not a boy. She was shocked, but because she was a faithful woman, she decided to keep her vow. She left Maryam (as) to serve Allah (SWT) in a place of worship, and asked someone to look after Maryam (as). A lot was drawn to see who should look after Maryam, and it turned to be Prophet Zachariah who would look after her.

As Maryam (as) spent her life in the worship of Allah (SWT), He would send her sustenance miraculously; she would have the fruits of winter in summer and the fruits of summer in winter.

One day, Maryam (as) is visited by angels, and she is given the good news of a child, called 'Īsā (as)

THE VIRGIN CONCEPTION

Unlike the story of the virgin birth in the Christian scriptures, the true story is miraculous and dignified. The angels gave glad tidings to Maryam of having a son who would be a prophet. Maryam, though, was not married and so this worried her greatly. However, the angels said to her that Allah (SWT) had willed this and so it would happen. One night, she was visited by an angel, but in the form of a man. She seeks refuge with Allah (SWT), but then realises he is an angel, who gives her the message that she is going to have a son.

“How can I have a son, when no man has touched me?”
(3:47)

Maryam (as) again showed her great surprise, but the angels said that this was a sign for people and a mercy. Now, Maryam's challenge was to face the accusations of the whole community. Maryam ran away into the wilderness when she realised she was pregnant. Then she started to feel the pangs of childbirth and Allah (SWT) guided her to a date-palm. Maryam wished that she had died before this happened, and that she was forgotten by everyone.

Now, Maryam had reached her threshold of patience in this great test from Allah (SWT), and so He comes to her rescue:

“O Maryam, do not grieve. Your Lord has made under you a river, and shake the date-palm above you, so eat and drink, and be happy. Then if you see any person, tell them that I have made a silent fast...” (19:24-26)

Once Maryam came back into town with her son, the accusations began. The whole town heard about this. Maryam responded by pointing to her baby, Prophet ‘Īsā (as). The people made fun of her, but suddenly Prophet ‘Īsā (as) began to speak:

“He said: I am the devotee of Allah. He has given me the Scripture and has made a prophet, and made me blessed wherever I am...” (19:30)

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN VIEWS

- Catholics believe that Maryam was a virgin her entire life. However, other Christians, especially recently, argue against this and do not believe in it.
- Catholics also believe that Prophet ‘Īsā (as) and Maryam (as) were the only two people born without being touched by Satan. Some Sunni narrations also quote this. However, this is not true and as Muslims we do not believe that people are born sinful and touched by Satan.
- The Bible says that Prophet ‘Īsā (as) was born in a stable, and we also do not believe in this.
- The Bible contradicts itself about when Prophet ‘Īsā (as) was born. However, it is clear that his birth occurred in summer. So why is Christmas in winter in the northern hemisphere? Thus the Christmas that is celebrated today is not the real birth date of Prophet ‘Īsā (as). The current date for ‘Christmas’ was chosen because it was the longest winter night in the northern hemisphere, and the pagans of the time who were becoming Christians wanted their celebrations to last as long as possible.

THE TITLES OF PROPHET ‘ĪSĀ IN THE QUR’AN

Allah (SWT) gives Prophet ‘Īsā (as) a few titles in the Qur’an in order to correct some of the mistakes of the Bible:

- **‘Īsā (as), the son of Maryam;** to correct the false message that Jesus is the son or God or God
- **The Messiah (al-masīḥ):** this is a Hebrew word which means a Prophet or a Messiah. Allah (SWT) calls Prophet ‘Īsā (as) this so that the Jews and Christians both know he is their prophet.

Messiah also refers to a king or ruler and not only a religious leader. However, Allah (SWT) not only calls Prophet ‘Īsā (as) ‘a Messiah’, but He calls him **‘the Messiah’**. This was because the Jews were waiting for a specific Messiah who would save them, and so Allah (SWT) is telling them Prophet ‘Īsā (as) is this specific Messiah they were waiting for

- **The Messenger of Allah (SWT) (Rasulullāh):** again, this is to bring both Jews and Christians back to the path of truth: Prophet ‘Īsā (as) was not an ordinary man as the Jews believe, nor is he god as the Christians believe.
- **The Word of God (kalimatun min Allah):** in some gospels of the Bible, this title is used to show that Prophet ‘Īsā (as) is god, because they claim that ‘the word of god is part of god’. However, this is not what the Qur’an means. What the Qur’an means by ‘the words of God’ is ‘the creature or sign of God’. Allah (SWT) uses ‘word’ in other places in the Qur’an to describe his signs and creatures
- **The Soul from God (ruḥullāh):** again, the Christians use this as proof for Prophet ‘Īsā (as) being god. However, Allah (SWT) uses this expression for all humans, beginning with Prophet Adam. What Allah means by ‘soul’ is ‘life’. Also ‘from God’ means God is the source like when we say: ‘I am from Iraq’ and not that Prophet ‘Īsā (as) is part of God.

