



ELEVEN FACTS ABOUT JESUS

(PEACE BE UPON HIM)
AND HIS MOTHER

(MARY)

IN THE ISLAMIC TEACHINGS





In the Name of Allah,
the Most Gracious,
the Most Merciful



ELEVEN FACTS ABOUT JESUS (PEACE BE UPON HIM) AND HIS MOTHER (MARY) IN THE ISLAMIC TEACHINGS

The Quran highlights the important aspects of Jesus' birth, along with his miracles, his mission, and his ascension. The Quranic account of Jesus' ministry confirms most of his miracles mentioned in the Bible; it even identifies some that are not mentioned in the Bible. What we know about Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be

upon him) can be divided into two topics: his personality and his message. The following are eleven facts that you should know about Jesus (peace be upon him) in the Islamic teachings.

01 THE STATUS OF JESUS (PEACE BE UPON HIM) IN ISLAM

Islam teaches that Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) is one of the most respected prophets because of his efforts in spreading the word of Allah. Muslims display a true spirit of love towards him and his mother, Mary. There is not a single disparaging remark against Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) or any other prophet in the entire Quran or in other Islamic literature or Islamic history books. Evidence of praise for Jesus (peace be upon him) is the fact that his story, along with that

of his mother, is mentioned in three places in the Quran: Chapters 3, 4, and 19. In fact, an entire chapter of the Quran (Chapter 19) is named ‘Maryam’ (Mary) in her honour.

Another sign of praise is that the name of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) is mentioned twenty-five times in the Quran; in contrast, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is mentioned by name only four times. This proves that Islam honours all prophets for the message they have in common; it did not disregard earlier prophets with the coming of another.

Jesus (peace be upon him) has been referred to in the Quran by many titles: Ibn Maryam (son of Mary), the Messiah (the anointed one), Abdullah (slave of Allah), and Rasool Allah (Messenger of Allah).

This praise and glorification agree with what Jesus (peace be upon him) is reported to have said about the prophet who would succeed him, “He will glorify me.” (John 16:14)

02 THE BEGINNING OF JESUS’ LINEAGE

The Quranic account of Jesus (peace be upon him) starts with the story of his grandmother, the wife of Imran. When she conceived Mary, she vowed to dedicate her unborn child to the worship of Allah and to the service of Bayt al-Maqdis.

Mary grew up to be very righteous. She dedicated herself to the service of Bayt al-Maqdis and to the worship of Allah, the Exalted, and she received provisions from Him. Therefore, it is no mystery as to why she was chosen to be the mother of Jesus (peace be upon him). The Quranic verses inform us:



{[Mention, O Muhammad,] when the wife of ‘Imran said: My Lord, indeed I have pledged to You what is in my womb, consecrated [for Your service],¹ so accept this from me. Indeed, You are the Hearing, the Knowing. But when she delivered her, she said: My Lord, I have delivered a female-and Allah was most knowing of what she delivered-and the male is not like the female. I have named her Mary, and I seek refuge for her in You and [for] her descendants from Satan, the expelled [from the mercy of Allah].

So, her Lord accepted her with good acceptance and caused her to grow in a good manner and put her in the care of Zachariah. Every time Zachariah visited her in the prayer chamber, he found with her provision. He said: O Mary, from where is this [coming] to you? She said: It is from Allah. Indeed, Allah provides for whom He wills without account.} (Quran 3: 35-37)

It is interesting to note that when the mother of Mary delivered her child, she was a bit disappointed to discover that she did not have a son, because she had always wished for her child to be dedicated to the worship of Allah. Little did she know that this very child would be extremely righteous and would end up being the mother of Jesus himself. This was better for her than a son, hence Allah's words: {...and Allah was most knowing of what she delivered...}

03 THE STATUS OF MARY

Mary, mother of Jesus, is very highly respected in Islam. Her story is an important one that is mentioned several times in the Quran. Mary is mentioned by name thirty-one times in the Quran, and an entire chapter is named after her. This is an honour that not even the women in Prophet Muhammad's family were accorded. Although there are stories and anecdotes in the Quran about other women of strong faith, and others of importance in the history of the three Abrahamic religions, none other than Mary is actually mentioned by name.

