

## Section 2: Mary and Jesus

### Surah Maryam – Verses 16 – 17

وَأذْكَرُ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ انْتَبَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا

فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا

**16. “And mention in the Book about Mary when she withdrew from her family to an eastern place.”**

**17. “So she took a veil (to screen herself) apart from them. Then We sent unto her Our Spirit (Holy Spirit) that presented himself to her a perfect man.”**

The Messenger of Allah (S) said that Mary was one of the four typical godly women.

The Arabic term */nabaḥa/* means: ‘to throw away something inattentively’, while the Qur’anic word */’intibaḥ/* is used for ‘seeking retirement from people’. Since Mary was dedicated to ‘The Remote Mosque’, she had chosen a corner in the east of the mosque for herself.

After the statement of the explanation about Yahya (John), through these holy verses, the Qur’an refers to the story of Jesus (as) and his mother’s fate, because there is a close connection between these two occurrences.

The birth of Yahya (John) to an aged father and a barren mother was a wonderful thing, but the birth of Jesus, from a mother without a father, was something even more marvelous.

It is surprising, of course, for a person be given wisdom and prophethood in childhood, but it is more

surprising than that that he, as a baby, speaks in cradle concerning the Book and prophecy.

However, both of them are signs of the Power of Allah, the Exalted, and, they both concerned people who had a very close blood relationship with each other, because John's mother was Mary's maternal aunt both of whom were barren and longed for a righteous child.

The verse says:

***“And mention in the Book about Mary when she withdrew from her family to an eastern place.”***

In fact she humbly and anonymously withdrew from her family and went to a place in the temple free from any disturbance in order to pray and to tell her secrets to Allah.

At this time, Mary put a veil between herself and those people to screen herself away from them so that her private place could be suitable for worship and away from the prying eyes of people.

The verse says:

***“So she took a veil (to screen herself) apart from them...”***

Then one of the great angels (Holy Spirit), in the form of a perfect handsome man, without any defect, presented himself to Mary and, by the might of Allah, fulfilled his mission.

It was just as Allah, the Most High, in the Qur'an says:

***“Blessed be He in Whose hand is Domination; and He is All-Powerful over everything.”***<sup>1</sup>

The verse under discussion continues saying:

***“...Then We sent unto her Our Spirit (Holy Spirit) that presented himself to her a perfect man.”***

## **Surah Maryam – Verses 18 – 20**

قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتُ تَقِيًّا

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا

قَالَتْ أَنِّي يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا

**18. “She said: ‘Verily I take refuge in the Beneficent (Allah) from you! if you are God-fearing.’”**

**19. “He (the angel) said: ‘Verily I am only a messenger of your Lord that I bestow on you a pure son’.”**

**20. “She said: ‘How shall there be for me a son while no man has touched me, neither have I been unchaste.’”**

One of the recommendations of Allah to His Messengers is that they should take refuge in Allah. Therefore, this state has been the moral life of the prophets and the saints of Allah, and that is why when the pious persons feel the probability of committing sin, they tremble in fear and take refuge in Allah, The Beneficent.

It is evident that, at that time, a great fear overcame her when this pious woman saw that a handsome foreigner had entered her sanctuary, therefore, she immediately said:

**“Verily I take refuge in the Beneficent (Allah) from you! if you are God-fearing.”**

Her Mentioning the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, and qualifying Him by His general mercy, on the one hand and encouraging the man to piety and being God-fearing, on the other, were all intended to deter that unfamiliar man if he had intended something evil.

By saying these words, Mary was expecting a reaction from the stranger, an expectation laden with fear and abundant anxiety.

But this situation did not last very long, and the stranger spoke and stated his great mission:

**“He (the angel) said: ‘Verily I am only a messenger of your Lord...’”**

This statement comforted Mary’s pure heart, as if water was poured over a fire.

But this relief did not last long, because immediately after that he added that he had come to bestow on her a son who would be pure from the point of temper, manner, body, and spirit.

The verse continues saying:

**“...that I bestow on you a pure son’.”**

However, the term /zakiyy/, used in the verse, is derived from /zakat/ in the sense of: ‘purity, growth, and blessing’, while the word /baqyan/, here, means ‘a prostitute’.

In this Surah the subject of being granted a child from Allah has been mentioned several times: the bestowal of Jesus to Mary in verse 19; that of Isaac and Jacob to Abraham in verse 49. Moreover the remittal of Aaron to Moses in verse 53; and the glad tidings of a child to Zachariah in verse 7 are among them.

Having a child is something of great value, but greater than this is the purity of the child.

By hearing these word, Mary was seized with a severe trembling and again she became very worried.