- Prophet 'Īsā (as) is 'supported by the Holy Spirit': the Holy Spirit is either the Archangel Gabriel, or a special entity that was with all prophets and imams. It is the secret behind their infallibility. The Christians also claim that the Holy Spirit is a part of god. However the Qur'an says:

“We supported him with the Holy Spirit” (2:87)

The indication here is that Allah (SWT) controls both the Holy Spirit and Prophet 'Īsā (as) and they are both His creatures, and not a part of Him.

Review Questions

1. The Holy Qur'an teaches that:

- Prophet Jesus (as) was born in a miraculous way to the virgin Maryam (as)
- Maryam had a child out of wedlock
- Maryam should be worshipped or venerated because she is the 'mother of God'

2. The Holy Qur'an calls Jesus (as) a 'Word from God' to indicate that Jesus (as) is:

- God
- Part of God
- A sign of God

Christians follow and this is our main focus for today. We will discuss this topic by posing a number of questions.

DID PROPHET 'ĪSĀ HAVE A BOOK THAT HE TAUGHT?

- The Holy Qur'an confirms that Prophet 'Īsā (as) had a book revealed to him and this was called the Injil.
- It seems from the present Bible that Jesus had a Scripture called 'the Gospel'. Luke in the beginning of Chapter 20 says: “One day as he (Jesus) was teaching the people in the temple courts and preaching the Gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came up with the elders and said to him...” This passage is the clear evidence that Jesus had a Scripture which he was preaching in the temples. Luke also narrates that Jesus was asking his disciples to go around from village to village and preach the Gospel. (Luke 9:6)
- Christians however do not recognise any written Gospel for Jesus. They claim he did not consign to writing his own teachings and directed his apostles not to write, but to preach the Gospel verbally to their fellow-men. In justification of their belief, they offer a literal interpretation for the abovementioned Biblical quotations. Thus, they assert the term 'Gospel' in those passages has a literal meaning, i.e. glad tidings.
- This claim is an attempt to conceal an historical fact about the original Gospel. Unfortunately, the Gospel of Jesus was lost or destroyed by the Jews. Though it is expressed by a number of historians that divisions between early sects of Christianity also encouraged the destruction of writings of which they did not approve. Subsequently, many people's hands were employed in the rewriting of the Gospel.

WHO WROTE THE GOSPELS?

- The Bible that we have with us today consists of the Old Testament and the New Testament. The New Testament contains the 'four gospels' and a remaining section called the 'Letters of Paul'.

Lesson 2: the Book of Prophet 'Īsā (as)

In this lesson, we will discuss the issue of the book of Prophet 'Īsā (as). The Holy Qur'an definitely confirms that a book called the Injil was revealed to Prophet 'Īsā (as). However, the question is whether this book is the same as the Bible that we have today?

The Bible of today consists of the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is the Torah of the Jews, and there is no real claim that this is the Word of God. It is accepted by Christians to a certain extent. The New Testament is the 'Bible' which the

- Sometime after the passing away of Prophet 'Īsā (as), a great number of people began to write 'gospels', such that there were 50 or 100 gospels written by many different people. Luke in the beginning of his Gospel with reference to this says: "Now that many have put their hands to the composition of a narrative regarding the events that have certainly taken place amongst us, transmitted as they were to us by those who were from the first eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word, it seemed fitting for me as well..."
- Of all these gospels, 4 were chosen to be in the current Christian Bible: the gospels of Mathew, Mark, Luke and John. These form the major part of the Bible today.
- Prophet 'Īsā (as) had 12 disciples. Two of these were called Mathew and John. However, all Christian scholars agree the writers of these gospels were not the same as the disciples of Jesus. They were a different Mathew and John who lived at a later time. Mark was one of the students of St Peter, who was one of the disciples. Luke was a Greek physician and he wrote his book because 'everyone seems to be writing one', and not because he had any special qualification to know what Jesus (as) taught.
- Thus the answer is that the Bible was written by four people who did not have direct access to Prophet 'Īsā (as). They were not his companions or successors, and they were not prophet or messengers.
- They did not hear these words from Prophet 'Īsā (as) and write them down exactly. Even they do not claim to have done this. They claimed to be inspired.
- The existence of numerous differences between the present four Gospels is a fact which has long been noticed and admitted by Christian scholars. The Gospels differ in many instances from the narration of the genealogy and the birth of Jesus to his so-called crucifixion.

name they bear - all of which would place them within a short period of time of Jesus. A number of scholars believe that they were compiled between the years 50 to 100 AD which would make the first assumption impossible.

