

Jesus in the Qur'an

A few years ago, while working in Europe, I was assigned to teach a course entitled, "International Business," in Bonn, Germany. Students enrolled in the course were sons/daughters of ambassadors from a variety of countries, as Bonn, at that time, was the capital of Germany. The class consisted of about 10 students and each was a Muslim. Progressing through the dictates of the syllabus, we eventually spoke of foreign cultures and the need to be sensitive to a client's differences in manners, customs, and religion. Taking off on the latter, I mentioned in passing that I knew little of Islam, and had never seen a copy of the Qur'an.

We then entered into an informative discussion (at least for me) of Islam, and the elevated position the Qur'an held in Muslim nations. It lasted for much of the class period, and when we finished for the night, I thanked them for their participation and for sharing with me their faith and its teachings. I thought that was the end of it.

When we met the following week, one student, a tall lovely lady from The Sudan, came in carrying a bag. She approached me and stated that she had related the story of our previous class meeting and my admitted ignorance of the Qur'an to her father. In response, he broke out his cherished copy of the Qur'an and asked his daughter to bring it to me to study. I was delighted, took it home, and examined it for our 10 Commandments. When we met again and I attempted to return the precious book she refused - it was a gift from her father.

Fast forward to 2009: I now have my own copy of the Qur'an written both in Arabic and English. In Bill Blanton's Sunday School class recently, I was asked what the Qur'an had to say about Jesus. I didn't know!! So, later at home, I went to my bookshelf, took out the Qur'an, and opened it. I thought you might like to know what I found.

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I make no pretense of having special knowledge of the Qur'an: The material listed below was **extracted verbatim**. For Christians with no understanding of the basic construction of the Book, here are a few characteristics.

In the Holy Bible we have testaments, books, chapters, verses, and in some Bibles, commentary. In the Qur'an, there are Surahs, verses, and commentary. My copy is bilingual with Arabic and the English translation. I have listed the material in the order presented in the index.

Surah 2:87 For, indeed, We vouchsafed unto Moses the divine writ and caused apostle after apostle to follow him; and We vouchsafed unto Jesus, the son of Mary, all evidence of the truth, and strengthened him with holy inspiration. [Yet] is it not so that every time an apostle came unto you with something that was not to your liking, you gloried in your arrogance, and to some of them you gave the lie, while others you would slay?

Surah 2:136 Say: "We believe in God, and in that which has been bestowed from on high upon us, and that which has been bestowed upon Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and, their descendants, and that which has been vouchsafed to Moses and Jesus; and that which has been vouchsafed to all the [other] prophets by their Sustainer: we make no distinction between any of them. And it is unto Him that we surrender ourselves."

Surah 2:253 Some of these apostles have We endowed more highly than others: among them were such as were spoken to by God [Himself], and some He has raised yet higher.' And We vouchsafed unto Jesus, the son of Mary, all evidence of the truth, and strengthened him with holy inspiration. And if God had so willed, they who succeeded those [apostles] would not have contended with one another after all evidence of the truth had come to them; but [as it was,] they did take to divergent views, and some of them attained to faith, while some of them came to deny the truth. Yet if God had so willed, they would not have contended with one another: but God does whatever He wills.

Surah 3:42-55 AND LO! The angels said: "O Mary! Behold, God has elected thee and made thee pure, and raised thee above all the women of the world. O Mary! Remain thou truly devout unto thy Sustainer, and prostrate thyself in worship, and bow down with those who bow down [before Him]." This account of something that was beyond the reach of thy perception We [now] reveal unto thee: for thou wert not with them when they drew lots as to which of them should be Mary's guardian, and thou wert not with them when they contended [about it] with one another. Lo! The angels said: "O Mary! Behold, God sends thee the glad tiding, through a word from Him, [of a son] who shall become known as the Christ Jesus, son of Mary, of great honour in this world and in the life to come, and [shall be] of those who are drawn near unto God. And he shall speak unto men in his cradle, and as a grown man, and shall be of the righteous." Said she: "O my Sustainer! How can I have a son when no man has ever touched me?" [The angel] answered: "Thus it is: God creates what He wills when He wills a thing to be, He but says unto it, 'Be' - and