In that situation, and only thinking about the natural means of having a child, she wondered and:

***“She said: ‘How shall there be for me a son while no man has touched me, neither have I been unchaste.’”***

## **Surah Maryam – Verses 21 - 23**

قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ وَلِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا  
مَّقْضِيًّا

فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَذَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا

فَاجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَا لَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا  
مَنْسِيًّا

**21. “He said: ‘So (it will be)’. Your Lord says: ‘It is easy for Me, and that We will make him a Sign (miracle) unto the people and a Mercy from Us, and it is a matter decreed.**

**22. “So she conceived him (Jesus) and withdrew with him to a distance place.”**

**23. “And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree. She said: ‘Would I had died ere this, and had been a thing forgotten’.”**

The Divine angel, in the guise of a man, appeared before Mary and blew on her so that she became pregnant. Then, Mary went to a distant place for she was worried about the accusation of people who did not know of the matter, or because a pregnant woman needs comfort and a quiet environment.

The opinions recorded in most commentaries are divided and abundant about the place and that how Mary became pregnant, or who was the first person that was informed of the matter, but since the Qur’an has not stated anything in this regard, we, too, do not offer any discussion concerning these subjects, because they are not so functional in the development of our understanding.

Some of the difficulties and hardships that Mary tolerated are as follows:

- A. The accusation and suspicion of people.
- B. Pregnancy and childbirth in solitude and isolation.
- C. The lack of a resting place and taking refuge beside a palm tree.
- D. Maintaining a child with no father and being among some people who looked at her with revulsion.

However, when the angel saw Mary's surprise at hearing that glad tidings, he told her that Allah's command was exactly what he had said to her, and that her Lord announced that creating a child out of a virgin was not difficult for Him.

Allah intended for that extraordinary occurrence to be evidence of the child's prophethood and a proof of the immunity of his mother, and that it might also be a bounty from Him upon mankind for their guidance by means of this prophet.

The verse says:

***"He said: 'So (it will be)'. Your Lord says: 'It is easy for Me, and that We will make him a Sign (miracle) unto the people and a Mercy from Us, and it is a matter decreed.'"***

The creation of Jesus with no father, of course, is a special event that occurred by the Will of Allah. Finally, at the highest spiritual point Mary experienced the most intense experience of the divine in her life, to receive the spirit of a prophet in her womb.

Mary conceived and that promised child was settled in her pure womb. Most of the commentators have said that Gabriel blew into her collar and at the same moment she felt the stirrings of pregnancy.

It has also been narrated from Imam Muhammad Baqir (as) that Gabriel blew into Mary's collar and at the same moment Jesus existed in mother's womb,<sup>2</sup> while, in the wombs of other women, the creation and growth of a child usually extends to about nine months.

Mary came out with her abdomen grown big and heavy, and when her maternal aunt saw her, she became quite upset, seeing her niece in that status. Mary was always bashful and deferential with her maternal aunt, so because of this, and the fear of being accused of immoral conduct, she chose not to stay among the people and went to a far off place.

She spent in seclusion relying on hope in her Lord, with a state of anxiety, mixed with happiness. It was her Lord Who had wrought this great miracle upon her, and only He could silence the accusing fingers and voices that could not accept that a woman could conceive without a man. What could she do with that accusation?

But, in the other hand, she felt that this child was the promised Divine prophet, a great heavenly gift. She thought how the Lord, Who had given her the glad tidings of that child, and had created him with that

miraculous quality, would leave her alone?

Accounts vary concerning the length of Mary's pregnancy. Some have said that it lasted one hour, while some others believe that it took a longer time. Ibn 'Abbas says that one hour after that she went to that distant place, the child was born, because Allah has not mentioned any length of time for between Mary's departure for that place and the birth of the child.

It is said that when Mary was ten years old, she became pregnant in one hour, and the body of the child was formed in that very hour, and in that very hour the child was born. The birth of the child occurred when the sun was setting in the horizon.

It has also been narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) that Mary's pregnancy lasted nine hours.<sup>3</sup>

Whatever the duration of her pregnancy was, the time came for the birth of the child. Women, in such a state, usually seek the help and refuge of their kindred that they might help them in the birth of their child. But Mary's situation was an exceptional one, she did not want anyone to witness her delivery, and as soon as the pain began, she set out toward the desert.

The verse says:

***“So she conceived him (Jesus) and withdrew with him to a distance place.”***

In this regard the Qur'an implies that the pain of childbirth drove her to the stump of a withered palm-tree from which only that trunk had remained; i.e. it was a dry tree.

The verse says:

***“And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree...”***

In that condition, a storm of sadness and grief came over her pure being.

