

## CAN GOD HAVE A SON ?

In the time of Mohammed, pagan Meccans believed that God had daughters. According to Ibn Ishaq there were Christians who believed that the virgin Mary was God's mother and that the Christ<sup>1</sup> was the physical son of God. This could be why there are verses like these in the Qur'an:-

*The originator of heavens and earth! How can He have a child, when there is for Him no consort ...* <sup>2</sup>

*And (we believe) that He - exalted be the glory of our Lord - hath taken neither wife nor son.*<sup>3</sup>

Note that, in these verses, it is not God's ability to miraculously produce a son without copulation that is in question. Even so Muslims believe that words like *father* and *son* necessarily mean that the Father must have a wife in order to have a son. So they ask *How could Jesus be the son of God when God has no wife?*

## CAN GOD HAVE A WIFE ?

Generally, Muslims do not appreciate that no Christian believes the Lord Jesus was God's physical son by copulation. The Bible nowhere speaks of God having a wife. In it there is not the least suggestion of any sexual relationship between God and His creatures. Such an idea is utterly blasphemous and repulsive to Christians, as it is to Muslims. Christians are deeply horrified and grieved to discover this Muslim conjecture about their innermost faith. Obviously there has been some misunderstanding. Taken aback by our protestations, Muslims enquire: *Why use the term Son of God if you do not wish to be misunderstood?*

## ACCEPTABLE IDIOMS

Would it be wise to abandon the use of terminology that had the Christ's full approval? He said to his disciples, "*Whom do you say I am?*" Simon Peter answered, "*You are the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the living God*". The Lord Jesus' response was, "*No physical being revealed this to you, but My heavenly Father*".<sup>4</sup>

The words *father* and *son* need not be construed in a base way, otherwise consistency would oblige us to draw some improper conclusions from statements like the following:-

Mohammed had an uncle whose name was Abdul Uza, but in the Qur'an he is called *Abu Lahab* - the father of a flame. Obviously this does not mean that he sired a flame.<sup>5</sup>

A wayfarer is called, *Ibn as-sabeel* - son of the road. This does not mean that the road has a wife.<sup>6</sup>

There are many other similar examples such as these:-

*Om ul-Kitab* - the mother of the book.<sup>7</sup>

Mecca is called, *Om ul- Qurah* - the mother of villages.<sup>8</sup>

The wives of Mohammed are called the mothers of the believers (meaning all the Moslems).

Mohammed's cousin Ali was called *Abu Turab* - the father of dust.

One Mohammed's disciples was named *Abu Hurairah* - the father of a cat, because he was very fond of cats.

It is quite common, particularly in the eastern societies, for elderly men and women to call any young person *my daughter* or *my son*, even though they are not their real father and mother.

Just as it is not necessary to force an offensive interpretation on the foregoing, it is also not necessary to force an offensive interpretation on the Bible statements about the Lord Jesus being the Son of God, unless one wishes to be malicious. We appeal to all Muslims to try to appreciate -

## WHAT IS REALLY MEANT BY THE LORD JESUS' CLAIM TO BE "SON OF GOD"

When an angel gave glad tidings of a son to Mary, she said, "*How will this be 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. Consequently the one born will be even called Holy, Son of God*".<sup>9</sup>

What difference is there then between the Lord Jesus and Adam? This - Christ Jesus was no ordinary man:-

1) The Lord Jesus was superior to all His physical forefathers, including Adam! On one occasion the Lord Jesus asked, "*How do you view the Christ [Messiah]? Whose*

*son is He?*" They replied, "*David's son*" His response was, "*How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls Him Lord? ... If then David calls Him Lord how is He his son?*"<sup>11</sup>

2) He existed before His birth. He said, "*Before Abraham existed, I am!*".<sup>10</sup>

3) He reveals to us what God is like, "*Anyone having seen Me has seen the Father*".<sup>12</sup>

## WE NEED TO KNOW WHAT GOD IS LIKE

Not what does He look like, since God being Spirit is invisible, but rather:- Is He stern? Is He kind? Does He care about you and me? *No man has ever seen God. God's Only-begotten - has portrayed Him.*<sup>13</sup>

Nobody knows what Christ Jesus looked like. According to the prophet Isaiah, He was not attractive.<sup>14</sup> Supposed pictures of Him are pure conjecture. What really matters is what kind of person is He. The Bible, more than any other source, gives us comprehensive and accurate information on that. Learning about Jesus will help us to understand what God is like.