Allah has said:

{And [mention] when the angels said:
O Mary, indeed Allah has chosen you

and purified you and chosen you above the women of the worlds. O Mary, be devoutly obedient to your Lord and prostrate and bow with those who bow [in prayer]. That is from the news of the unseen which We reveal to you [O Muhammad]...} (Quran 3: 42-44)

04 THE NEWS ABOUT JESUS (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

When Mary approached adulthood, she was informed well before Jesus' birth about the honour of bearing this noble son. It was the angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) who appeared in front of her with this news. The following verses in the Quran describe the dialogue between Mary and the angel:

{[And mention] when the angels said: O Mary, indeed Allah gives you good tidings of a word from Him, whose name will be the Messiah, Jesus, the

son of Mary-distinguished in this world and the hereafter and among those brought near [to Allah]. He will speak to the people in the cradle and in maturity and will be of the righteous. She said: My Lord, how will I have a child when no man has touched me? [The angel] said: Such is Allah; He creates what He wills. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it: Be-and it is.} (Quran 3: 45-47)





05 THE BIRTH OF JESUS (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

Mary conceived this child miraculously (and this was the first miracle of Jesus) and retired to a distant place where she waited for the birth of her child. This amazing story has been related to us in Chapter 19 of the Quran, titled Maryam (Mary):

{So she conceived him, and she withdrew with him to a remote place. And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm tree. She said: Oh,

I wish I had died before this and was in oblivion, forgotten. But he called her from below her: Do not grieve; your Lord has provided beneath you a stream. And shake toward you the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop upon you ripe, fresh dates. So eat and drink and be contented. And if you see from among humanity anyone, say: Indeed, I have vowed to the Most Merciful abstention, so I will not speak today to [any] man.} (Quran 19: 22-26)

Allah created Adam from neither a man nor a woman, while he created Eve from the rib of a man (Adam). He has created the rest of humanity, both male and female, from the union of males and females. From the union of a man and woman, He can create males only, females only, both males and females, or no offspring at all (if one or both of them are infertile). He is the Creator

and All-powerful. He can create from elderly men and women, as He did with Prophets Abraham and Zachariah and their wives, who were given Isaac and John the Baptist, respectively. Bearing that in mind, the creation of Jesus through the medium of a woman, but without the intervention of a man, is certainly possible and in accordance with the notion that Allah creates whoever and however He wills; thus, it is not difficult to believe and accept.

{Indeed, the example of Jesus to Allah is like that of Adam. He created Him from dust; then He said to him: Be-and he was.} (Quran 3: 59)



06 SUBSEQUENT MIRACLES OF JESUS (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was blessed with the ability to perform many miracles. This supported his claim that he was a prophet sent by Allah Almighty, Who has said:

{...And We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear proofs and supported him with the pure spirit...} (Quran 2: 87)

Muslims do not hesitate to accept that Jesus (peace be upon him) performed miracles. At the same time, Muslims do not elevate Jesus (peace be upon him) to the position of Allah or describe him as the ‘son of God’. They do not consider him to be anything more than a divinely-inspired man: a messenger and prophet of Allah.

The same applies to all the other prophets, since many of them were blessed with different miracles as well.

The first miracle associated with Jesus (peace be upon him) was that he was born from a mother without any human intervention (father). Allah gave the divine command “Be,” and he was created.

The Quran has mentioned the miraculous creation of both Adam and Jesus in the following verse (which was mentioned in the previous section):

{Indeed, the example of Jesus to Allah is like that of Adam. He created Him from dust; then He said to him: Be-and he was.} (Quran 3: 59)

The Quran has mentioned that Jesus' miraculous birth did not change his status as a human; in other words, he did not evolve from a human being to become Allah or a son of Allah. If that had been the case, then Adam would have had a greater right to such an honour, since he was born without a human father OR mother.

Another miracle was that Allah gave Jesus (peace be upon him) the ability to speak as a new-born baby, a blessing which helped save his mother from the harsh slander of her own community. This remarkable story has been narrated in the Quran:

{Then she brought him to her people, carrying him. They said: O Mary, you have certainly done a thing unprecedented. O sister of Aaron, your father was not a man of evil, nor was your mother unchaste. So she pointed to him. They said: How can we speak to one who is in the cradle, a child? [Jesus] said: Indeed, I am the slave of Allah. He has given me the scripture and made me a prophet. And He has made me blessed wherever I am and has enjoined upon me prayer and zakah as long as I remain alive, and [made me] dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me a wretched tyrant. And peace is on me the day I was born and the day I will die and the day I am raised alive.}1 (Quran 19: 27-33)

Other subsequent miracles performed by Jesus (peace be upon him) have also been mentioned in the Quran:

{[The day] when Allah will say: O Jesus, son of Mary, remember My favour upon you and upon your mother when I supported you with the pure spirit and you spoke to the people in the cradle and in maturity;² and [remember] when I taught you writing and wisdom,¹ and the Torah and the Gospel,² and when you designed from clay [what was] like the form of a bird with My permission, then you breathed into it, and it became a bird with My permission; and you healed the blind and the leper with My permission; and when you brought forth the dead with My permission; and when I restrained the children of Israel from [killing] you when you came to them with clear proofs and those who disbelieved among them said: This is not but obvious magic.} (Quran 5: 110)

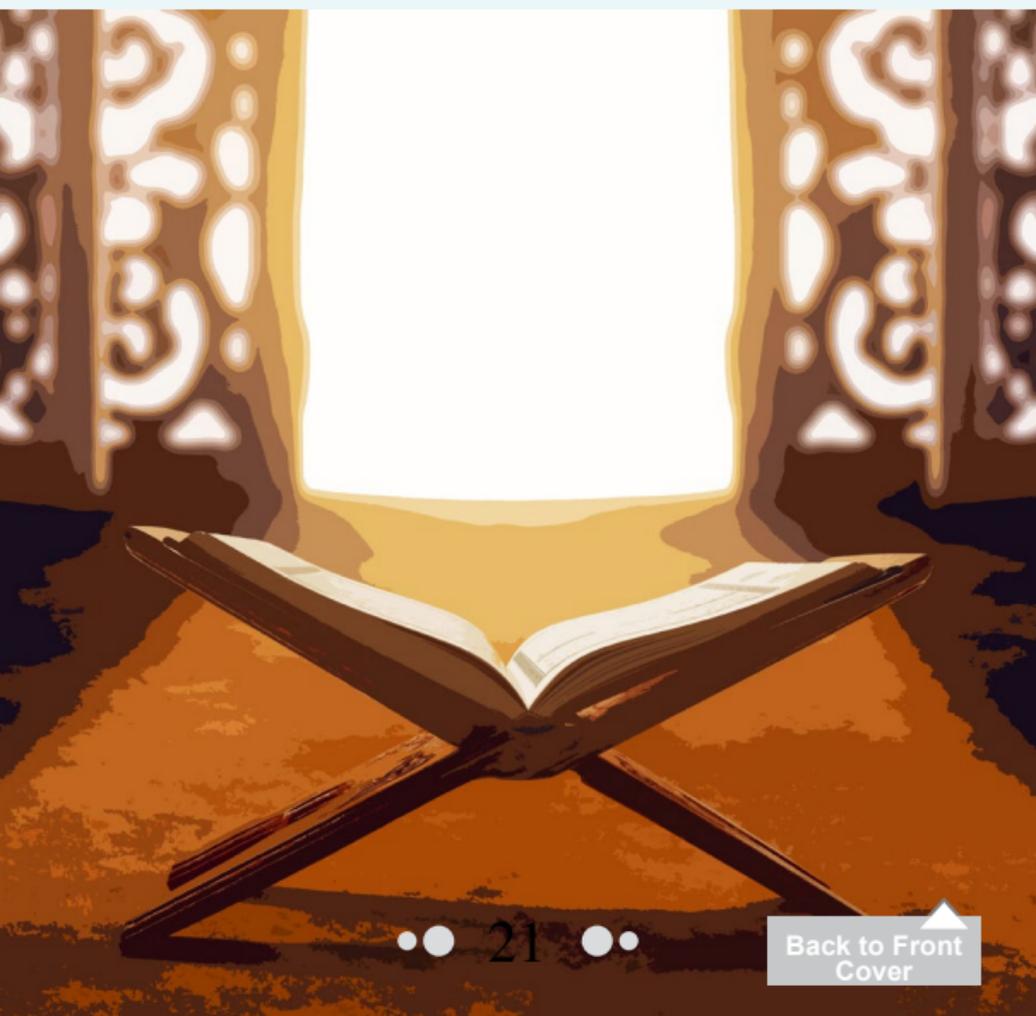
Indeed, the Islamic account of the miracles bestowed on Jesus (peace be upon him) describes more miracles than those known to Christians. Points 10 and 11 below describe two more miracles associated with Jesus (peace be upon him) and his role as the Messiah.