it is. And he will impart unto thy son revelation, and wisdom, and the Torah, and the Gospel, and [will make him] an apostle unto the children of Israel." "I HAVE COME unto you with a message from your Sustainer. I shall create for you out of clay, as it were, the shape of [your] destiny, and then breathe into it, so that it might become [your] destiny by God's leave; and I shall heal the blind and the leper, and bring the dead back to life by God's leave; and I shall let you know what you may eat and what you should store up in your houses. Behold, in all this there is indeed a message for you, if you are [truly] believers. "And [I have come] to confirm the truth of whatever there still remains of the Torah, and to make lawful unto you some of the things which [aforetime] were forbidden to you. And I have come unto you with a message from your Sustainer; remain, then, conscious of God, and pay heed unto me. "Verily, God is my Sustainer as well as your Sustainer; so worship Him [alone]: this is a straight way." And when Jesus became aware of their refusal to acknowledge the truth, he asked: "Who will be my helpers in God's cause?" The white-garbed ones replied: "We shall be [thy] helpers [in the cause] of God! We believe in God: and bear thou witness that we have surrendered ourselves unto Him! O our Sustainer! We believe in what Thou hast bestowed from on high, and we follow this Apostle; make us one, then, with all who bear witness [to the truth]!" And the unbelievers schemed [against Jesus]; but God brought their scheming to nought: for God is above all schemers. Lo! God said: "O Jesus! Verily, I shall cause thee to die, and shall exalt thee unto Me, and cleanse thee of [the presence of] those who are bent on denying the truth; and I shall place those who follow thee [far] above those who are bent on denying the truth, unto the Day of Resurrection. In the end, unto Me you all must return, and I shall judge between you with regard to all on which you were wont to differ.

Surah 3:59 Verily, in the sight of God, the nature of Jesus is as the nature of Adam, whom He created out of dust and then said unto him, "Be" - and he is.

Surah 3:84 Say: "We believe in God, and in that which has been bestowed from on high upon us, and that which has been bestowed upon Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and their descendants, and that which has been vouchsafed by their Sustainer unto Moses and Jesus and all the [other] prophets: we make no distinction between any of them. And unto Him do we surrender ourselves."

Surah 4:157 and their boast, "Behold, we have slain the Christ Jesus, son of Mary, [who claimed to be] an apostle of God!" However, they did not slay him, and neither did they crucify him, but it only seemed to them [as if it had been] so; and, verily, those who hold conflict-ing views thereon are indeed confused, having no [real] knowledge thereof, and following mere con-jecture. For, of a certainty, they did not slay him:

Surah 4:158-159 Nay, God exalted him unto Himself - and God is indeed almighty, wise. Yet there is not one of the followers of earlier revelation who does not, at the moment of his death, grasp the truth about Jesus; and on the Day of Resurrection he [himself] shall bear witness to the truth against them.

Surah 4:163 BEHOLD, We have inspired thee [O Prophet] just as We inspired Noah and all the prophets after him - as We inspired Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and their

descendants, including Jesus and Job, and Jonah, and Aaron, and Solomon; and as We vouchsafed unto David a book of divine wisdom;

Surah 4:171-172 O FOLLOWERS of the Gospel! Do not overstep the bounds [of truth] in your religious beliefs, and do not say of God anything but the truth. The Christ Jesus, son of Mary, was but God's Apostle - [the fulfillment of] His promise which He had conveyed unto Mary - and a soul created by Him. Believe, then, in God and His apostles, and do not say, "[God is] a trinity". Desist [from this assertion] for your own good. God is but One God; utterly remote is He, in His glory, from having a son: unto Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth; and none is as worthy of trust as God. Never did the Christ feel too proud to be God's servant, nor do the angels who are near unto Him. And those who feel too proud to serve Him and glory in their arrogance [should know that on Judgment Day] He will gather them all unto Himself:

Surah 5:17 Indeed, the truth deny they who say, "Behold, God is the Christ, son of Mary." Say: "And who could have prevailed with God in any way had it been His will to destroy the Christ, son of Mary, and his mother, and everyone who is on earth-all of them? For, God's is the dominion over the heavens and the earth and all that is between them; He creates what He wills: and God has the power to will anything!"