This storm was so turbulent, and the burden on her shoulder was so heavy, that, as the verse says:

***“...She said: ‘Would I had died ere this, and had been a thing forgotten’.”***

It is evident that it was not only the fear of future accusations that was pressing upon Mary's heart, there were also other problems such as delivering a child alone in the desert with no midwife or friend as a helper.

There was no place to rest, nor water to drink, there was no food to eat, nor any means to take care of the child with what was available in the environment. These were all the discomforts that Mary had to tolerate.

Imam Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

*“The best clothing of the religion is modesty.”*<sup>4</sup>

Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as) said:

*“Verily modesty and chastity are among the specialties of Faith, and both of them are the epithets of the noble and the method of the righteous.”*<sup>5</sup>

Amir-ul-Mu’mineen Ali (as) said:

*“The modesty of a man with himself is the fruit of Faith.”*<sup>6</sup>

Hadrat Ali (as) said:

*“Modesty is from Allah, the Pure, it protects (one ) from the punishment of Hell Fire.”*<sup>7</sup>

## **Surah Maryam – Verses 24 – 25**

فَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَّا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا

وَهُزِّي إِلَيْكِ بِجِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطُ عَلَيْكِ رُطَبًا جَنِيًّا

**24. “Then (a voice) called out unto her from beneath her: ‘Grieve not! Verily your Lord has made a stream to flow beneath you.’”**

**25. “And shake the trunk of the palm-tree towards yourself. It will drop on you fresh ripe dates.”**

The Qur’anic word /sariyya/ means ‘a small stream’; and the term /janiyya/ is applied for ‘a fruit which is ripe and ready to be picked off’.

Some commentators have said that the caller unto Mary has been Gabriel; but the context of the verses shows that the caller has been Jesus, in a manner that the mother hears his words and believes what he says, and, later with a calm mind, she tells people to ask about her chastity from the child in the cradle.

At the time of delivery and after it, women usually need tranquility, water and appropriate food, the things which have been mentioned in these verses.

The food which has been recommended in the Qur’an and by some Islamic tradition for the woman who has already delivered, is fresh ripe dates.

Also, the Prophet (S) said:

*“The first food for the women who have already delivered, should be fresh dates”.*<sup>8</sup>

Hadrat Ali (as) says:

*“The best food for the pregnant woman is fresh dates, and there is no medical treatment for her better than dates”.*<sup>9</sup>

This is a Divine trial. The day when Mary was sound, a heavenly food was sent down for her, but today, when she is pregnant and has no assistant, she must shake the palm-tree to get some food.

However, the verse says:

***“Then (a voice) called out unto her from beneath her: ‘Grieve not! Verily your Lord has made a stream to flow beneath you’.”***

Some commentators have said that the caller has been Jesus Himself (as), who, from beneath her, called out that she should not be grieved (Grieve not!), and she should not ask for death.

She ought to be sure that Allah would protect her from accusation and, by the miracles of Jesus (as), He removes all accusations from her. One of those miracles was that very spring which was found by one step of Gabriel or that of Jesus, from which she both drunk and expurgated herself.

Another miracle of Jesus (as) was that he called unto her to shake the trunk of the palm-tree, which had been dead for years, in order to become green alive again and give her fresh dates. Mary started at once and found that tree. She shook it when some fresh dates fell down for her.

The verse says:

***“And shake the trunk of the palm-tree towards yourself. It will drop on you fresh ripe dates.”***

It seemed that Allah intended to show her that the similitude of her and Jesus was the similitude of that palm-tree and the dates; meaning that Allah is powerful to cause the fresh dates to fall from a dry dead palm-tree, to gash water from a plain land, and He is powerful to bring a complete human out of the womb of a husbandless woman during a few hours.

This fact was made quietly manifest to Mary that that child was the great sign of Allah and also His condescension unto her, but she was amazed what to say to people so that it could remove the accusation from her. Then, the command of Allah came to her that ‘she should eat and drink’.

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) that the best things which must be given to the ladies who have already conceived is dates and the dates produced in Medina in particular, but if it is not available, the fresh dates from other places might be given to them, or at least, some ordinary dates.<sup>10</sup>

Mary was also commanded to drink the wholesome water of that spring, and to refresh her eyes by

looking at that newborn child. What a refreshment of the eye can be better than this that Allah grants her a child with the rank of prophethood.

A child who spoke at the beginning time of his birthday, and who had great miracles such as restoring to life the dead, healing the blind, and the like of them.11

## Surah Maryam – Verse 26

فَكُلِّي وَاشْرَبِي وَعَيْنًا فَإِمَّا تَرَيْنَ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَانِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا

**26. “So eat and drink and refresh your eye; and if you meet any mortal, say: ‘Verily I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent (God), so never shall I speak today with any human being’.”**

Mary’s keeping silence fasting before people was either for that they had not the capacity of her answer, or speaking with them would result a negative consequence, or in continuation of their questions and that Mary gave them their answers, they might suggest some other questions and new pretexts.