An important note

As shown in the previous verse, it was emphasized after mentioning each miracle that whenever Jesus (peace be upon him) performed a miracle, he informed people that it was by Allah's permission. He made it clear to his followers that he was not performing the miracle by himself. As Dr Philips points out:

There are texts in the New Testament which confirm that Jesus did not act on his own. Jesus is quoted in John

5:30 saying: I can of mine own self do nothing... In Acts 2:22, Paul writes: Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs **which God did through him** in your midst, as you yourselves know...





07 HUMAN QUALITIES OF JESUS (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

Islam forbids the deification of human beings (going to excess in the exaltation of human beings-prophets or otherwise-to the point where they perceive them to be divine). On the other hand, Christian beliefs teach that Jesus (peace be upon him) was human and divine at the same time. Addressing both the Jews and the Christians, Allah has said in the Quran:

{O People of the Scripture,² do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, was but a messenger of Allah, and His word which He directed to Mary, and a soul [created at a command] from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers. And do not say: Three; desist-it is better for you. Indeed, Allah is but one God. Exalted is He above having a son. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth, and sufficient is Allah as Disposer of affairs. Never would the Messiah disdain to be a slave of Allah, nor would the angels near [to Him]. And whoever disdains His worship and is arrogant-He will gather them to Himself all together. And as for those who believed and did righteous deeds, He will give them in full their rewards and grant them extra from His bounty.

But as for those who disdained and were arrogant, He will punish them with a painful punishment, and they will not find for themselves besides Allah any protector or helper. O humankind, there has come to you a conclusive proof from your Lord, and We have sent down to you a clear light. So those who believe in Allah and hold fast to Him-He will admit them to mercy from Himself and bounty and guide them to Himself on a straight path.} (Quran 4: 171-175)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also warned against the deification of humans. He said:

«O people, beware of going to excesses in religion, for verily people before you were destroyed for going to excesses in religion.» (Recorded by Ibn Majah and Nasai with a sound chain of narration)

Being a human prophet, Jesus (peace be upon him) did not ask people to worship him, and there is no evidence in the Bible that he did so. Allah has informed us in the Quran that on the Day of Judgement, He will gather all the nations in front of Himself and will ask the messengers how they were received by their peoples and what they said to them. Among those who are going to be questioned is Jesus (peace be upon him):

{And [beware the day] when Allah will say: O Jesus, son of Mary, did you say to the people: Take me and my mother as deities besides Allah? He will say: Exalted are You! It was not for me to say that to which I have no right. If I had said it, You would have known it. You know what is within myself, and I do not know what is within Yourself. Indeed, it is You who is Knower of the unseen. I said not to them except what

You commanded me-to worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. And I was a witness over them as long as I was among them; but when You took me up, You were the Observer over them, and You are, over all things, Witness. If You should punish them-indeed they are Your slaves; but if You forgive them-indeed it is You who is the Exalted in Might, the Wise. Allah will say: This is the day when the truthful will benefit from their truthfulness. For them are gardens [in paradise] beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever, Allah being pleased with them, and they with Him. That is the great attainment.} (Quran 5: 116-119)

It is clear that Jesus' essence is different from Allah's essence, so it is not logical to say that Jesus is the son of Allah.



08 THE PROPHETHOOD OF JESUS (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

The Islamic view of Jesus (peace be upon him) is a moderate one, as it lies between the two extremes. The Jews rejected Jesus (peace be upon him) in his role as a prophet of Allah and called him an impostor. The Christians, on the other hand, considered him to be the son of God (Allah) and ‘God-incarnate’ in some cases; thus, they began worshipping him. Islam

considers Jesus (peace be upon him) to be one of the greatest prophets of Allah, Who has said:

{The Messiah, son of Mary, was not but a messenger; [other] messengers have passed on before him. And his mother was a supporter of truth.¹ They both used to eat food. Look how We make clear to them the signs; then look how they are deluded.} (Quran 5: 75)





09 THE MISSION OF JESUS (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

Now one might ask: what was the real mission of Jesus (peace be upon him) according to the Quran?

The answer is that Jesus (peace be upon him) propagated the message of monotheism: worship of Allah alone, as prescribed in the original Gospels. He worked hard to propagate this message, inviting all of the people of Israel to accept it. On the Day of Judgement, when Allah asks Jesus whether he instructed the Christians to worship him and his mother, Jesus will reply:

{I said not to them except what You commanded me-to worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord...} (Quran 5: 117)

The prophecy of Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a successor to Christ was a part of Jesus' message. Allah has mentioned:

{And [mention] when Jesus, the son of Mary, said: O children of Israel, indeed I am the messenger of Allah to you confirming what came before me of

the Torah and bringing good tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad. But when he came to them with clear evidences, they said: This is obvious magic.} (Quran 61: 6)

Though the Bible has been altered a great deal over time, it contains remnants of the original true message revealed to Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him). In this regard, the messenger of whom Jesus gave glad tidings and prophecies is still referred to in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible.

