[Jesus in Islam and Christmas](http://www.islamicity.org/6407/jesus-in-islam-and-christmas/" \o "Permalink to Jesus in Islam and Christmas)

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Many Christians are unaware that the true spirit of reverence which Muslims display towards Jesus http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Art/alaihissalam2%5b25x10%5d.JPG and his mother Mary spring from the fountainhead of their faith as prescribed in the Holy Quran. Most do not know that a Muslim does not take the name of Jesus http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Art/alaihissalam2%5b25x10%5d.JPG, without saying Eesa alai-hiss-salaam i.e. (Jesus peace be upon him).

Many Christians do not know that in the Holy Quran Jesus http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Art/alaihissalam2%5b25x10%5d.JPG is mentioned by name twenty-five times.  For example:

*.. We gave Jesus the son of Mary Clear (Signs) and strengthened him with the holy spirit. ..*[*Quran 2:87*](http://www.islamicity.com/quran.asp?s=002.087)

*Behold! the angels said: “O Mary! Allah gives thee glad tidings of a Word from Him: his name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honor in this world and the Hereafter and of (the company of) those nearest to Allah.*[*Quran 3:45*](http://www.islamicity.com/quran.asp?s=003.045)

*.. Christ Jesus the son of Mary was (no more than) an apostle of Allah .. [Quran 4:171](http://www.islamicity.com/quran.asp?s=004.171)*

*And in their footsteps We sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the Law that had come before him .. [Quran 5:46](http://www.islamicity.com/quran.asp?s=005.046)*

*And Zakariya and John, and Jesus and Elias: all in the ranks of the righteous:*[*Quran 6:85*](http://www.islamicity.com/quran.asp?s=006.085)

**The Quranic Titles of Jesus**

Though Jesus is mentioned by name in twenty-five places in the Holy Quran he is also addressed with respect as: “Ibne Maryam” – son of Mary; as Masi (Heb) Messiah – translated as Christ; “Abd-ullah” servant of Allah; “Rasul -Ullah” – Messenger of Allah.

He is spoken of as “the word of God”, as “the spirit of God”, as a “Sign of God”, and numerous other epithets of honor spread over fifteen different chapters. The Holy Quran honors this great Messenger of God, and over the past fourteen hundred years Muslims continue to hold Jesus as a symbol of truth.

**Christmas and 25th of December**

Jesus http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Art/alaihissalam2%5b25x10%5d.JPG is commonly considered to have been born on the 25th of December. However, it is common knowledge among Christian scholars that he was not born on this day. It is well known that the first Christian churches held their festival in May, April, or January. Scholars of the first two centuries AD even differ in which year he was born. Some believing that he was born fully twenty years before the current accepted date. So how was the 25th of December selected as the birthday of Jesus http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Art/alaihissalam2%5b25x10%5d.JPG?

Grolier’s encyclopedia says: “Christmas is the feast of the birth of Jesus Christ, celebrated on December 25 … Despite the beliefs about Christ that the birth stories expressed, the church did not observe a festival for the celebration of the event until the 4th century…. since 274, under the emperor Aurelian, Rome had celebrated the feast of the “Invincible Sun” on December 25. In the Eastern Church, January 6, a day also associated with the winter solstice, was initially preferred. In course of time, however, the West added the Eastern date as the Feast of the Epiphany, and the East added the Western date of Christmas”.

So who else celebrated the 25th of December as the birth day of their gods before it was agreed upon as the birth day of Jesus http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Art/alaihissalam2%5b25x10%5d.JPG? Well, there are the people of India who rejoice, decorate their houses with garlands, and give presents to their friends on this day. The people of China also celebrate this day and close their shops. Buddha is believed to have been born on this day. The great savior and god of the Persians, Mithras, is also believed to have been born on the 25th of December long before the coming of Jesus http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Art/alaihissalam2%5b25x10%5d.JPG.

The Egyptians celebrated this day as the birth day of their great savior Horus, the Egyptian god of light and the son of the “virgin mother” and “queen of the heavens” Isis. Osiris, god of the dead and the underworld in Egypt, the son of “the holy virgin”, again was believed to have been born on the 25th of December.

The Greeks celebrated the 25th of December as the birthday of Hercules, the son of the supreme god of the Greeks, Zeus, through the mortal woman Alcmene Bacchus, the god of wine and revelry among the Romans (known among the Greeks as Dionysus) was also born on this day.

Adonis, revered as a “dying-and-rising god” among the Greeks, miraculously was also born on the 25th of December. His worshipers held him a yearly festival representing his death and resurrection, in midsummer. The ceremonies of his birthday are recorded to have taken place in the same cave in Bethlehem which is claimed to have been the birth place of Jesus http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Art/alaihissalam2%5b25x10%5d.JPG.

The Scandinavians celebrated the 25th of December as the birthday of their god Freyr, the son of their supreme god of the heavens, Odin.

The Romans observed this day as the birthday of the god of the sun, Natalis Solis Invicti (“Birthday of Sol the invincible”). There was great rejoicing and all shops were closed. There was illumination and public games. Presents were exchanged, and the slaves were indulged in great liberties. These are the same Romans who would later preside over the council of Nicea (325 CE) which lead to the official Christian recognition of the “Trinity” as the “true” nature of God, and the “fact” that Jesus http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Art/alaihissalam2%5b25x10%5d.JPG was born on the 25th of December too.

In Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Gibbon says: “The Roman Christians, ignorant of his (Christ’s) birth, fixed the solemn festival to the 25th of December, the Brumalia, or Winter Solstice, when the Pagans annually celebrated the birth of Sol ” vol. ii, p. 383.

**Christians opposed to Christmas**

There are several Christian groups who are opposed to Christmas. For example, they take the verse from the Bible in Jeremiah 10:2-4 as an admonition against decorating Christmas trees.

The King James Version reads: “Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen…. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.”

