

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

Monthly Bulletin of International
Community of Submitters

www.masjidtucson.org



Published by Masjid Tucson
Jumada I 1444

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Christianity: an "Islamic" Outlook

True Islam and true Christianity both teach harmony, love and mercy. Many unfortunate events have taken place between these two great religions. Every historical episode should be assessed in light of its original circumstance. We are not just in an age of information but of mass communication. We can, God willing, evaluate our knowledge and seriously consider whether ongoing misunderstandings are based on conjecture or from confirmed Scripture.

Invitation to All Believers [3:64] Say, "O followers of the scripture, let us come to a logical agreement between us and you: that we shall not worship except GOD; that we never set up any idols besides Him, nor set up any human beings as lords beside GOD." If they turn away, say, "Bear witness that we are submitters."

At the outset, can we say that Christianity is divinely ordained? Praise God, of course, we can. From the Quran, we learn that all religions which originate from the same Divine Source preached one and the same message. *Only One Religion [42:13] He decreed for you the same religion*

decreed for Noah, and what we inspired to you, and what we decreed for Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: "You shall uphold this one religion, and do not divide it." [4:136] O you who believe, you shall believe in GOD and His messenger, and the scripture He has revealed through His messenger, and the scripture He has revealed before that. Anyone who refuses to believe in GOD, and His angels, and His scriptures, and His messengers, and the Last Day, has indeed strayed far astray

If we are fortunate enough, God willing, to meet Jesus in the Hereafter, he would be more proud of righteous Submitters that most of his so-called devout "followers" who deify him and do not adhere to what he stood for. *[3:52] When Jesus sensed their disbelief, he said, "Who are my supporters towards GOD?" The disciples said, "We are GOD's supporters; we believe in GOD, and bear witness that we are submitters.*

God, be He glorified, is high above having any partners. We do not believe that Jesus is God or the son of God or one third of a holy Trinity. In

fact, this is the furthest from his teachings. He never declared any of these beliefs and would have spurned these claims.

We do believe that Jesus was born of Virgin Birth and that his mother Mary was a saint. We may be asked, "How can someone born to a virgin not be divine?" An answer is in *[3:59] The example of Jesus, as far as GOD is concerned, is the same as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him, "Be," and he was.*

The creation of a complete physical man with no parents would be more astounding than one who was born of a virgin. So, if believers don't consider Adam to be divine then why should Jesus be divine?

Jesus was chosen by God to call to faith and righteousness. *[5:75] The Messiah, son of Mary, is no more than a messenger like the messengers before him, and his mother was a saint. Both of them used to eat the food. Note how we explain the revelations for them, and note how they still deviate!*

God has given Jesus a special status:

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[3:45] *The angels said, "O Mary, GOD gives you good news: a Word from Him whose name is 'The Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary.' He will be prominent in this life and in the Hereafter, and one of those closest to Me. [3:55] Thus, GOD said, "O Jesus, I am terminating your life, raising you to Me, and ridding you of the disbelievers. I will exalt those who follow you above those who disbelieve, till the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me is the ultimate destiny of all of you, then I will judge among you regarding your disputes.*

The Quran also names churches as being among those places of worship where God's name is frequently commemorated. [22:40] *They were evicted from their homes unjustly, for no reason other than saying, "Our Lord is GOD." If it were not for GOD's supporting of some people against others, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and masjids—where the name of GOD is commemorated frequently—would have been destroyed. Absolutely, GOD supports those who support Him. GOD is Powerful, Almighty.*

We know that the Christians departed from Jesus' own teachings in their adoration and veneration of Jesus. His instructions were lost or corrupted, and claims were brought forth which he never said for himself. After he passed away, he was elevated to be a son of God and then a third of a Trinity and then God Himself.

[19:88-93] *They said, "The Most Gracious has begotten a son!" You have uttered a gross blasphemy. The heavens are about to shatter, the earth is about to tear asunder, and the mountains are about to crumble. Because they claim that the Most Gracious has begotten a son. It is not befitting the Most Gracious that He should beget a son. Every single one in the heavens and the earth is a servant of the Most Gracious.*

We are told: *You Shall Not Make Any Distinction Among God's Messengers [2:285] The messenger has believed in*

what was sent down to him from his Lord, and so did the believers. They believe in GOD, His angels, His scripture, and His messengers: "We make no distinction among any of His messengers." They say, "We hear, and we obey. Forgive us, our Lord. To You is the ultimate destiny."

A true Muslim cannot say that "our prophet" (Muhammad) was better than Jesus. Similarly, no true Christian can say that "his Jesus" was better than any other prophet.