- The truth is that the physical manuscript evidence of the Gospels does not start until early mid-2nd century with the famous P52- a tiny piece of papyrus with fragments of only 7 verses. The full manuscripts of the present four Gospels were completed in the 4th century. There are also many scholarly debates about the authenticity of some chapters and the verses of the present Gospels. For instance, New International Version of the Bible warns the reader: "The most reliable early manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not have Mark 16:9-20", and "The earliest and most reliable manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not have John 7:53-8:11"

IN WHICH LANGUAGE WERE THE GOSPELS WRITTEN?

- Around 400AD, Saint Jerome translated the Bible from Greek into Latin. This translation is called the "Vulgate" and is still in use by those still interested in Latin and is used in a revised form as the Roman Catholic Authorized Version. But in what language were the Gospels originally written, in Greek or Hebrew or even Aramaic? There is an ongoing debate as to whether the earliest Gospels were written in Aramaic or Greek. Some scholars have proposed that they were written in Aramaic. But then again, no one has ever seen an Aramaic Gospel predating the fourth century which had to be translated from Greek to Aramaic.
- We as Muslims do not have such a debate, we all know the Qur'an is in Arabic. The Christians however have no reliable way of knowing which language the original Bible was written in, and so their scholars differ on this.

WHEN WERE THE GOSPELS WRITTEN?

- Our Christian friends commonly preach that the present Gospels were compiled by those whose

CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusion from these discussions is that the Bible that the Christians have today is not the book of Prophet 'Īsā (as). It is not the Injīl mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. While the original source of some of the material may be the original holy book, we cannot rely on these gospels because they are not the words of God or the words of Jesus. Rather, they were written by others later.

Other issues to consider are that because the gospels were simply chosen by a government of the time, different Christian groups believe in different gospels. The Orthodox Christians have a Bible that contains different gospels to the Catholic one. This is confusing and shows that the Bible of today is not the original word of God, for otherwise it could not have been changed.

Yet another issue is that of translation. The Bible, in English as we have it today, continues to have updated translations. Each new version or translation makes subtle but meaningful changes to the last. This changes the meaning of the Book and its teachings. Since we do not have the Bible in its original form, this poses a great problem. It means that the translators, who are ordinary people, are changing the meanings of a book which is meant to contain the word of God.

All this shows the miracle of the Holy Qur'an, and the blessings that Muslims have in being able to access a true Holy Book, which is the Word of God revealed directly to His Messenger, which was compiled during his life, and which remains till today, having only version and in its original language.

Supplementary Resources

We suggest that teachers organise for their students to watch one of the lectures by Ahmad Deedat discussing this topic. These are readily available online.

Review Questions

1. The Original Gospels were written in:

- Aramaic

- Greek
- Hebrew
- No one knows the original language

2. The Gospels were written by:

- Jesus (as)
- The Disciples of Jesus (as)
- People who lived at least 100 years after Jesus (as) and never met him

3. The Original Injīl revealed to Jesus (as):

- Is the same Bible we have today
- Was destroyed by the Jews
- Never really existed

Lesson 3: Analysing Crucifixion and Trinity

The Christian religion is based on two major beliefs:

- The Crucifixion of Jesus (as)
- Trinity: the claim that God is one and three at the same time, and that Jesus is God

In this lesson, we will analyse these beliefs and prove them to be untrue and illogical.

THE MYTH OF CRUCIFIXION

Crucifixion was a form of torture, done by hanging someone on the cross. Christians believe that Prophet 'Īsā (as) was crucified and died on the cross. Then later, he was resurrected and then raised to heaven by Allah (SWT).

According to the Holy Qur'an, however, Prophet 'Īsā (as) was never crucified and never died; he was raised up to heaven by Allah (SWT) without being caught by his enemies. The Holy Qur'an emphasises the fact that Prophet 'Īsā (as) was not crucified. This is important because a lot of Christian beliefs are based on the crucifixion. They believe that all humans are sinful, and that Prophet 'Īsā (as) dying on the cross saves all humans from their sinfulness. This is why the Holy Qur'an, especially in Surat al-Nisā', Allah (SWT)

emphasises so many times that crucifixion did not happen, and that Prophet 'Īsā (as) did not die.