Imam Sadiq (as) said that fasting was not only an abstinence from eating and drinking, and then he recited the verse under discussion.

In this holy verse, Allah, the Pure, commands Mary to eat from that delicious and nutritive food and to drink from that wholesome water.

The verse says:

**“So eat and drink...”**

She was also commanded to refresh her eye by that newly born child and not to be worried about the future; and if anybody asked her regarding it, she would say by sign that she had kept fasting (a silence fasting) for Allah, the Beneficent, and that was why she could speak with no one.

The verse continues saying:

**“...and refresh your eye; and if you meet any mortal, say: ‘Verily I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent (God), so never shall I speak today with any human being’.”**

Therefore, she should have peace of mind from any points of view and should not let herself be grievous and sad.

From the text of the verse, it is understood that the fast of silence was something familiar to that

community, so they did not object to it however this kind of fasting is not sanctioned in the religion of Islam.

It is narrated from Imam Ali-ibn-il-Hussayn (as) who said:

*“A fast of Silence is prohibited.”*

Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as) has narrated from the Prophet of Islam (S) who said:

*“The first thing that a woman may eat after her delivery must be fresh dates.”*

Some Islamic traditions denote that the best food for a pregnant woman, and her drug, is fresh dates.

## **Some Points**

1. The hardships and inconveniences that Mary experienced during that short time, and the wonderful things that occurred to her, by the grace of Allah, trained her and made her prepared for fostering one of the Arch-prophets of Allah, so that she could afford her maternal duty in performing this great task very well.

The process of events led her up to the last stage of difficulties, which was so exacting that she did not see the distance between life and death to be more than one step. But suddenly the state of affairs changed.

Everyone hastened to help her, and she was assured a calm atmosphere. The command to shake the palm-tree to enjoy its fruit, teaches her, as well as all other human beings, this lesson that effort and endeavour should not be abandoned even in the most difficult moments of life.

This statement is an answer to those who think there should not have been any necessity for Mary, who had just given birth, to stand up and shake the palm-tree.

This view states that it would have been better if the same Lord, by Whose command the spring had gushed forth in front of her, and by Whose order the dry tree had yielded fruit, had sent a breeze to shake the branch of the tree so that the dates would fall.

They say that when Mary was healthy, heavenly fruits were sent to her sanctuary, and now when she was in dire physical and emotional difficulties, she had to shake the tree and pick up the fruit herself.

The commandment is far from without wisdom, to recapitulate, it shows that there is no bounty unless we use effort. In other words, when the difficulties come forth, everybody must apply his utmost effort, and that which is beyond his ability, he ought to seek it from Allah.

2. Why Mary hoped for Death? There is no doubt that hoping for death is not a proper thing to do, but sometimes calamities and terrible events occur in the course of a person's life when the taste of life

becomes utterly bitter for him, especially when his own honour and sacred aims are in danger and he does not have the ability to defend them. In such circumstances he hopes for death in order to free himself of his spiritual tortures.

What was on Mary's mind from the beginning was that the birth of this child could make her lose all her respect and honour in the eyes of those mindless people, so she hoped for death and that she would be forgotten. This itself is a proof of the fact that she valued chastity and piety more than her very life, and would rather die than live without honour.

These kinds of thoughts, however, bothered her only for a short time. When she contemplated these couple of miracles of Allah, (gushing water and fructification of the dry palm-tree), all her fears and anxieties, disappeared and the light of certainty and tranquility filled her whole heart.

**3. An Answer to a Question:** Some sceptics say if miracles are only particular to prophets and Immaculate Imams, how could have those miracles appeared for Mary?

To solve this problem, some commentators count these miracles as those wrought by Jesus, and say that they were done as miracles preliminary to prophethood, which in Arabic are called: *'irhadat'*.

But such questions need not be answered with answers such as these, because it is possible for supernatural events to occur in connection with people other than prophets and the Immaculate Imams. This is exactly what we call */kiramah/* 'extraordinary act', whereas a miracle is accompanied with */tahaddi/* 'a challenge' for it serves as a proof for a prophet or an Imam.

**4. The Fast of Silence:** The verses under discussion show that Mary was held to a vow of silence and, by the command of Allah, she refrained from speaking to the people for a particular duration until her child, Jesus, began speaking and defended her chastity. This state was more appropriate and effective from all respects.

The verse indicates that the vow of silence was a familiar habit for those people and as such they did not object to it from her.

This kind of fasting, however, is not lawful in the religion of Islam.