Jesus was a link in a long line of prophets and messengers whom Allah sent to various civilizations and nations whenever they needed guidance or deviated from His teachings. Jesus was sent by Allah especially to preach to the Jews, who had deviated

from the teachings of Moses and other messengers. Just as he was supported by Allah miraculously in his conception, birth and childhood, he was also supported by numerous miracles to prove that he was a messenger from Allah. However, a majority of Jews rejected his ministry.

It must be noted that Jesus Christ (peace be upon him), son of Mary, was the last in the line of prophets sent to the Jewish people exclusively.



10 THE ASCENSION OF JESUS (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

Jesus' ascension is the last miracle that was given to him while he was on the earth. The Jews and Romans attempted to kill him, but Allah replaced him with another man who resembled him, and it was this man who was killed. Jesus (peace be upon him) was neither killed nor crucified; rather, he was raised to Allah. To this day, the Christians believe that Jesus himself was the one who was killed, but Allah has said:

{And [for] their saying: Indeed, we have killed the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, the messenger of Allah. And they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him; but [another] was made to resemble him to them. And indeed, those who differ over it are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge of it except the following of assumption. And they did not kill him, for certain. Rather, Allah raised him to Himself. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise.} (Quran 4: 157-158)

11 THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

In the Islamic teachings, there is clear evidence indicating the second coming of Jesus (peace be upon him) before the final hour; this will be his final miracle. He will return not as God, as the

Christians believe, but as Jesus, Allah's messenger and slave, as he has always been. One of the purposes of his coming will be to correct the misconceptions surrounding his message and mission. According to a statement of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), he will stay for forty years, and these will be the happiest years of life on this earth. During that time, those who had misconceptions about him will correct their understanding and believe in him as a messenger, not as the son of God (Allah).

It was narrated by Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

«By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, it will not be long before the son of Mary descends amongst you, a

just judge and ruler. He will break the cross, kill the swine and abolish the jizyah.² Money will be so plentiful that no one will accept it. At that time, a single prostration will be better than this world and everything in it.

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) then said: Read if you wish (the following verse of the Quran):

{And there is none from the People of the Scripture but that he will surely believe in Jesus before his death. And on the Day of Resurrection, he will be against them a witness.} (Quran 4: 159)» (Recorded by Bukhari)

In another narration, Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said that:

«Among the things that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was recorded to have said regarding

Prophet Jesus' return is the following:

There will be no prophet between Jesus and me, and Jesus will return. When he does, you will know him. He will be a well-built man of ruddy complexion, and he will descend wearing a two-piece garment. His hair will look wet, though no water will have touched it. He will fight people to establish Islam and he will break the cross, kill the swine and cancel the jizyah. During his time, Allah will destroy all religions except Islam, and the Antichrist will be killed.¹ Jesus will remain on Earth for forty years, and when he dies, Muslims will pray the funeral prayer for him.» (A sound hadith recorded by Abu Dawood)

Jesus' return will be one of the signs of the Day of Judgement. It will be the final miracle given to him before he dies.

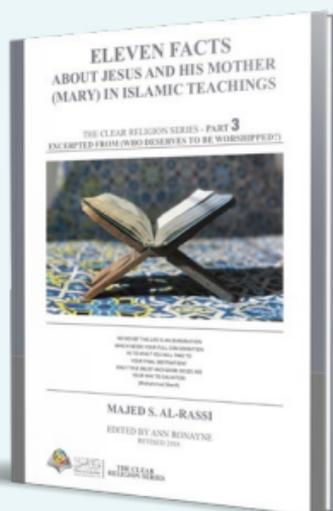


CONCLUSION

The eleven points in this chapter shed light on the personality of Jesus (peace be upon him) from the Islamic perspective. Splits and conflicts regarding the reality of Jesus' personality have existed over the last twenty centuries, as Christian teachings were heavily polluted with man-made thoughts and Roman beliefs, causing them to stray far from the inspiration revealed to Jesus (peace be upon him). These controversies have been cleared away by the teachings of Islam.

This is an excerpt
of a larger book titled
“**Eleven Facts about Jesus and his
Mother (Mary) in the Islamic Teachings**”
by Majed S. Al- Rassi.

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