“And because of their saying: We killed Messiah, Jesus; son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah, but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it appeared so to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For, surely they killed him not. But Allah raised him up unto Himself. And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise.”
(4:157-158)

An authentic narration from Imam al-Bāqir (as) clarifies what really happened:

“Verily, in the night that Allah had promised to raise Jesus to Him, Jesus invited his disciples, who were twelve men, to a house. Jesus came out to them from a corner of the house whilst he was drying his head from water. He then said: Surely, Allah revealed to me that He will raise me this time to Him and will clear me from the Jews, so which one of you is willing to have my image cast upon him to be killed and crucified and he will be with me in the hereafter? A young man from among them said: I (will accept) O Ruhullah! Jesus replied: So, you will be the one.” (Tafsir al-Qomi, vol.1 p.111)

Thus the Qur'an clearly denounces crucifixion. However, some Christians quote two āyāt from the Qur'an which they falsely believe indicate that crucifixion occurred:

“O 'Īsā, I am collecting your soul and raising you to Myself”

The word used in Arabic in this āyah is 'mutawaffika' which comes from the root word 'wafāt' and not 'mawt'. 'Wafāt' means collection of the soul and not death. Therefore, this āyah is not stating that Jesus (as) died. Rather, it is confirming the fact that Allah (SWT) raised him to heaven.

“Peace be upon Me the day I was born, the day I will die and the day I will be resurrected.”

This āyah is also used in the same style for Prophet Yaḥyā (as), but no one claims that he died and was resurrected. Also the āyah says: 'I *will* die and I will be raised' so it is speaking about the future and not something in the past. Also 'mawt' is natural death and not being killed by torture or crucifixion.

The authors of the gospels, who claim crucifixion happened, are not known and would not have been present at the time. Also, they could not have heard it

from the disciples of Jesus (as) because according to the Bible the disciples ran away and were not present at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. Because of this, there are many contradictions in the story.

One of the contradictions relates to Prophet 'Īsā's (as) last words on the cross. Gospels narrate different phrases for the last words of Jesus. The last word of Jesus according to John was 'it is finished'. (John 19:30) Luke on the other hand narrates: “With a loud voice Jesus cried: Father, into Your hands I entrust my spirit! And with these words he died.” [23:46] The last words Mark narrates from Jesus is 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?' [Mark 15:34, Matt. 26:14-16] Keep in mind the fact that that the reason why the narrations of Mark and Matthew are practically the same is due to Matthew's narration depending largely upon that of Mark's. Thus, it should not be treated as a separate historical source.

In addition to all this, the historical evidence also indicates that Prophet 'Īsā (as) was not crucified.

This discussion shows that there is no strong logical or historical proof for crucifixion. Thus it is a false claim that Prophet 'Īsā (as) was tortured and died on the cross. The truth is that he was raised to heaven by Allah (SWT) before his enemies could reach him.

Furthermore, it is false to claim that one person suffering and dying leads to the sins of other people being forgiven. It is also a false claim that all people are born sinful and are prone to being punished. This is because Allah (SWT) is Just. He would not punish a person or cause him to be born sinful when that person has not done anything wrong. He would also not cause a person to suffer in order to forgive the sins of another, or forgive a person because of the suffering of another. All this would be against the Justice of Allah (SWT), and logic necessitates that God is Just.

IS JESUS GOD?

Monotheism (belief in one God) is the main pillar of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. All these three faiths are based completely on the belief that there is only one Lord.

However, Christianity was perverted and corrupted and

Christians began to believe in 'Trinity' and Jesus as God. The deity of Jesus is explained through the mysterious dogma of Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity states that God is the union of three divine persons- the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit- in one divine being. Thus, they say there is one God who exists in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. According to Christians the Father is God, the Son (Jesus) is God and the Holy Spirit is God although the Father is not the Son and neither of them is the Holy Spirit. Here is the formula of the Trinity: One person, God, the Father + one person, God the son + one person, God the Holy Spirit= one person, God the what? And by the way this is English not gibberish! Most churches baptize infants into the Trinity and thus Christians from their very childhood are told to believe in the deity of Jesus, though on faith alone.

THE DOGMA OF TRINITY

When and how did the dogma of the Trinity emerge? Did Jesus ever proclaim to be God or son of God? Did he ever call for the Trinity? No.

Historically, the original Christians of the first three centuries did not know of the Trinity.

Some early Christian sects who did exist before the Roman Catholics did not know Trinity and did not worship Jesus.

In 318 C.E. a controversy over the matter of the nature of Jesus blew up between church men from Alexandria-Arius, the deacon and Alexander his bishop. In order to safeguard the unity of his kingdom, the Emperor Constantine stepped into the fray and called for the first ecumenical council in church history in order to settle the matter once and for all.