Surah 5:46 And We caused Jesus, the son of Mary, to follow in the footsteps of those [earlier prophets], confirming the truth of whatever there still remained of the Torah; and We vouchsafed unto him the Gospel, wherein there was guidance and light, confirming the truth of whatever there still remained of the Torah, and as a guidance and admonition unto the God-conscious.

Surah 5:72 Indeed, the truth deny they who say, "Behold, God is the Christ, son of Mary" - seeing that the Christ [himself] said, "O children of Israel! Worship God [alone], who is my Sustainer as well as your Sustainer." Behold, whoever ascribes divinity to any being beside God, unto him will God deny paradise, and his goal shall be the fire: and such evildoers will have none to succour them!

Surah 5:75 The Christ, son of Mary, was but an apostle: all [other] apostles had passed away before him; and his mother was one who never deviated from the truth; and they both ate food [like other mortals]. Behold how clear We make these messages unto them: and then behold how perverted are their minds!

Surah 5:78 THOSE of the children of Israel who were bent on denying the truth have [already] been cursed by the tongue of David and of Jesus, the son of Mary? this, because they rebelled [against God] and persisted in transgressing the bounds of what is right.

Surah 5:110-118 Lo! God will say: "O Jesus, son of Mary! Remember the blessings which I bestowed upon thee and thy mother-how I strengthened thee with holy inspiration, so that thou couldst speak unto men in thy cradle, and as a grown man; and how I imparted unto thee revelation and wisdom, including the Torah and the Gospel; and how by My leave thou didst create out of clay, as it were, the shape of [thy followers'] destiny, and then didst breathe into it, so that it might become, by My leave, [their] destiny ; and how thou didst heal the blind and the

leper by My leave, and how thou didst raise the dead by My leave; and how I prevented the children of Israel from harming thee when thou camest unto them with all evidence of the truth, and [when] those of them who were bent on denying the truth were saying, `This is clearly nothing but deception!'" AND [remember the time] when I inspired the white-garbed ones: Believe in Me and in My Apostle!" They answered: "We believe; and bear Thou witness that we have surrendered ourselves [unto Thee]." [And,] lo, the white-garbed ones said: "O Jesus, son of Mary! Could thy Sustainer send down unto us a repast from heaven?" [Jesus] answered: "Be conscious of God, if you are [truly] believers!" Said they: "We desire to partake thereof, so that our hearts might be set fully at rest, and that we might know that thou hast spoken the truth to us, and that we might be of those who bear witness thereto!" Said Jesus, the son of Mary: "O God, our Sustainer! Send down upon us a repast from heaven: it shall be an ever-recurring feast for us - for the first and the last of us -and a sign from Thee. And provide us our sustenance, for Thou art the best of providers!" God answered: "Verily, I [always] do send it down unto you: and so, if any of you should henceforth deny [this] truth, on him, behold, will I inflict suffering the like of which I have never [yet] inflicted upon anyone in the world!" AND LO! God said: O Jesus, son of Mary! Didst thou say unto men, `Worship me and my mother as deities beside God?'" [Jesus] answered: "Limitless art Thou in Thy glory! It would not have been possible for me to say what I had no right to [say]! Had I said this, Thou wouldst indeed have known it! Thou knowest all that is within myself, whereas I know not what is in Thy Self. Verily, it is Thou alone who fully knowest all the things that are beyond the reach of a created being's perception. Nothing did I tell them beyond what Thou didst bid me [to say]: `Worship God, [who is] my Sustainer as well as your Sustainer.' And I bore witness to what they did as long as I dwelt in their midst; but since Thou hast caused me to die, Thou alone hast been their keeper: for Thou art witness unto everything. If thou cause them to suffer - verily, they are Thy servants; and if Thou forgive them - verily, Thou alone art almighty, truly wise!"