All prophets and messengers called to the one true faith – Submission to God alone (Islam). *Submission: The Only Religion [3:19] The only religion approved by GOD is "Submission." Ironically, those who have received the scripture are the ones who dispute this fact, despite the knowledge they have received, due to jealousy. For such rejectors of GOD's revelations, GOD is most strict in reckoning. They had one mission, to worship God alone and reject all other gods and deities. God is the only One worthy of worship.*

God tells us what Jesus will say on the Day of Resurrection. [5:116-118] *GOD will say, "O Jesus, son of Mary, did you say to the people, 'Make me and my mother idols beside GOD?'" He will say, "Be You glorified. I could not utter what was not right. Had I said it, You already would have known it. You know my thoughts, and I do not know Your thoughts. You know all the secrets. "I told them only what You commanded me to say, that: 'You shall worship GOD, my Lord and your Lord.' I was a witness among them for as long as I lived with them. When You terminated my life on earth, You became the Watcher over them. You witness all things. "If You punish them, they are Your constituents. If You forgive them, You are the Almighty, Most Wise."*

What does the Quran say about the basic characteristics of Christians?

[3:113-114] *They are not all the same; among the followers of the scripture, there are those who are righteous.*

They recite GOD's revelations through the night, and they fall prostrate. They believe in GOD and the Last Day, they advocate righteousness and forbid evil, and they hasten to do righteous works. These are the righteous.

[3:199] *Surely, some followers of the previous scriptures do believe in GOD, and in what was revealed to you, and in what was revealed to them. They reverence GOD, and they never trade away GOD's revelations for a cheap price. These will receive their recompense from their Lord. GOD is the most efficient in reckoning.*

[5:83-85] *When they hear what was revealed to the messenger, you see their eyes flooding with tears as they recognize the truth therein, and they say, "Our Lord, we have believed, so count us among the witnesses. "Why should we not believe in GOD, and in the truth that has come to us, and hope that our Lord may admit us with the righteous people?" GOD has rewarded them for saying this; He will admit them into gardens with flowing streams. They abide therein forever. Such is the reward for the righteous.*

The Christians who are righteous and humble get a special status. [5:82] *You will find that the worst enemies of the believers are the Jews and the idol worshipers. And you will find that the closest people in friendship to the believers are those who say, "We are Christian." This is because they have priests and monks among them, and they are not arrogant.*

The people of the Scripture are mentioned because God wants us to interrelate with them and be nice to them. [29:46] *Do not argue with the people of the scripture (Jews, Christians, & Muslims) except in the nicest possible manner—unless they transgress—and say, "We believe in what was revealed to us and in what was revealed to you, and our god and your god is one and the same; to Him we are submitters."*

If we communicate and understand one another better, the consequent

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inter-faith harmony will be a positive progressive move to ensure serenity and patience worldwide. The Quran is the truth and is undeniable by anyone who possesses insight and a lucid and rational understanding of God.

Who then will be redeemed? Who inherits Paradise? Heaven belongs to God and we only judge in light of the Quran. We cannot profess to have some kind of guarantee. We cannot restrict the path to Heaven according to our whim and fancy. It is best to stick to what God says in the proven Scripture. *[4:122-124] As for those who believe and lead a righteous life, we will admit them into gardens with flowing streams, wherein they live forever. Such is the truthful promise of GOD. Whose utterances are more truthful than GOD's? It is not in accordance with your wishes, or the wishes of the people of the scripture: anyone who commits evil pays for it, and will have no helper or supporter, against GOD. As for those who lead a righteous life, male or female, while believing, they enter Paradise; without the slightest injustice.*

[2:62] Surely, those who believe, those who are Jewish, the Christians, and the converts; anyone who (1) believes in GOD, and (2) believes in the Last Day, and (3) leads a righteous life, will receive their recompense from their Lord. They have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve.

Alim

* * * * *

[Matthew 7:21-23] None of those who cry out, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of God but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. When the day comes, many will plead with me, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? Have we not exorcised demons by its power? Did we not do many miracles in your name as well?" Then I will declare to them solemnly, "I never knew you. Out of my sight, you evildoers!"

Christmas vs. the real story of Jesus

This is supposedly "The Most Wonderful Time of Year" according to a song. Parties, roasting chestnuts, and caroling out in the snow.

More than 2 billion people in more than 160 countries consider Christmas to be the most important holiday of the year. In the United States, 9 out of 10 people celebrate the holiday—even if they are not Christian. I grew up Jewish and it was a challenge for me to get into the "Christmas spirit" with my Christian wife and our boys. As I came into Submission, I wanted them to understand the real story without feeling left out, as all their friends boasted about all the gifts they'd received. So, we decided to celebrate New Year's as our 'family holiday'. Being in the toy industry, December was a very exhausting month. We thought rewarding ourselves with a family gathering, good food, and presents on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day was a good compromise. We pretty much kept everything generic as far as decorations were concerned with the exception of stockings. I gave in on that one. We did have a mantel after all. So, we would host a party on New Year's eve, and New Year's day we'd have an elaborate brunch with the extended family and afterwards sit in the living room taking turns opening the presents stacked around the fire place. It was a nice family tradition that I have many fond memories of.

Here are some interesting facts that I found while researching this topic.

When Christianity first began, Jesus's birth wasn't celebrated—Easter was the main holiday. The Bible doesn't even mention a specific birth date for Jesus, and some Christians believe the birth took place on January 6, not December 25. That date, according to some, still

belonged to the Juvenalia holiday which was a Roman holiday.