In order to understand this subject, it is helpful to trace some of the history of Christmas avoidance, particularly its roots in Puritanism.

The Puritans believed that the first-century church modeled a Christianity that modern Christians should copy. They attempted to base their faith and practice solely on the New Testament, and their position on Christmas reflected their commitment to practice a pure, scriptural form of Christianity. Puritans argued that God reserved to himself the determination of all proper forms of worship, and that he disapproved of any human innovations – even innovations that celebrated the great events of salvation. The name *Christmas*also alienated many Puritans. *Christmas,*after all, meant “the mass of Christ.” The mass was despised as a Roman Catholic institution that undermined the Protestant concept of Christ, who offered himself once for all. The Puritans’ passionate avoidance of any practice that was associated with papal Rome caused them to overlook the fact that in many countries the name for the day had nothing to do with the Catholic mass, but focused instead on Jesus’ birth. The mass did not evolve into the form abhorred by Protestants until long after Christmas was widely observed. The two customs had separate, though interconnected, histories.

As ardent Protestants, Puritans identified the embracing of Christianity by the Roman Emperor Constantine in the early 300s CE as the starting point of the degeneration and corruption of the church. They believed the corruption of the church was brought on by the interweaving of the church with the pagan Roman state. To Puritans, Christmas was impure because it entered the Roman Church sometime in this period. No one knows the exact year or under what circumstances Roman Christians began to celebrate the birth of their Lord, but by the mid-300s CE, the practice was well established.

**Islam requires Muslims to respect the faith of others**

Regardless of historical facts and theological differences that Christians may have among themselves or theological differences Muslims may have with Christianity we cannot disregard the sentiments of practicing Christians who use this occasion to revere Jesus http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Art/alaihissalam2%5b25x10%5d.JPG.

Prophet Muhammad http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Other/saws1%5b26x22%5d.JPG was always very respectful towards the Christians. According to Islamic historians, Ibn e Saad and Ibn e Hisham, once there was a delegation of Byzantine Christians, who were traveling from Yemen to Madinah. The delegation was lead by a bishop by the name of Zqyd al-Usquf, who came to discuss a number of issues with Prophet Muhammad http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Other/saws1%5b26x22%5d.JPG. When the time of their prayer came, they asked the Prophet if they could do their worship in the mosque of the Prophet. He answered, “Conduct your service here in the mosque. It is a place dedicated to God.”

We should never ridicule the religious beliefs of others, no matter how much we disagree with them. God says in the Quran: *“And insult not those whom they worship besides God, lest they insult God wrongfully without knowledge. Thus We have made fair-seeming to each people its own doings; then to their Lord is their return and He shall then inform them of all that they used to do”.*[*Quran, 6:108*](http://www.islamicity.com/quran.asp?s=006.108)

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[Jesus in the Quran](http://www.islamicity.org/6405/jesus-in-the-quran/)

By: [Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi](http://www.islamicity.org/by/sayyid-abul-ala-maududi)   Source: [IslamiCity](http://www.islamicity.org/source/islamicity)

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Jesus or Isa in Arabic (peace be upon him) is of great significance in both Islam and Christianity. However, there are differences in terms of beliefs about the nature and life occurrences of Jesus http://www.islamicity.com/global/images/photo/Other/alayhisalam1_sm%5b44x12%5d.JPG. There are about 71 verses in the Quran that refer to Prophet Jesus.

Following is a translation and explanation of Chapter 3 verses 44 thru 60 by Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi, English rendering by Muhammad Akbar.

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*O Muhammad, these are the “unseen” things, We are revealing to you: you were not present there when the priests of the Temple were casting lots by throwing their quills to decide which of them should be the guardian of Mary: 43 nor were you with them when they were arguing about it. Quran 3:44*

Note 43: As Mary was a girl who had been dedicated by her mother to the Temple in the way of God, the question of her guardianship had become a problem for the keepers because of her sex. They were therefore casting lots to decide the delicate problem.

*And remember when the angels said, “O Mary, God sends you the good news of a Command of His: his name shall be Messiah, Jesus son of Mary. He will be highly honored in this world and in the Next World and he will be among those favored by God. He will speak to the people alike when in the cradle and when grown up, and he will be among the righteous.” Hearing this, Mary said, “How, O Lord, shall I have a son, when no man has ever touched me?” “Thus shall it be,”44 was the answer. God creates whatever He wills. When He decrees a thing, He only says, “Be” and it is. (Continuing their message, the angels added,) “And God will teach him the Book and wisdom, and give him the knowledge of the Torah and the Gospel, and appoint him as His Messenger to the children of Israel.” Quran 3:45-49*

Note 44 That is, “Although no man has touched you, yet a son shall be born to you.” It should be noted that the same word “kazalika, “meaning “so shall it be,” had been used in response to Zacharias’ prayer. It, therefore, carries the same sense here. Moreover, the whole context here corroborates the story that Mary was given the glad tidings of the birth of a son without any sexual intercourse, and the birth of Christ, in actual fact, took place in that unusual way. If a son was to be born to her in the normal known way, and if the event of the birth of Jesus had taker. place in a natural way, then the whole discourse starting from verse 33 and ending with verse 63 would become absolutely pointless. Not only that but all other references to the unusual birth of Jesus in the Qur’an would lose their significance and meaning. The Christians had made Jesus the Son of God and worthy of worship simply because of his unusual birth without a father and the Jews had accused Mary because they had witnessed that she had given birth to a child, though she was not married. Had it been otherwise, then the two groups could have been told plainly that the girl was married to such and such a man and that Jesus was from his seed. In that case, one fails to see the reason why such a long introduction and a series of arguments should have been necessary to remove all doubts about his miraculous birth. Then Jesus could have been called the son of a particular man, instead of being called “the son of Mary”. The position of those people who, on the one hand, profess to believe the Holy Qur’an to be the Word of God and on the other hand try to prove that Jesus was born after the natural coming together of a husband and wife, really try to show that God is not able to express Himself as clearly as these people. (May God protect us from blasphemy!)