Surah 6:85 and [upon] Zachariah, and John, and Jesus, and Elijah: every one of them was of the righteous;

Surah 9:30-31 AND THE JEWS say, "Ezra is God's son," while the Christians say, "The Christ is God's son." Such are the sayings which they utter with their mouths, following in spirit assertions made in earlier times by people who denied the truth! They deserve the imprecation:] "May God destroy them!" How perverted are their minds! They have taken their rabbis and their monks-as well as the Christ, son of Mary-for their lords beside God, although they had been bidden to worship none but the One God, save whom there is no deity: the One who is utterly remote, in His limitless glory, from anything to which they may ascribe a share in His divinity!

Surah 19:16-26 AND CALL to mind, through this divine writ, Mary. Lo! She withdrew from her family to an eastern place and kept herself in seclusion from them, whereupon We sent unto her Our angel of revelation, who appeared to her in the shape of a well-made human being. She exclaimed: "Verily, I seek refuge from thee with the Most Gracious! [Approach me not] if thou art conscious of Him!" [The angel] answered: "I am but a messenger of thy Sustainer, [who says,] `I shall bestow upon thee the gift of a son endowed with purity.'" Said she: "How can I have a son when no man has ever touched me? - for, never have I been a loose woman!" [The angel] answered: "Thus it is; [but] thy Sustainer says, `This is easy for Me; and [thou shalt have a son,] so that We might make him a symbol unto mankind and an act of grace from US. And it

was a thing decreed [by God]: and in time she conceived him, and then she withdrew with him to a far-off place. And [when] the throes of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree, she exclaimed: "Oh, would that I had died ere this, and had become a thing forgotten, utterly forgotten!" Thereupon [a voice] called out to her from beneath that [palm-tree]: "Grieve not! Thy Sustainer has provided a rivulet [running] beneath thee; and shake the trunk of the palm-tree towards thee: it will drop fresh, ripe dates upon thee. Eat, then, and drink, and let thine eye be gladdened! And if thou shouldst see any human being, convey this unto him: `Behold, abstinence from speech have I vowed unto the Most Gracious; hence, I may not speak today to any mortal.

Surah 19:30-33 [But] he said: "Behold, I am a servant of God. He has vouchsafed unto me revelation and made me a prophet, and made me blessed wherever I may be; and He has enjoined upon me prayer and charity as long as I live, and [has endowed me with] piety towards my mother; and He has not made me haughty or bereft of grace. "Hence, peace was upon me on the day when I was born, and [will be upon me] on the day of my death, and on the day when I shall be raised to life [again]!"

Surah 21:90 And so We responded unto him, and bestowed upon him the gift of John, having made his wife fit to bear him a child: [and,] verily, these [three] would vie with one another in doing good works, and would call unto Us in yearning and awe; and they were always humble before Us.

Surah 23:50 And [as We exalted Moses, so, too,] We made the son of Mary and his mother a symbol [of Our grace], and provided for both an abode in a lofty place of lasting restfulness and unsullied springs.

Surah 33:7 AND LO! We did accept a solemn pledge from all the prophets from thee, [O Muhammad,] as well as from Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and Jesus the son of Mary -: for We accepted a most weighty, solemn pledge from [all of] them,

Surah 42:13 In matters of faith, He has ordained for you that which He had enjoined upon Noah - and into which We gave thee [O Muhammad] insight through revelation as well as that which We had enjoined upon Abraham, and Moses, and Jesus: Steadfastly uphold the [true] faith, and do not break up your unity therein. [And even though] that [unity of faith] to which thou callest them appears oppressive to those who are wont to ascribe to other beings or forces a share in His divinity, God draws unto Himself everyone who is willing, and guides unto Himself everyone who turns unto Him.