It is narrated from Imam Ali-ibn-il-Hussayn (as) that he said:

*"The fast of silence is prohibited".* 12

And this prohibition reflects the difference between the conditions prevailing at that time and those at the time of the advent of Islam.

Nevertheless, one of the etiquettes of a perfect fast in Islam, of course, is that, when fasting the believer should protect his tongue from committing sins and doing what is disapproved and restrain his eyes from

looking at any corruption.

Imam Sadiq (as) in a tradition has said:

*“Verily fasting is not merely to restrain oneself from eating and drinking alone. Surely Mary said:*

***‘Verily I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent (God)’***, i.e. the silence.

*Therefore (when you are in fasting) protect your tongue, restrain your eyes from whatever is sin, be not envious of each other, and do not get into conflict.”*<sup>13</sup>

**5. A Nutritive Food:** The verses under discussion clearly say that Allah sent fresh dates for Mary’s food at the time of childbirth. With this in mind, commentators have said that the best food for women after their childbirth is fresh dates.

This idea has been explicitly indicated as such in the Islamic literature as well. Imam Amir-ul-Mu’mineen Ali (as) has narrated from the holy Prophet of Islam (S) who said:

*“The first thing a woman is to eat after childbirth should be fresh dates, since Allah told Mary:*

***‘And shake the trunk of the palm-tree towards yourself. It will drop on you fresh ripe dates’.***<sup>14</sup>

The explanation in some commentaries that cite this tradition implies that eating this food is not only useful for the mother, but will also affect her milk.

Again, it is understood from some Islamic traditions that the best food for a pregnant woman, as well as her medicine, is fresh dates,<sup>15</sup> and, if it is not available, ordinary dates can be used. But, moderation must be observed in everything, even in this matter.

Some scientists and food specialists say that dates are abundant in nutrition and have one of the healthiest sugars which can be used even by some diabetic patients.

The same scientists say that there are 13 vital substances and five kinds of vitamins found in dates, all of which make it a rich source of food.<sup>16</sup>

It is also well known that in such a state, women are intensely in need of some nutritive food which are full of vitamins.

With the progress of medical science, the importance of dates as a medicine has been proved.

Calcium is found in dates which is an important substance in strengthening bones and teeth. There is also phosphorus which is one of the main elements that make up man’s brain. It hinders neurasthenia and fatigue. Dates contain potassium, the lack of which causes ulcers in the stomach.

## Surah Maryam – Verses 27 - 28

فَأَتَتْ بِهِ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُ قَالُوا يَا مَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا

يَا أُخْتَ هَارُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبُوكِ امْرَأً سَوْءًا وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكِ بَغِيًّا

**27. “Then she brought the child to her people, carrying him (in her arms). They said: ‘Verily you have done a very indecent thing’.”**

**28. “O sister of Aaron! Your father was not a bad man, nor was your mother an unchaste woman.”**

The Arabic term /fariyya/ means ‘an indecency, a great sin’.

### Jesus Speaks in Cradle!

At last, Mary brought her child to her people, carrying him in her arms. When those people saw a new-born child in her bosom, they wondered so that their mouths remained half open.

The verse says:

**“Then she brought the child to her people, carrying him (in her arms). They said: ‘Verily you have done a very indecent thing’.”**

Some of them, who were hasty in judgment, said about Mary that it was a pity with that glorious background and this pollution! And a thousand pities her pure family who became so disgraced like that.

Then, as the verse says, they encountered her as follows:

**“... They said: ‘Verily you have done a very indecent thing’.”**

Some others, addressing Mary, told her:

**“O sister of Aaron! Your father was not a bad man, nor was your mother an unchaste woman.”**

They addressed Mary by the phrase ‘O sister of Aaron’, because Aaron was a pure and pious man, and he was so well known among the Children of Israel for his piety that whenever they wanted to show how pious and righteous a person was, they would address the one as a brother or sister of Aaron.

## Some Verses and Traditions About Calumny

Allah, the Almighty, says:

*“And whoever commits a fault or a sin, then accuses an innocent person of it, he has burdened (himself) with a calumny and a manifest sin.”*<sup>17</sup>

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

*“When a believer accuses his brethren, faith will dissolve away from his heart like salt is dissolved in water.”*<sup>18</sup>

Imam Ali (as) said:

*“(The sin of) calumny charged against the pious is heavier than the skies.”*<sup>19</sup>

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

*“Calumny against the pious is heavier than firm, (steady) mountains.”*<sup>20</sup>

Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

*“A (true) believer does not deceive his brethren, is not treacherous to him, does not abase him, does not denigrate him, and does not tell him he hates him.”*<sup>21</sup>

Imam Rida (as) narrated from the Prophet (S) who said:

*“He who belies a believing man or a believing woman, or says something about him which is not in him, on the Day of Judgment Allah will make him stand on a heap of Fire until he comes out of what he had said against him.”*<sup>22</sup>

## Surah Maryam – Verses 29 - 30

فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا

قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ءَاتَانِي الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا

**29. “Then Mary pointed to him. They said: ‘How shall we speak to one who is (yet) a child in the cradle?’”**

**30. “He (miraculously) said: ‘Verily I am a servant of Allah; He has given me the Book and made me a prophet’.”**

Since Mary had observed a silence fasting, in order to fulfill her vow, she signed instead of speaking.