*(And when he came as a Messenger to the children of Israel, he said,) “I have come to you with a clear Sign from your Lord: in your very presence, I make the likeness of a bird out of clay and breathe into it and it becomes, by God’s Command, a bird. I heal those born blind and the lepers and I bring to life the dead by God’s Command: I inform you of what you eat and what you store up in your houses. Surely there is a great Sign for you in all this, if you have a mind to believe. 45 And I have come to confirm those teachings of the Guidance of the Torah which are intact in my time. 46 Lo! I have come with a clear Sign from your Lord; 47 so fear God and obey me. Indeed God is my Lord, and also your Lord; therefore worship Him alone: that is the straight way.”48Quran 3:49-51*

Note 45 That is, “These Signs are clear enough to convince you that I have been sent by that God Who is the Creator and Absolute Ruler of this universe, provided that you are not obdurate but are willing to accept the Truth.”

Note 46 That is, “This is yet another proof of the fact that I have been sent by God. If I had been a false prophet I would have invented my own religion and by virtue of these miracles striven to divert you from your previous Faith to the New creed. But I profess the same original religion to be true and confirm the same teachings which were brought by the Prophets before me.”

The fact that Jesus taught the same religion that had been presented by Moses and the other Prophets is supported even by the existing Gospels. For example, according to the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus declared in the Sermon on the Mount: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” (5: 17).

One of the Pharisees, who was a lawyer, asked Jesus, “Which is the great commandment in the law?” He replied:

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and the great commandment. And the second is like. unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and Prophets.” (Matthew 22: 37-40).On another occasion Jesus said to his disciples:

“The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.” (Matthew 23: 2-3).

Note 47 That is, “I have come to efface and abolish the superstitions of your ignorant people, the hairsplitting of your jurists, the religious austerities of your ascetics and the restrictive additions made in the Law of God under the non-Muslim domination; I will make lawful or unlawful for you only those things which God has made lawful or unlawful.”

Note 48 This shows that like all other Prophets, Jesus also based his teachings on the following three fundamentals:

1. The Supreme Authority to which mankind should submit and surrender exclusively belongs to God and all the social and moral systems should be built entirely on it.
2. Being a representative of the same Paramount Power, a prophet must be obeyed unconditionally.
3. God alone is entitled to prescribe laws and regulations for making things lawful or unlawful, pure and impure; consequently all laws imposed by others must be abolished.

Thus it is clear that Jesus, Moses, Muhammad and all other Prophets (God’s peace be upon them all) had one and the same mission. Those people who say that different Prophets were sent with different missions and to fulfill different aims, are gravely mistaken. Anyone, who is delegated by the Absolute Master of the Universe to His subjects, cannot have any other mission than to prevent the people, from becoming disobedient to and independent of Him, and to forbid them to set others to rank with God as partners in His Authority in any way. For, they are sent to invite the people to surrender and submit and be loyal to the Almighty God and worship Him alone.

It is a pity that the existing Gospels do not present the mission of Jesus so precisely and clearly as it has been presented above in the Holy Qur’an. Nevertheless all the three basic things mentioned above are found scattered over in these Books. For instance, the fact that Jesus believed exclusively in the worship of God is clear from the following:

1. “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.” (Matthew 4: 10).
2. Not only did he believe in this, but also made it the ultimate aim of all his activities and strove to make the people of the earth to submit to the revealed Law of God just as the whole universe submits to His physical Law.

“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matthew 6 :10).

Then the fact that Jesus always presented himself as a prophet and as a representative of the Kingdom of Heaven, and always invited the people to follow him in that capacity alone, is supported by a number of his sayings. When he started his mission in his native place, Nazareth, the people of his own town and his own kinsfolk rose against him and according to an agreed tradition of Matthew, Mark and Luke, he said: “No prophet is accepted in his own country”. And when his enemies were conspiring at Jerusalem to kill him and the people advised him to go to somewhere else, he replied: “It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.” (Luke 13: 33).

When he was entering Jerusalem for the last time, his disciples began to utter in a loud voice: “Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord.” At this the Pharisees felt offended and asked him to silence his disciples. He replied:

“I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.” (Luke 19: 38-40).

On another occasion he said: “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart ….. my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11: 28-30). Moreover the fact that Jesus wanted the people to obey the Divine Law rather than man-made laws becomes clear from that tradition of Matthew and Mark which says that when the Pharisees asked, why his disciples transgressed the tradition of the elders and took food without washing their hands,. he replied and said, “Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written. This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups, and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto the, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.” (Mark 7 : 6-13).

*When Jesus perceived that the children of Israel were bent upon disbelief, he said, “Who will be my helper in the cause of God?” The disciples 49 (promptly responded and) said, “We are God’s helpers: 50 we have believed in God; so do bear witness that we are Muslims (who surrender to God). Lord! we have believed in that which Thou hast sent down and followed Thy Messenger; so enroll us among those who bear witness. Quran 3:52-53*

Note 49 The Arabic word (havari) is almost the equivalent of “helper”. In the Bible, they have been called “disciples” and at some places “apostles” because Jesus used to send them to the people to deliver his message, and not because God had appointed them as His apostles.

Note 50 Those people who help establish Islam have been called God’s helpers. In order to understand its significance, it should be kept in view that God has taken upon Himself to persuade human beings to adopt Islam of their free will, for He does not force His will on man in those spheres of his life in which He has granted him freedom of action but likes to convince him by reason and admonition. As it is the work of God to bring the people to the right way by admonition and advice, He calls those people who exert their utmost to establish Islam “His helpers and companions:” This is indeed the highest position that a servant of God can aspire to achieve. For man’s position is merely that of a servant when he is engaged in praying, fasting and other kinds of worship, but he is elevated to the high and unique position of God’s companion and assistant when he is exerting for the establishment of the way of God. And this is indeed the loftiest position of spiritual attainment, to which a man can aspire in this world.