After Jesus' death many sects of Christianity emerged. It was the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD which attempted to homogenize Christianity so it would become acceptable to more people and pagans. In 381 the Council of Nicaea came out with its Creed declaring the divinity of Jesus. Even at this time there was no Christmas as we know it. Many people still celebrated the Solstice.

In the 4th Century Pope Julius I selected December 25 as the official birthdate of Jesus. It's generally believed that this date was chosen to coincide with pagan traditions of the time, hoping to draw pagans into a different pagan ritual.

By the Middle Ages, the practice of celebrating Christmas had spread around the globe. Christ's birth was celebrated on December 25, and January 6 became the date that people marked the Feast of the Epiphany, commemorating when the wise men arrived in Bethlehem and found Jesus in the manger. (The period of time between both dates would become known as the 12 days of Christmas.)

With religious reforms of the 17th century, Christmas fell into disfavor. It wasn't declared a federal holiday in the US until 1870. But then it gained great momentum, and more and more traditions were added as immigrants brought their festive ideas with them. These include: Christmas trees—millions of live trees are sold each year in the US.

Parties—in the Middle Ages Christmas was celebrated much like Mardi Gras. Poinsettia plants—brought from Mexico in 1828 and loved for their red and green colors.

None of the contemporary Christmas customs have their origin in theological or liturgical affirmations, and most are of fairly recent date. Christmas carols, such as White Christmas, I'll be home for Christmas, Winter Wonderland, Silver

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MASJID TUCSON United Submitters International

PO Box 43476 Tucson AZ 85733-3476 USA

Tel: (520) 323 7636

internet web site: www.masjiduntucson.org

e-mail: info@masjiduntucson.org (or: masjiduntucson@gmail.com)

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ISSN 1089-053X

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Bells, and many more were written by Jewish composers. And the beloved Christmas classic story, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer was written by a Jewish Chicago copywriter named Robert May. He had started the book and then his wife died of cancer. He continued to work on it, saying, "I needed Rudolph now more than ever." Remembering his daughter's love for the deer at the Lincoln Park Zoo, May thought up a little reindeer with a shiny nose. He felt this creature might become a symbol for lighting up happier times ahead. He was right. It sold millions of copies in 1939 when it came out and continued to be a best-seller after WWII. How ironic is it that many of today's modern Christmas songs were written by Jews? You'll notice that their songs don't mention Jesus. It's about the most wonderful time of the year, and snow, and silver bells and a red nose reindeer. Surprisingly secular.

All of that is delightful and can be fun. But what's the real story of the birth and life of Jesus? Well, we know absolutely from the Quran.

[3:42] *The angels said, "O Mary, GOD has chosen you and purified you. He has chosen you from all the women. [3:43] "O Mary, you shall submit to your Lord, and prostrate and bow down with those who bow down." [3:44] This is news from the*

past that we reveal to you. You were not there when they drew their raffles to select Mary's guardian. You were not present when they argued with one another. [3:45] The angels said, "O Mary, GOD gives you good news: a Word from Him whose name is 'The Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary.' He will be prominent in this life and in the Hereafter, and one of those closest to Me. [3:46] "He will speak to the people from the crib, as well as an adult; he will be one of the righteous." [3:47] She said, "My Lord, how can I have a son, when no man has touched me?" He said, "GOD thus creates whatever He wills. To have anything done, He simply says to it, 'Be,' and it is. [3:48] "He will teach him the scripture, wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel." [3:49] As a messenger to the Children of Israel: "I come to you with a sign from your Lord—I create for you from clay the shape of a bird, then I blow into it, and it becomes a live bird by GOD's leave. I restore vision to the blind, heal the leprous, and I revive the dead by GOD's leave. I can tell you what you eat, and what you store in your homes. This should be a proof for you, if you are believers. [3:50] "I confirm previous scripture—the Torah—and I revoke certain prohibitions imposed upon you. I come to you with sufficient proof from your Lord. Therefore, you shall observe GOD, and obey me. [3:51] "GOD is my Lord and your Lord; you shall worship Him alone.

This is the right path." [3:52] When Jesus sensed their disbelief, he said, "Who are my supporters towards GOD?" The disciples said, "We are GOD's supporters; we believe in GOD, and bear witness that we are submitters. [3:53] "Our Lord, we have believed in what You have sent down, and we have followed the messenger; count us among the witnesses."

[19:24] *(The infant) called her from beneath her, saying, "Do not grieve. Your Lord has provided you with a stream. [19:25] "If you shake the trunk of this palm tree, it will drop ripe dates for you. *19:25 Thus, Jesus was born in late September or early October. This is when dates ripen in the Middle East to the point of falling off the tree.*

[4:171] *O people of the scripture, do not transgress the limits of your religion, and do not say about GOD except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, was a messenger of GOD, and His word that He had sent to Mary, and a revelation from Him. Therefore, you shall believe in GOD and His messengers. You shall not say, "Trinity." You shall refrain from this for your own good. GOD is only one god. Be He glorified; He is much too glorious to have a son. To Him belongs everything in the heavens and everything on earth. GOD suffices as Lord and Master.*

And that's the real story of Jesus. Praise God.

Bob