The verse says:

**“Then Mary pointed to him. They said: ‘How shall we speak to one who is (yet) a child in the cradle?’”**

The first word of Jesus (as) was about servitude unto Allah, but his followers exaggerated and considered Jesus as God or God’s son.

Once Imam Baqir (as) was asked whether Hadrat Jesus (as) was also the witness of Allah when Jesus was in cradle. Imam (as) said Jesus (as) was a prophet then, but he was not a Messenger until when he was seven years old. It was in that year that the rank of Messengership was bestowed on him.<sup>23</sup>

By a short sentence, Jesus (as) both banished the accusation from his mother, and spoke about his own future, and pointed to the future duty of people.

The verse in this regard says:

**“He (miraculously) said: ‘Verily I am a servant of Allah; He has given me the Book and made me a prophet’.”**

However, the Qur’an in the first verse says that Mary was silent to obey the command of Allah. The only thing she did was that she pointed to her new-born-child, Jesus, when her action caused the people’s astonishment more than before.

They told her:

**“How shall we speak to one who is (yet) a child in the cradle?”**

According to some other commentary books, they said to each other that the mockery and ridicule of Mary was harder and heavier to them than her deviation from the path of chastity.

But this situation did not last so long, because that new-born-child started speaking, and said:

**“Verily I am a servant of Allah; He has given me the Book and made me a prophet.”**

## **Surah Maryam – Verses 31 – 32**

وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا

## وَيَرّاً بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّاراً شَقِيّاً

**31. “And He has made me blessed wherever I may be and He has enjoined on me prayer and almsgiving so long as I live.”**

**32. “And (He has made me) kind to my mother, and He has not made me arrogant unblessed.”**

The existence of Jesus (as) was a blessed thing in which there were a lot of interests, education of others, and its continuation. Hadrat Jesus (as) both lives a long blessed life which lasts until after the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (as), and his followers are abundant and are victorious against the infidels.

The origin of good things and blessings are mainly intentions, aims, and innate modes and virtues.

Therefore, some people are blessed wherever they may be, as the verse, concerning Jesus, says:

**“And He has made me blessed wherever I may be...”**

But, some others, because of their spiritual difficulties and their separation from spirituality, are faced with their own evil qualities, and usually they are not useful for others wherever they may be.

By mentioning the word ‘mother’, Jesus (as) has pointed to the chastity of his mother, Mary, and his lack of father, when he says:

**“And (He has made me) kind to my mother...”**

Also, the Qur’an, from the tongue of Jesus, in this verse implies that Allah has made him a blessed being, or a useful being for people, wherever he may be, and He has enjoined him to prayer and almsgiving so long as he is alive.

The verse, in this regard, continues saying:

**“...and He has enjoined on me prayer and almsgiving so long as I live.”**

And, by the next verse, Jesus after implaying that Allah made him kind, benevolent, and appreciative unto his mother, adds that He did not make him arrogant and damned.

The verse continues saying;

**“...and He has not made me arrogant unblessed.”**

An Islamic tradition indicates that Jesus (as) has said:

**“My heart is mild and I humble myself to my self.”**

This statement is an indication to this fact that the opposite state of ‘being arrogant and unblessed’ is

these two epithets.

## **A Few Traditions About Prayer, Almsgiving, and Kindness to Parents**

### **A. Prayer**

1. Imam Baqir (as) said:

*“Islam has been founded on five things: prayer, almsgiving, Hajj, fasting and the mastership (of Ahl-ul-Bayt).”*<sup>24</sup>

2. The Prophet of Islam (S) said:

*“The most beloved things with Allah are prayer at its time, then kindness to parents, then Holy Struggle in the way of Allah.”*<sup>25</sup>

3. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

*“The one who takes his prayer lightly is not of me. No, by Allah, such a person will not reach me by the Houd, the pool of abundance.”*<sup>26</sup>

### **B. Almsgiving**

1. It is narrated from Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as) who said:

*“The pillars of Islam are three, none of which is useful without the other two. They are: Prayer, almsgiving, and the guardianship (of the Ahl-ul-Bayt).”*<sup>27</sup>

2. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

*“Cure your patients by means of charity (sadaghah), and protect your property by the alms tax (Zakat).”*

3. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

*“One who restrains paying as much as a Qirat (about 2 grams) of the (obligatory) alms tax (Zakat), will die as a Jew or a Christian.”*<sup>28</sup>

4. Imam Musa-ibn-Ja'far (as) said:

*“Verily the Alms tax has been assigned as a provision for the poor and as a means for the increase of their wealth.”*<sup>29</sup>

However, communication with Allah (prayer) is not separate from communication with the deprived (almsgiving).