*Then the children of Israel began to plot (against Jesus) and God also devised His secret plan, and God is the best of devisers. (It was to carry out His secret plan that) He said, “O Jesus, now I will recall 51 you and raise you up to Myself and cleanse you of (the uncongenial company and the filthy environment of ) those who have rejected you and will set up those who follow you above those who have rejected you 52 till the Day of Resurrection. And ultimately all of you shall return to Me: then I will judge between you in what you differ, and punish with a grievous punishment, both in this world and in the Hereafter, those who have adopted the attitude of disbelief and rejection and they shall have none to help them. And those, who have believed and done good deeds, shall be given their rewards in full. And note it well that God does not like the transgressors.” Quran 3:54-57*

Note 51 The word (mutawaffi) in the Arabic text is from (tawaffa) which literally means “to take and to receive” and “to seize the soul” is not its lexical but metaphorical meaning. Here it means “to recall from mission.” God recalled Jesus because the Israelites had rejected him in spite of the clear Signs he had brought. They had been disobeying God for centuries and, in spite of many a warning and admonition served to them, their national character was rapidly deteriorating. They had killed several Prophets, one after the other, and had grown so audacious as to demand the blood of any good man who ventured to invite them to the Right Way. In order to give them the last chance for turning to the Truth, God appointed among them two great Prophets, Jesus and John (God’s peace be upon them), at one and the same time. These Prophets came with such clear signs of their appointment from God that only such people dared reject them as were utterly perverted and prejudiced against the Truth and were averse to following the Right Way. Nevertheless the Israelites lost their last chance also as they not only rejected their invitation but also had the head of a great Prophet like John cut off openly at the request of a dancing girl. ‘And their Pharisees and Jurists conspired and sought to get Jesus punished with the death sentence by the Roman Government. Thus they had proved themselves to be so obdurate that it was useless to give the Israelites any further chance. So God recalled His Prophet Jesus and inflicted on them a life of disgrace up to the Day of Resurrection.

It will be useful here to bear in mind the fact that this whole discourse is meant to refute and correct the Christian belief in the God-head of Jesus. Three main things were responsible for the prevalence of this belief among the Christians:

1. The miraculous birth of Jesus.
2. His concrete and tangible miracles.
3. His ascension to heaven about which their Scriptures were explicit.

The Qur’an confirmed the first thing and made it plain that the birth of Jesus without a father was only a manifestation of the infinite powers of God. He can create anybody in whatever manner He wills. His miraculous birth, therefore, is no reason why he should be made a god or a partner in Godhead.

The Qur’an also confirms the second thing and even recounts the miracles performed by Jesus, but makes it clear that all those miracles were performed by him, as a servant of God, by His leave and not as an independent authority. It is, therefore, wrong to infer that Jesus was a partner in Godhead.

Now let us consider the third thing. If the Christian belief in “Ascension” had been wholly baseless, it could have been refuted by pointing out that the object of their worship, the so-called “Son of God”, expired long ago and had become one with dust, and that they could see, for their full satisfaction, his grave at such and such a place. But the Qur’an does not declare this explicitly. On the other hand, it not only uses such words as give at least a vague suggestion of his “Ascension”, but also denies that Jesus was crucified at all. According to it the one who gave a loud cry at his last hour, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” and the one whose picture they carry on the cross, was not Messiah at all, because God had recalled to Himself the real Messiah before the crucifixion took place.

It is thus clear that those people who try to prove the death of Jesus from these verses, really try to show that God is not able to express Himself clearly and unambiguously. (May God protect us from such a blasphemy!)

Note 52 “Those who rejected” him were the Jews who were invited by Jesus to accept the Truth.

“Those who follow” him are really the Muslims only but if it may be taken to imply all those who believe in him, then the sincere Christians may also be included.

*The stories which We are relating to you are full of signs and wisdom. In the sight of God, the case of the birth of Jesus is like that of Adam, whom He created out of dust and said, “Be”, and he was. 53 This is the fact of the matter your lord is imparting, and you should not be of those who doubt it. 54Quran 3:58-60*

Note 53 That is, “If one’s miraculous birth entitles one to become God or the Son of God, then Adam was better entitled to it because he was created without either a human father or a mother, while Jesus was born without a father only.

Note 54 The main points in the discourse presented before the Christians up to here are:

First, he was only a man who was born in a miraculous way by the will of God and given the power to perform certain miracles as a clear proof of his Prophet-hood. As regards his “Ascension”, God had arranged to recall him to Himself before the disbelievers could crucify him. In fact, the Master of the Universe has full powers to treat any of His servants in any special way He pleases. It is, therefore, wrong to infer from the exceptional treatment accorded to Jesus that he himself was the Master or the Master’s Son or a partner in the authority of the Master.

Secondly, their attention has been drawn to the fact that Prophet Muhammad (God’s peace be upon him) invites them to the same Truth that had been preached by Prophet Jesus (God’s peace be upon him) in his own time and that the teachings of the two Prophets were basically identical.

Thirdly, the disciples of Jesus believed in and followed the same religion of Islam that is being presented in the Qur’an. However the Christians of the later age discarded the message of Jesus and digressed from the Faith of his disciples.