Surah 43:57-64 NOW WHENEVER [the nature of] the son of Mary is set forth as an example, [O Muhammad,] lo! thy people raise an outcry on this score, and say, "Which is better - our deities or he?" [But] it is only in the spirit of dispute that they put this comparison before thee: yea, they are contentious folk! [As for Jesus,] he was nothing but [a human being -] a servant [of Ours] whom We had graced [with prophethood], and whom We made an example for the children of Israel. And had We so willed, [O you who worship angels,] We could indeed have made you into angels succeeding one another on earth! AND, BEHOLD, this [divine writ] is

indeed a means to know [that] the Last Hour [is bound to come]; hence, have no doubt whatever about it, but follow Me: this [alone] is a straight way. And let not Satan bars you [from it] - for, verily, he is your open foe! NOW WHEN Jesus came [to his people] with all evidence of the truth, he said: "I have now come unto you with wisdom, and to make clear Unto you some of that on which you are at variance: hence, be conscious of God, and pay heed unto me. "Verily, God is my Sustainer as well as your Sustainer; so worship [none but] Him: this [alone] is a straight way!"

Surah 57:27 And thereupon We caused [other of] Our apostles to follow in their footsteps; and [in the course of time] We caused them to be followed by Jesus, the son of Mary, upon whom We bestowed the Gospel; and in the hearts of those who [truly] followed him We engendered compassion and mercy. But as for monastic asceticism - We did not enjoin it upon them: they invented it themselves out of a desire for God's goodly acceptance. But then, they did not [always] observe it as it ought to have been observed: and so We granted their recompense unto such of them as had [truly] attained to faith, whereas many of them became iniquitous.

Surah 61:6 And [this happened, too,] when Jesus, the son of Mary, said: "O children of Israel! Behold, I am an apostle of God unto you, [sent] to confirm the truth of whatever there still remains of the Torah, and to give [you] the glad tiding of an apostle who shall come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad." But when he [whose coming Jesus had foretold] came unto them with all evidence of the truth, they said: "This [alleged message of his] is [nothing but] spellbinding eloquence!"

Surah 61:14 O YOU who have attained to faith! Be helpers [in the cause of God - even as Jesus, the son of Mary, said unto the white-garbed ones, "Who will be my helpers in God's cause?" - whereupon the white-garbed [disciples] replied, "We shall be [thy] helpers [in the cause] of God!" And so [it happened that] some of the children of Israel came to believe [in the apostleship of Jesus], whereas others denied the truth. But [now] We have given strength against their foes unto those who have [truly] attained to faith: and they have become the ones that shall prevail.

Jesus in the Qur'an – Answering Islam

The Qur'an discusses some relatively superficial incidents in the life of Jesus. However, in spite of the fact that the Qur'an, and some Muslims, holds Jesus in high regard as a Prophet, the Qur'an says virtually nothing about the teachings of Jesus. For that, we must turn to the Bible and the New Testament where those who were witnesses to His life, works, and teachings established a record. Muhammad lived 600 years after Jesus and had a poor understanding of the New Testament and a poorer understanding of the teachings of Jesus.

There are many wonderful materials giving biblical answers to Islam and the Qur'an and I have listed a few links below. In this present post, let us focus on a single point. The Qur'an goes to great length to record the virgin birth. Yet, Muhammad insists that Jesus is no more than a Prophet like Noah and Moses (Sura 5:75). What then is the significance of the virgin birth?

The virgin birth is an essential doctrine of historic Christianity. To be the perfect sacrifice required that Jesus be free of sin. Yet, Christ also had to be fully man. The virgin birth solved both of these requirements: Christ was born of a woman so as to be fully man; yet was born as result of the miraculous intervention of God, by means of the Holy Spirit -- the result of which was that Adam's sin nature was not passed to Jesus.

The virgin birth was prophesied in the Old Testament, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14). The Apostles recognized Isaiah's sign as applying to Jesus. They affirmed the virgin birth. "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel' -- which means, 'God with us'" (Matthew 1:22-23).

The virgin birth was announced in the New Testament. "You will be with child and give birth to a son. 'How will this be,' Mary asked the angel, 'since I am a virgin?' The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God'" (Luke 1:34-35).

Muhammad, and the Qur'an, misses the significance of this historical event. Jesus was born of a virgin because he was not like other prophets. Jesus arrived as the Lamb of God, ready to take away the sins of the world.