*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We contemplated His glory, being the glory of the only begotten from the Father full of goodwill and truth.*<sup>15</sup> Here, one of the Christ's closest apostles, in explaining that the Lord Jesus is the eternal Word of God says, *The Word was in the beginning and the Word was with God, also the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.*<sup>16</sup>

It is easy to understand that since God is eternal then His Word must also be eternal. No one on this earth has been called the Word of God, other than Jesus.

If Muslims can accept the idea that the eternal God gave expression to His eternal Word and it became the eternal Qur'an, then why should it not be possible to accept that God gave expression to His eternal Word in the Messiah, the Christ?

Why hesitate to accept that the Word was revealed in flesh, that is, He became *Son of Man*?

Even the Qur'an, 600 years later, acknowledged that Jesus was the *Word from God*.<sup>17</sup>

### THIS IS THE EVIDENCE?

He was *powerfully delineated - God's Son, by resurrection from the dead.*<sup>18</sup>

Before Christ Jesus ascended to heaven He required that all who wished to follow Him should undergo immersion in the name of the Son. He said, "*All authority was given to Me in heaven and on earth. Therefore go, disciple all the nations, immersing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe every thing, whatever I ordered you...*"<sup>19</sup>

Those who believed in Him were immersed in water thus depicting the Lord Jesus' death, burial and resurrection It is an established historical fact that right from the beginning Christians persistently preached the death, burial and resurrection of Christ Jesus in spite of vicious opposition, extreme forms of persecution and martyrdom. This testimony to the death, burial, resurrection and sonship of Christ Jesus has been with us right from the beginning.

### IF WE DENY HIM WE DENY GOD.

"... *He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who has sent Him.*"<sup>21</sup> If we disobey Him we risk God's anger, "*Anyone trusting in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, but God's wrath remains on him.*"<sup>22</sup> However, ... "*God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.*"<sup>23</sup>

### GOD DOES CARE ABOUT YOU AND ME.

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that everyone trusting in Him might not perish but have eternal life.*<sup>24</sup>

*God advocates His own love to us in this: We were still sinners yet Christ [the Messiah] died on our behalf.*<sup>25</sup>

Biblical prophecies made long before Christ Jesus lived on earth predicted that the Messiah would sacrifice His sinless life for our sins.<sup>26</sup> So you see being executed did not mean that He was a failure. If He had not both died and risen He would not have been the Messiah (that would have been failure). We urge you, do not spurn His Love. Heed what King David said beforehand about Him, *Kiss the Son lest He be angry and you are destroyed ... for His wrath can flare up in a moment. Blest are all who take refuge in Him.*<sup>27</sup>

### WHY?

The Lord Jesus declared, "*The Father ... has delegated all judgement to the Son.*"<sup>28</sup>

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#### References:

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|--|---|
| 1. "The Christ" means exactly the same as "The Messiah"      | 16. John 1:1-2                              |
| 2. Qur'an 6:102  | 17. Qur'an 3:45                             |
| 3. Qur'an 72:3   | 18. Romans 1:4                              |
| 4. Matthew 16:15-17  | 19. Matthew 28:18-20.                       |
| 5. Qur'an 111:1  | "immersion" is from a Greek word "βαπτίζω". |
| 6. Qur'an 2:177  | 20. Romans 6:3-4, Colossians 2:12           |
| 7. Qur'an 3:7,13:39,43:3                                     | 21. John 5:23                               |
| 8. Qur'an 6:93,42:8  | 22. John 3:36                               |
| 9. Luke 1:34-35  | 23. John 3:17                               |
| 10. John 8:58  | 24. John 3:16                               |
| 11. Matthew 22:41-45. c.p. with Psalm 110:1. circa 1,000 B.C | 25. Romans 5:8                              |
| 12. John 14:9  | 26. e.g. Isaiah 53:10,12                    |
| 13. John 1:18  | 27. Psalm 2:12 circa 1,000 B.C              |
| 14. Isaiah 53:2. circa 700 B.C                               | 28. John 5:22                               |
| 15. John 1:14  |   |

NOTE: All Quranic quotations are taken from "The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an" translated by Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall, Taj Company, Karachi.

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