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[Jesus (PBUH) – The Spiritual Ascetic](http://www.islamicity.org/6401/jesus-pbuh-the-spiritual-ascetic/)

By: [Sadullah Khan](http://www.islamicity.org/by/sadullah-khan)   Source: [IslamiCity](http://www.islamicity.org/source/islamicity)

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The Prophet’s saying “make *zuhd* from the dunya” [Ibn Majah] does not imply a disregard for this world, but rather an awareness of the transient nature of the worldly material things which are insignificant in relation to the permanence of what Allah promises … “*All that is with you is bound to come to an end, whereas that which is with God is everlasting. And most certainly shall We grant unto those who are patient in adversity their reward in accordance with the best that they ever did*.” [[Qur’an 16:96](http://www.islamicity.com/mosque/arabicscript/Ayat/16/16_96.htm)].

***Zuhd* in perspective**

*Zuhd*entails abandoning whatever of this world that does not bring about benefit in the Hereafter. *Zuhd*resides in the heart, and is practiced by ridding the heart of enslavement from the unwarranted desire and the over-attentiveness to things that are temporary. It entails your being more certain in what Allah has in store for you, than your are about what you have in your hand . As Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said; “*When Allah desires goodness for his servant, He grants the capacity of abstention from materialism, a desire for the Hereafter and an insight into his own faults*“.

***Zuhd* of ‘Isa/Jesus (pbuh)**

‘Isa/Jesus (pbuh) was the embodiment of the true *zaahid*. Ka’b al-Ahbar said; Jesus the son of Mary would walk bare-footed, claiming nothing in the way of shelter, finery, wares, garments, or money; of the latter he would procure only enough to subsist for the day. Once the sun would set, he would align himself and pray until morning. He would restore sight to the blind, heal those afflicted with leprosy, and revive the dead – all with the license of God. He was ascetic in matters of this world, vigorously exuberant towards the hereafter, ever-vigilant in his devotions to God. He was an itinerant who wandered the earth…..It was then that God raised him up to the heavens.

The Messiah (pbuh) said: “Asceticism/ Abstention from materialism revolves around three days; Yesterday, which has passed and from it you should seek admonition/ learn a lesson; Today, in which you should increase your preparation; Tomorrow of which you know not what is holds. [Musnad Ahmed]

The Messiah (pbuh) said: “*O Children of Israel! I have been positioned on earth with a particular status, and there is neither pompousness nor arrogance. Do you know where my residence really is?” They said, ” Where is your residence, O Spirit of Allah.” The Messiah replied, “My home is any place of worship, my perfume is water, hunger is the flavoring of my food, my feet are my transport, my lamp at the night is the moon, my blanket in the winter is (the rising of the sun) east of the earth, my food is basic, my fruit and flowers are whatever grows from the earth, my garment is wool, my motto is fear of Allah and I accompany the sick and the poor. I sleep while I have nothing and I wake up while I have nothing, and yet there is no one on earth wealthier than I.*” [Bihaar al-Anwaar]

Taking a Collective Lesson from the Messiah (pbuh) Muslims and Christians do have differing perspectives on Jesus’ life and teachings, but his spiritual legacy, as a righteous and principled guide, his mission as a Prince of Peace offers an alternative opportunity for people of faith to recognize their shared religious heritage. Christians and Muslims would do well to reflect on the verse in the Quran reaffirming Allah’s eternal message of spiritual unity: “*Say: ‘We believe in God and the revelation given to us and to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and message given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and it is unto Him that we surrender ourselves.’*” [[Quran 2:136](http://www.islamicity.com/mosque/arabicscript/Ayat/2/2_136.htm)]

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[Jesus Through a Muslim Lens](http://www.islamicity.org/6392/jesus-through-a-muslim-lens/)

By: [Michael Wolfe](http://www.islamicity.org/by/michael-wolfe)   Source: [Beliefnet](http://www.islamicity.org/source/beliefnet)

Featured on: Dec 21, 2016



Jesus of Nazareth is the most widely revered religious figure in the world. Not only is he central to Christianity, the largest religion in the world, he is also venerated throughout Islam, the world’s second largest faith.

Christians may be surprised to learn that Muslims believe in the Virgin Birth and Jesus’ miracles. But this shared interest in his message goes much further.

In our scientific age, the miraculous side of Jesus’ story has greatly obscured his role in the prophetic tradition. In this sense, there may be more important questions for Muslims and Christians than whether he walked on water or raised the dead.

In the Muslim view, Jesus’ essential work was not to replicate magic bread or to test our credulity, but to complement the legalism of the Torah with a leavening compassion rarely expressed in the older testament. His actions and words introduce something new to monotheism: They develop the merciful spirit of God’s nature. Jesus confirmed the Torah, stressing the continuity of his lineage, but he also developed the importance of compassion and self-purification as crucial links between learning the words of God’s message and possessing the wisdom to carry it out.

Oddly enough, some of the recent work by New Testament scholars seems to have reached a view of Christ not all that different from Muslims’. For us and for these scholars, Jesus appears not as a literal son of God in human form, but as an inspired human being, a teacher of wisdom with a talent for love drawn from an unbroken relationship to God. Both versions present him as a man who spoke to common people in universal terms.

Two events in the life of the prophet Muhammad may help explain why Muslims revere the Christian Jesus.

The first event involves an elder resident of Mecca named Waraqa bin Nawfal. This man was an early Arab Christian and an uncle of Muhammad’s wife, Khadija. We know he could read Hebrew, that he was mystical by nature, and that he attended Khadija and Muhammad’s wedding in about 595 C.E. Fifteen years later, a worried Khadija sought Waraqa out and brought her husband to him.

At the time, Muhammad was a 40-year-old respected family man. He attended this “family therapy” session in a rare state of agitation. He was frightened. He had been meditating one evening in a cave on the outskirts of town. There, while half asleep, he had experienced something so disturbing that he feared he was possessed. A voice had spoken to him.

Waraqa listened to his story, which Muslims will recognize as a description of Muhammad’s first encounter with the angel Gabriel. When it was finished, Waraqa assured him he was not possessed.

“What you have heard is the voice of the same spiritual messenger God sent to Moses. I wish I could be a young man when you become a prophet! I would like to be alive when your own people expel you.”