### C. Kindness to the Parents

1. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

*“The best deeds are: prayer in its time, kindness to parents, and Holy Struggle in the way of Allah.”*<sup>30</sup>

2. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

*“One who obeys the command of Allah regarding parents, two doors of the Paradise will be opened for him; and if he obeys (the command of Allah regarding) one of them, then one door will be opened (to him).”*<sup>31</sup>

3. The holy Prophet (S) in a tradition has said:

*“He who obeys his parents and His Lord, will be in the highest position (of Heaven in Hereafter).”*<sup>32</sup>

4. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

*“The person who pleases his parents, has pleased Allah; and the one who discontents his parents, has discontended Allah.”*<sup>33</sup>

5. The Prophet of Islam (S) said:

*“The person who likes his lifetime to be prolonged and his sustenance to be increased, then he should be kind to his parents and visit his kin.”*<sup>34</sup>

### Surah Maryam – Verse 33

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا

**33. “And peace be on me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised alive.”**

Then, finally, from the tongue of this newborn Child (Hadrat Messiah) the verse says:

**“And peace be on me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised alive.”**

This statement has occurred both about Yahya (John)<sup>35</sup> (as) and about Jesus Christ (as).

Hadrat Imam Rida (as) said:

*“The most horrible days of a man are three days: the birth day, the day of death, and the Day of Hereafter.”*<sup>36</sup>

## Surah Maryam – Verses 34 – 35

ذَٰلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قَوْلَ الْحَقِّ الَّذِي فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ

مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ مِنْ وَلَدٍ سُبْحَانَهُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

**34. “This is Jesus, son of Mary, a statement of truth, concerning which they doubt.”**

**35. “It is not befitting to Allah that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him! When He decrees a thing, He only says unto it: ‘Be’, and it is.”**

Formerly the Qur’an illustrated clearly the event of the birth of Jesus through previous verses. Now, it refers to the negation of the superstitions and the polytheistic words that they have said about Jesus (as).

It says:

**“This is Jesus, son of Mary...”**

The Qur’an emphasizes on the fact that Jesus is the son of Mary, in order to negate his being as the son of God, and then, it adds:

**“...a statement of truth, concerning which they doubt.”**

Then, in the next verse, it explicitly says:

**“It is not befitting to Allah that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him!...”**

But, if He intends something and commands, He says to it ‘Be’ and it will come into being, too.

The verse continues saying:

**“...When He decrees a thing, He only says unto it: ‘Be’, and it is.”**

This statement indicates that having son for Allah, in the form that the Christians imagine it unto Him, does not fit the sanctity of the Rank of Allah. On one side, its requisite is the existence of body, and on the other side, there should be considered a limitation for Him, and on the third side, Allah does not need anything.

The expression saying **“Be’ and it is”** is a very lively illustration unto the vast power of Allah and His

domination and sovereignty over the subject of creation.

## **Explanations**

Jesus Christ (as) has been introduced through the afore mentioned verses by seven outstanding epithets and two accomplishments.

### **A. The Epithets of Jesus Christ**

1. To be a servant of Allah:

***“Verily am a servant of Allah.”***

2. To bring a heavenly Book:

***“...He has given me the Book.”***

3. To be a prophet:

***“...and made me a prophet.”***

4. To be blessed:

***“And He has made me blessed.”***

5. To be kind unto the mother:

***“And (He has made me) kind to my mother.”***

6. Not to be arrogant and unblessed:

***“He not made me arrogant and unblessed.”***

7. To be humble, gratitude, and prosperous:

***“And peace be on me.”***

### **B. Two Accomplishments**

One of them is prayer and the other is almsgiving (zakat). The above mentioned verse says that the truth about Jesus is just what Allah said:

***“This is Jesus, son of Mary”.***

In the holy Qur'an, the Christians have been repeatedly mentioned as deviated whose belief about Christ, as the son of God, is wrong.

For example, in Surah Al-Ma'idah, No. 5, verse 73, it says:

***“certainly they disbelieve who say: ‘Verily Allah is the third of the three’...”***

And, in Surah At-Taubah, No. 9, verse 30, it says:

***“...and the Christians say: ‘The Messiah is the son of God’...”***

But, this verse shows the correct argument in response to these erroneous claims regarding the characteristics of Jesus.