According to Encarta Encyclopaedia, of the 1800 bishops in the Rome Empire, 318 attended the Council in 325 C.E. in Nicea (now Iznik, Turkey). The irony is that Christ's deity was ratified over the objections of most of the Christian bishops who had been gathered there from all over the world. Nevertheless, the Emperor concluded the council with a faith that he dictated in the Council. The Nicene Creed according to Catholic Encyclopaedia reads: "We believe in one God; the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible; and our Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father, God of God, light of light,

true God of true God, begotten not made, of the same substance with the Father."

The debates continued after this meeting. However, over time, those who believed in Trinity got the upper hand. Since then, brutal punishments, violent persecution and being labeled as heretics was the only destiny of the Unitarians. All their books were burnt and by 600 A.D., they had basically ceased to exist.

Today some critical Christian theologians such as John Hick in his book 'The Myth of God Incarnate' find the roots of the Trinity in ancient pagan religions. Hick finds amazing similarities between the Buddhist doctrine of Trikaya (the three body doctrine) and the Trinity. Similarly, there are many similarities between the Trinity and the Hindu doctrine of Trimurti (Sanskrit: Three Forms) consisting a triad of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. It is due to these similarities that some historians assumed that Jesus must have spent some time in India during his missing years! There is however, no historical proof for this assumption. Moreover, the claim of the adaptation of a pagan doctrine by a Messenger of God i.e. Jesus (a.s) is the most irrational proposition.

ANALYSING TRINITY LOGICALLY

- God is physical and God is not physical! No doubt, the God that all monotheists believe in is not physical, or else he would be limited. Nevertheless, Trinity is explained as 'God reincarnate in Jesus'. Jesus was born of Mary. He had body and flesh. He was eating and drinking. Jesus was physical. Thus, the result of the dogma of the Trinity is that God is physical and God is not physical!
- God is not begotten and God is begotten! All monotheists believe that God is not begotten. Christians also believe that God; the Father is not begotten. On the other hand, the Trinity claims that Jesus is the begotten son of God and he is God! Thus, God is begotten and is not begotten.
- God dies and God doesn't die! God that all monotheists- including Christians as they claim- believe in is Ever-Living. God does not die, not even for a micro-second. Jesus is born and hence they celebrate Christmas. All Christians believe Jesus died on the cross. Although he was

resurrected again, he died. Thus, God dies and God doesn't die. Isn't this violation of a law of contradiction?

DID JESUS EVER CLAIM TO BE GOD?

The Holy Qur'an states that on the Day of Judgment on the trial of Christians, Allah will ask Jesus if he had ever asked people to either worship him or his mother? The purpose of this rhetorical question is for the Christians to hear from Jesus that he had never had such a blasphemous claim.

“And when Allah will say: O Jesus son of Mary! Did you say unto men: Worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allah? He will say: Glory be to You! It was not for me to say what I had no right to say, Had it said such a thing, You would surely have known it. You know what is in my inner-self though I do not know what is in Yours; truly, You only You, are the All-Knower of all that is hidden.” [5:116]

Nowhere even in the present gospels has Jesus ever explicitly claimed to be God. The Encyclopedia Britannica states: "Neither the word Trinity, nor the explicit doctrine as such, appears in the New Testament, nor did Jesus and his followers intend to contradict the Shema in the Old Testament: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord. (Deut. 6:4)".

The worship of God was always focal in Jesus' life. For instance, when his disciples asked him to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1-2) he taught them to pray to God; the Father, not to himself. Notice that the words "Father! Grant us" indicate that Jesus included himself among the creation of God, acknowledging a high authority; 'God' over all of them. Similarly, according to John, Jesus said to Mary Magdalene: "I am going to ascend to my father and your father, to my God and your God." [John 20:17]

According to Mark, Jesus even did not allow himself to be called 'good' let alone 'God'. Mark narrates that as Jesus was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him: "Good teacher. What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone." [Mark 10:17-18]

We conclude from these discussions that all the rational and textual evidence indicates that Jesus is not God. Rather, he is a Messenger and Prophet of God, sent to

guide mankind towards the true belief of the Unity of God.

Review Questions

1. The claim that Jesus is God:

- Goes against the logical law of non-contradiction
- Is not supported by the Holy Qur'an or the Bible
- Both of the above

2. The Holy Qur'an teaches that:

- Jesus (as) was crucified but did not die on the cross
- Was neither crucified nor killed
- Was crucified and killed, but resurrected