“Will they expel me?” Muhammad asked.

“Yes,” the old man said. “No one has ever brought his people the news you bring without meeting hostility. If I live to see the day, I will support you.”

Christians will recognize in Waraqa’s remarks an aphorism associated with Jesus: “A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country.” But that a Christian should first have verified Muhammad’s role as a prophet may come as a surprise.

The second important event concerning Islam and Christianity dates from 616, a few years after Muhammad began to preach publicly. This first attempt to reinstate the Abrahamic tradition in Mecca met (as Waraqa had warned) with violent opposition.

Perhaps the Meccans resented Muhammad’s special claim. Perhaps his message of a single, invisible, ever-present God threatened the economy of their city. A month’s ride south from the centers of power in Syria and Persia, poor remote Mecca depended on long-distance trade and on seasonal pilgrims who came there each year to honor hundreds of pagan idols, paying a tax to do so.

At any rate, Muhammad’s disruptive suggestion that “God was One” and could be found anywhere did not sit well with the businessmen of Mecca.

Many new Muslims were being tortured. Their livelihoods were threatened, their families persecuted. As matters grew worse, in 616 Muhammad sent a small band of followers across the Red Sea to seek shelter in the Christian kingdom of Axum. There, he told them, they would find a just ruler, the Negus, who could protect them. The Muslims found the Negus in his palace, somewhere in the borderland between modern Ethiopia and Eritrea.

And protect them he did, after one Muslim recited to him some lines on the Virgin Mary from the Qur’an. The Negus wept at what he heard. Between Christians and Muslims, he said, he could not make out more difference than the thickness of a twig.

These two stories underscore the support Christians gave Muhammad in times of trial. The Qur’an distils the meaning from the drama:

Those who feel the most affection  
For us (who put our faith in the Qur’an),  
Are those that say, “We are Christians,”  
For priests and monks live among them  
Who are not arrogant. When they listen  
To what We have shown Muhammad,  
Their eyes brim over with tears  
At the truth they find there….

Even today, when a Muslim mentions Jesus’ name, you will hear it followed by the phrase “peace and blessings be upon him,” because Muslims still revere him as a prophet.

We believe in God  
And in what has been sent down to us,  
What has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael  
And Isaac and Jacob and their offspring,  
And what was given to Moses and to Jesus  
And all the other prophets of the Lord.  
We make no distinction among them.

As these lines from the Qur’an make clear, Muslims regard Jesus as one of the world’s great teachers. He and his mentor John the Baptist stand in a lineage stretching back to the founder of ethical monotheism. Moreover, among Muslims, Jesus is a special type of prophet, a messenger empowered to communicate divinity not only in words but by miracles as well.

Muslims, it must be said, part company with some Christians over the portrait of Jesus developed in the fourth and fifth centuries. Certain fictions, Muslims think, were added then. Three of these come in for special mention: First, Muslims consider monastic asceticism a latter-day innovation, not an original part of Jesus’ way. Second, the New Testament suffers from deletions and embellishments added after Jesus’ death by men who did not know him. Third, the description of Jesus as God’s son is considered by Muslims a later, blasphemous suggestion.

Muslims venerate Jesus as a divinely inspired human but never, ever as “the son of God.” In the same vein, we treat the concept of the Trinity as a late footnote to Jesus’ teachings, an unnecessary “mystery” introduced by the North African theologian Tertullian two centuries after Jesus’ death. Nor do Muslims view his death as an act of atonement for mankind’s sins. Rather, along with the early Christian theologian Pelagius, Islam rejects the doctrine of original sin, a notion argued into church doctrine by St. Augustine around the year 400.

It might almost be said that Islam holds a view of Jesus similar to some of the early apostolic versions condemned by the fourth-century Byzantine Church. Once Constantine installed Christianity as the Roman Empire’s state religion, a rage for orthodoxy followed. The Councils of Nicaea (325), Tyre (335), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431), and Chalcedon (451) were official, often brutal attempts to stamp out heterodox views of Jesus held by “heretical” theologians.

Rulings by these councils led to the persecution and deaths of tens of thousands of early Christians at the hands of more “orthodox” Christians who condemned them. Most disputes centered on divergent interpretations of the Trinity. For this reason, historians of religion sometimes see in these bloody divisions one of the root causes for early Islam’s firmly unitarian outlook.

Then and now, no more dangerous religious mistake exists for a Muslim than dividing the Oneness of God by twos or threes.

Despite these important differences, however, the Qur’an repeatedly counsels Muslims not to dispute with other monotheists over matters of doctrine. People, it says, believe differently for good reasons. In fact, that is a part of Allah’s will.

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*Source: [Beliefnet](http://beliefnet.com/" \t "_blank)*

[The Coming of the Prophet and according to the Bible](http://www.islamicity.org/5717/the-coming-of-the-prophetaccording-to-the-bible/)

By: [Adil Nizamuddin Imran](http://www.islamicity.org/by/adil-nizamuddin-imran)   Source: [IslamiCity](http://www.islamicity.org/source/islamicity)

Featured on: Dec 19, 2016



According to the Quran, Prophet Muhammad’s coming was foreshadowed by earlier prophets and their scriptures. Surah 7:157 states, *“Those who follow the messenger, the unlettered prophet of whom they find written in their sources, in the Torah and the Gospel. He directs them to what is just and forbids them from evil. And he permits them wholesome things and forbids them filthy things. He removes their burden for them, and the yokes that were on them.”*This verse is explicitly clear that the earlier divine scriptures foretold the coming of the Prophet Muhammad. Let us highlight those passages in the Bible that refer to the coming of the prophet, Prophet Muhammad.

