

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



ALI 351 – Session 3
**Nabi 'Isā/Jesus (a) in the
Quran**
19 Rajab 1437 /27 April 2016

Jesus (a) was not crucified

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ
لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ ۚ
مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ
يَقِينًا * بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا
حَكِيمًا

Translation Q 4: 157 - 158

4: 157. *And for their saying (boastfully), “We killed the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the messenger of God” –though they did not kill him; nor did they crucify him, but it appeared so unto them. Those who differ concerning him are in doubt thereof. They have no knowledge of it, but follow only conjecture; they slew him not for certain. 4: 158 But God raised him up unto Himself, and God is Mighty Wise.*

Quranic Style of Narrating Stories

It is Allah's custom in narrating stories only to select the important points which will be effective in achieving the (divine) purpose without going into detail, mentioning everything, or addressing all of the facets, lives, and times contemporary to the stories. God's book is not a history book. It is naught but a book of guidance. (*Al-Mizan*, 26:92 – 93)

Commentary by Agha Puya

Paul had distorted the true faith of Isa to accommodate Roman paganism. [Moreover] those who came to arrest Isa, in the darkness of night, had never seen his face; and the only witness of the resurrection was Mary Magdalene whose versions, given in the four gospels, differ from each other. It is a fact that it was not Isa who was crucified. He was saved. His disciples gave currency to the idea of his crucifixion so that the Jews remained assured of his death, else they would have gone in his pursuit. The Roman soldiers also kept quiet in order to avoid the blame of killing a wrong person and also the certain punishment for not executing Isa. George Sale also stated in his work that early Christians ⁵ did not believe in Isa's crucifixion.

Commentary by Allāmah Tabātabāī

Allah says explicitly that ‘Isa (a) did not die on their hands, neither by crucifixion nor in any other way; rather it appeared to them so. They caught another person in place of the Messiah and killed him or crucified him. This could have happened easily in those circumstances; in such a riotous and barbaric mobs often the actual target slips away and some other person is held and beaten up. He was arrested by the Roman soldiers who had no full prior knowledge of his features and conditions; it was possible for them to catch someone else in his place. Moreover, there are traditions saying that Allah had put his likeness on another person who was caught and killed in his place.

Commentary by Abdullah Yusufali

The Orthodox Christian Churches make it a cardinal point of their doctrine that his life was taken on the Cross, that he died and was buried, that on the third day he rose in the body with his wounds intact, and walked about and conversed, and ate with his disciples, and was afterwards taken up bodily to heaven. This is necessary for the theological doctrine of blood sacrifice and vicarious atonement for sins, which is rejected by Islam. The Quranic teaching is that Christ was not crucified nor killed by the Jews . . . circumstances which produced that illusion in the minds of some of his enemies: that disputations, doubts, and conjectures on such matters are vain; and that he was taken up to Allah

Those who dispute Quranic version

The Christians. Tory Jepson writes “Muslims and the Crucifixion” at www.debate.org.uk/debate-topics/apologetic/crucifix/ that “In the Muslim mind then, the issue is sealed: the Qur’an says it (4:157), so it must be. However, for the non-Muslim observer, this is not good enough.”

The Ahmadis: They believe that Jesus had died like other human beings. Read “The Death of Jesus according to Islamic sources” at www.muslim.org/islam/deathofj.htm

They claim that the Messiah in the Quran refers to Gulam Ahmed of Qadian.

Assignment: *How would you refute the arguments?*

Jesus in Hadith literature

The Prophet (s): *Whoever reads sūra Saff (i.e. Chapter 61) Jesus (a) will pray for him and ask God's forgiveness for him in the world and he will be his companion on the Resurrection Day. (Misbāh p. 447)*

Imam al-Sādiq (a): *It says in the Gospel Jesus (a), 'O Allah! Bestow upon me a flat loaf of barley bread in the morning and a flat loaf of barley bread in the evening, and do not bestow more than this upon me that I become rebellious.'*

SOURCE: All Hadiths taken from: *Jesus (a) Through Shi'ite Narrations, (JTSN)*, Mahdi Muntazir Qaim (comp.), M. Legenhausen (tr.), Ansariyan Publication, Qum: 2004. Online at <http://www.al-islam.org/jesus-though-shiite-narrations-mahdi-muntazir-qaim>

Du'as of Jesus (a)

A man complained to Jesus (a) about his debts. Jesus (a) said to him, “Say: ‘O God, *Who takes away grief, removes sadness, disposes of sorrow, answers the prayers of the needy! O Merciful of this world and the other world and the Compassionate of them! You are Merciful to me and Merciful to all things! So, be Merciful to me, with a mercy that will make me needless of the mercy of others than You, and by that mercy let my debts be paid.*” (Mustadrak, 13:289, H. 15,379)

His prayer: *O Creator of the soul from the soul, Director of the soul from the soul and Deliverer of the soul from the soul! Release us and deliver us from our trouble.*¹⁹ (Bihar, 92:176)

Humility in Jesus

Jesus served a meal to the Apostles, and when they had eaten it, he himself washed their feet. They said, “O Spirit of Allah! It would have been more proper for us to wash you!” He said: *I did this only that you would do this for those whom you teach* (Bihār 14:326,H. 42)

Abu Basir: “I asked Abu Ja‘far (a) about ‘Imran, whether he was a prophet. He said, ‘Yes. He was a prophet and an apostle to his people. And Hannah, the wife of ‘Imran and Hananah, the wife of Zachariah were sisters. Mary was born to ‘Imran from Hannah, and John (‘a) was born to Zachariah from Hananah.” (JTSN, p. 32)

Similarity between Jesus & John - 1

Imam al-Ridha (a): ‘The most terrifying events for creatures are three: the day one is born and comes out of his mother’s belly and sees the world, the day he dies and sees the afterlife and its people, and the day he is raised and sees laws he did not see in this world, and Allah made John secure in these three events and protected him from fear, and He said, *Peace be with him the day he was born and the day he dies and the day he is raised to life* (Q 19:15)

And Jesus the son of Mary made himself secure in these three events, and he said: *Peace be with me the day I was born and the day I die and the day I am raised to life* (Q 19:33)
(JTSN, p. 58)

Similarity between Jesus & John - 2

When Zakariyya saw sustenance with Maryam, he prayed: *My Lord! Grant me from You good offspring.* Allah gave him a son, Yahya – the prophet most similar to ‘Isa (a); he was given all the qualities of perfection and excellence which ‘Isa and his Truthful mother, Maryam, were granted. So Allah named him Yahya, sent him to verify a Word from Allah, made him honorable and chaste as well as a prophet, from among the good ones. Yahya means ‘he lives.’ ‘Isa means *ya‘ish* = he lives. Yahya, like ‘Isa, was given wisdom & taught the Book at childhood. He too is praised, like ‘Isa, to be a tenderness from Allah and purity, and to be dutiful to his parents. (*Al-Mizan*, 5:262)