First, we read in John 1:19-21:

*This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, “I’m not the Christ.” They asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” And he said “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No”.*

From this conversation between John the Baptist and Jewish priests, we learn that the Jews are awaiting the coming of three distinct people: the Christ, Elijah, and the Prophet. We now know that Jesus was the Christ and Messiah whom the Jews denied but the Muslims later affirmed. This leaves Elijah and the Prophet. With respect to Elijah, it is believed by Jews and some Christians that he has not yet returned but will do so to announce the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Thus, we need to account for The Prophet. Even today the Jews are still awaiting his arrival and the Christians believe Jesus Christ was the Prophet. This latter assertion of Christians is impossible because it is clear from John 1:21 as well as John 1:25 that “The Prophet” is a separate and distinct person from Elijah and the Christ. John 1:25 states *“Why than are you, John the Baptist, baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”*The questioning priests were trying to identify whether John the Baptist was one of these three individuals. The knowledge of the coming of these three was known not only by Jewish priests but also ordinary Jews. This is supported by John 7:40-41 which clearly identifies the distinction that Jewish people are making with regard to Jesus of Nazareth. John 7:40-41 states,*“Some of the people, therefore, when they heard these words were saying this certainly is the Prophet. Others were saying, ‘This is the Christ.'”* Hence, we can reasonably assert that the Prophet and the Christ are two separate and distinct men of God.

We know that Jesus Christ was a prophet, just as John the Baptist was. On the other hand, Muslims claim that Prophet Muhammad was the Prophet that Jews were asking about in the above passage. In fact, in the entire Quran, which is longer than both the Torah and the New Testament, the name “Muhammad” appears only four times. God addresses Prophet Muhammad as “the Prophet” or “the Messenger”. However, the Jews came to deny his Prophet Hood when they learned that he was the descendant of Ishmael and a non-Jew. Obviously, this is not a valid reason to reject any prophet of God, let alone the Prophet. The fact is that the Jews believed then and even today that they alone are God’s chosen people. If such a claim were true, what would have happened to all the Gentiles who had not received divine guidance, especially the descendants of Ishmael as they had a covenant with God? We as Muslims believe that it would be an act of injustice if God had exclusively sent guidance to Jews while neglecting other communities.

Moreover, it was prophesied that there would come a time when the prophet would be passed from Judah and the Children of Israel to another community.

In Isaiah 3:1-2, it states:

*“For behold, the Lord God of hosts is going to remove from Jerusalem and Judah both supply and support, the whole supply of bread and the whole supply of water; the mighty man and the warrior, the judge and the prophet…”*

This passage clearly asserts that God will take away from Judah and Jerusalem the Judge and the Prophet. Hence, if he (the Prophet) is to come, he must be from outside Jerusalem and not from the tribe of Judah. We know that Prophet Muhammad is from descendants of Ishmael and he was born in Mecca.

Another explicit validation that foreshadows the coming of Prophet Muhammad is found in Genesis 49:10. It states, *“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the rulers staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.”* Although the verse is very clear, let us provide some perspective. Before his death, Jacob gathered his twelve sons and told them what each one would face in the coming days. In this verse, Jacob addresses Judah who is the lawgiver which is confirmed in the statement *“and Judah is my scepter or lawgiver”*(Psalms 60:7). As such, in Genesis 49:10, Jacob informs Judah that in the future the scepter will pass from him to Shiloh. The question is: who is Shiloh?

Christians believe that Shiloh refers to Jesus Christ. However, this verse cannot be in reference to Christ because the scepter was to depart from Judah and go to Shiloh. Jesus is a direct descendant of Judah (Matthew 1), and therefore he cannot be Shiloh. In other words, Shiloh will possess the scepter and will be the lawgiver, and he will not be from Judah. Additionally, the notion that Jesus Christ was Shiloh and the lawgiver can be refuted when we consider that according to Christian doctrine Jesus did not produce any new law and nor did he claim to be the lawgiver. If we believe the testimony of both Apostles Peter and Paul, they were inspired to revoke the erstwhile Jewish law and taught that Christians no longer needed to abide by such doctrines. However, 49:10 makes complete sense when we consider Prophet Muhammad as Shiloh since he brought forth a new law in the Quran. This is consistent with Isaiah 3:1-2, whereby God will remove from Judah the judge and the prophet. Here, the judge and the prophet refer to the scepter or lawgiver.

These three passages – John 1:21, Genesis 49:10, and Isaiah 3:1 – validate the truthfulness of Prophet Muhammad as a prophet and messenger of God.

There is another passage that is quite comprehensive and it is found in Isaiah 46:10-11:

*“Declaring the end from the beginning, from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying ‘My purpose will be established and I will accomplish all My good pleasure’; Calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.”*(Isaiah 46:10-11).

Some Old Testament commentaries, such as Wesley’s Notes and Geneva Study Bible, refer to “the man of my purpose” as being Cyrus the Great. But this is erroneous because Cyrus is nowhere identified as a prophet or a man of God. Instead, it is believed he was an idol worshipper and an unbeliever. If God since the beginning had chosen him for a purpose, he would have needed to demonstrate that he was a faithful and obedient servant. Yet his primary contribution was to give the Jews permission to rebuild the Temple. King Solomon built the Temple in 957 BC and King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it in 587 BC. Again, it was rebuilt by revered prophets such as Zachariah and Ezra in 515 BC with Cyrus’ permission and, later in 40 BC; Herod the Great expanded the Temple.

*Excerpted from the book “Christ Jesus, The Son Of Mary: A Muslim Perspective” by Adil Nizamuddin Imran.*

*Throughout the ages, the personality of Christ (Peace Be Upon Him) has been the center of much controversy. Some have called him a false prophet while some others worship him as God or son of God who came to earth in human form. Similar controversies linger around his mother, the Virgin Mary. Islam considers Christ as a mighty prophet of God, from among His near ones and his mother as an embodiment of piety, chastity and righteousness. Unfortunately, this high reverence of Islam to Christ and the Virgin Mary is often ignored by the mainstream western intelligentsia and largely unknown to the common western populace. This well researched book describes the status of Jesus in divine Islamic texts and will enrich the knowledge of its readers and enlighten them about the Islamic position on Christ Jesus – The Son of Mary.*

[The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World](http://www.islamicity.org/8014/the-covenants-of-the-prophet-muhammad-with-the-christians-of-the-world/)

By: [Bill Cleland](http://www.islamicity.org/by/bill-cleland)   Source: [IslamiCity](http://www.islamicity.org/source/islamicity)

Featured on: Dec 18, 2016



At a time when the name of Islam is being besmirched by extremists all over the planet, it is refreshing to come back to what the Islamic way of life is really about. Indeed the best antidote to both Muslim extremism and Christian-Zionist Islamophobia is the actual teachings of Islam.

Even the most anti-rational extremist must be given food for thought in the very plain statement in the Holy Quran:

*To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight) because they are wronged and truly Allah is Most powerful for their aid.  
(They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right (for no cause) except that they say “Our Lord is Allah”. Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another there would surely have been pulled down monasteries churches synagogues and mosques in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid His (cause); for truly Allah is Full of Strength, Exalted in Might (Able to enforce His Will).* [*Surah 22 Hajj Ayat 39-40*](http://www.islamicity.com/quransearch/default.asp?ref=22:39-22:40)

It has become unfortunately commonplace to read in the venomous tracts of the Islamophobes that Islam teaches Muslims to exterminate non-Muslims and that they must engage in “jihad” (a term they use for religious war) against them. Again the Holy Quran is clear:

*Allah forbids you not with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith not drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them; for Allah loves those who are just.*

*Allah only forbids you with regard to those who fight you for (your) Faith and drive you out of your homes and support( others) in driving you out, from turning to them (for friendship and protection). It is such as turn to them (in these circumstances) that do wrong.*[*Surah 60 Mumtahana Ayat 8-9*](http://www.islamicity.com/quransearch/default.asp?ref=60:8-60:9)

This verse makes it a Muslim’s duty to treat peacefully coexisting persons with equity (qist) and birr. The term birr and its derivatives are the same expressions used in the Qur’an and Hadith to refer to one’s relationship with his or her parents. Such a relationship is more than kindness, since it includes also love and respect. Many English translations of the Qur’an have translated this Qur’anic term as kindness, a translation that falls short of the richer meaning of the original Arabic term. …The term qist has been translated as “justice.” Justice, however, is closest to another Arabic word `adl. This word, however, refers to giving the other his or her rights, no less and no more. Other scholars argue that the Qur’anic term qist means “going beyond justice by giving more than what is due to others.” (Jamal Badawi, PhD April 5 2005  
<http://islamonline.net/english/Contemporary/2005/04/Article01.shtml>)

The recently published “The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World” begins with a reference to these mostly neglected “literary monuments in the history of Islam.” The author comments:

*“Considering that the continued conflict between Christians and Muslims across the world has been artificially ignited by the forces of imperialism, especially in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, the content of these priceless historical documents can shed light on the early history of Islam. Via this information we are witness to the primordial relationship between Muslims and People of the Book. Thus, these covenants can serve as a source of inspiration for the establishment of insuperable harmony between the three Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam.”*

Extremist of both the Muslim and Islamophobic non-Muslim varieties try to ignore, or even deny, the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) but all accept the authenticity of the Constitution of Medina. There is no doubt that in this there was a clear paragraph:

*“6.2 The Jews of Banu ‘Awf are one community with the believers, the Jews have their religion and the Muslims have theirs, their freedmen and their persons except those who behave unjustly and sinfully, for they hurt but themselves and their families. The same applies to the Jews of the Banu al-Najjar, Banur al-Harith, Banu Sa’ida, Banu Jusham, Banu al-‘Aws, Banu THa’laba, and the Jafna, a clan of the Tha’laba and the Banu al-Shutayba. Loyalty is a protection against treachery.”*

The second paragraph of the Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Assyrian Christians states: “To the followers of Islam I say: Carry out my command, protect and help the Nazarenes nation in this country of ours in their own land.”

The significance of these words is that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) recognized the Nazarenes (Christians) as a people and a nation existing with the confines of the Islamic Ummah. As the author comments: “Rather than try to homogenize the Islamic world, making it all Arabic-speaking Muslims, the Prophet recognized that there were nations and peoples within the Muslim ummah. Such a concept never materialized in the West until the end of the twentieth century when countries like Canada finally recognized that Quebec was a nation within the country of Canada….Whether they were Jews or Christians, and later Hindus and Buddhists, these communities represented a kind of United Nations under Islamic rule.”

The author asks (p.185) “If Muslims are prohibited from belittling the People of the Book and destroying their property, what are we to make then, of so-called Islamists who insult and abuse them and destroy, not only their material belongings, but their lives as well?”

His answer is no revelation. Many thinkers have come to the very same conclusion about such people: “They are in most instances, conscious or unconscious agents of the enemies, not only of Islam, but of religion as a whole. If the imperialists used Islamic extremists for their own ends during the colonialist period, spreading Salafism and concocting Arab nationalism in order to undermine the Ottoman Empire, it would be nave to believe that neo-imperialists of the 20th and 21st century are not doing the same. While most of their rank and file are unaware of the reality, many if not most of the world’s militant Muslim movements were created and remain under the control of US, British, French and Israeli secret services.”

=======*Book Review: Morrow. John Andrew.*[*The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World*](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/159731465X/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=159731465X&linkCode=as2&tag=islamicitycom-20&linkId=SNUER7BR2BRADLSR)*http://ir-na.amazon-adsystem.com/e/ir?t=islamicitycom-20&l=as2&o=1&a=159731465X  
Angelico press/Sophia Perennis. USA. 2013*\*\*\*\*\*

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