There is no need to say that the Will of Allah comes into being, even without the expression of ‘Be’, but Allah has described His Will for us in this manner so that we could understand it.

Allah is Omnipotent, and He is not in need of anything or any means in creating, His infinite Power is a reason why He is far exalted from powerlessness and from begetting a son.

## **The Qur’an and the Christ**

As a result of the stiff pressure that the pagans of Mecca put upon the followers of the Prophet of Islam (S), a group of Muslims, accompanied by Ja’far-ibn-Abitalib, by the order of the Prophet (S), migrated to Ethiopia (Abyssinia).

The pagans of the Quraysh thought that if the Muslims could become powerful there and form a government, they would be able to root out the idolatry that the polytheists practiced.

They sent ‘Amru’as and with a delegation to Ethiopia bearing presents for the ministers of Najashi, the king of Abyssinia. Those ministers took the presents from them to put Najashi to motion against the emigrant Muslims.

But Najashi decided to personally summon the Muslims and hearken to their sayings. Ja’far, who was the representative of the Muslims, began speaking at the presence of the king of Ethiopia.

He said his words about the wrongdoings of idolatry, superstitions and transgressions of the Age of Ignorance. He informed Najashi of the advent of Islam and luminosity of the religion of Hadrat Muhammad (S). Ja’far spoke so influentially that Najashi wept and sent the pagans’ presents back to them.

He said:

*“The Lord, Who gave me power, did not take bribery from me. Why should I take bribery from you?”*

That meeting ended with the benefit of Muslims and the loss of infidels. After this defeat, ‘Amru’as contemplated and, on the following day, offered the king a new suggestion. In order to excite the

religious zeal of Najashi, he told him that Muslims had some notions which were against his belief. Najashi summoned Muslims once more and asked them their belief about Messiah (as).

In answer to him, Ja'far Tayyar recited some verses of the Qur'an from Surah Maryam up to the verse which says:

*“This is Jesus, son of Mary, a statement of truth, concerning which they doubt.”*

By hearing the verses of the Qur'an, Najashi shed tears and said:

*“This is the truth”*.

After this second defeat, when 'Amru'as wanted to start another new effort, Najashi raised his hand and gave him a sharp slap in his face.<sup>37</sup>

## Surah Maryam – Verse 36

وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ

**36. “And verily Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship (only) Him. This is a straight path.”**

The persistence of Messiah (as) on Monotheism, and his emphasis that the straight path is only this one, is an answer to the adherents of trinity as well as others.

(A similar text to the abovementioned holy verse has also occurred in Surah'Al-i-'Imran, No. 3, verse 51, and Surah Az-Zukhruf, No. 43, verse 64).

Through introducing himself, Jesus (as) said he was a servant of Allah:

*“... Verily I am servant of Allah...”*<sup>38</sup>.

Then, the first command he received was about prayer and worship:

*“...and He has enjoined on me prayer...”*<sup>39</sup>,

and the first program he announced was worshipping Allah:

*“...So worship (only) Him...”*.

Thus taking Jesus as a Son of God is an alteration in religion which causes blasphemy.

However, this verse implies that the last word of Jesus, after introducing himself with the qualities which were previously referred to, is the subject of Monotheism, specially on the field of worship, on which he

emphasized more.

By this verse, Jesus (as) says:

***“And verily Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship (only) Him. This is a straight path.”***

Thus, from very beginning of his life, Messiah (as) struggled against any blasphemy, and worshipping gods of dualism and polytheism, because monotheism, and worshipping Allah, is the straight path, while the rest paths are some deviated paths. (In the Qur’an, the path of Allah and His Messenger, accompanied with worshipping Him, has been introduced as the ‘straight path’.)

## **Surah Maryam – Verses 37 – 38**

فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ مَّشْهَدِ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ

أَسْمِعْ بِهِمْ وَأَبْصِرْ يَوْمَ يَأْتُونَنَا لَكِنِ الظَّالِمُونَ الْيَوْمَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ

**37. “Then the sects did differ among themselves; and woe to those who disbelieved because of presence on the great day.”**

**38. “How well they will hear and see on the day they come to Us! But the unjust (even) this day are in manifest straying.”**

‘A party’ is a group of people working with together and who have some particular goals and position which are usually united.

The Arabic word /mašhad/ means either the site of the attendance of people, or the place of bearing witness, because, on the Day of Judgment both people attend there, and a lot of witnesses from angels and prophets will testify upon the deeds of man.

Some people believed in Jesus as God, like the group of Ya‘qhubiyyah; some others said that he was son of God, like the group of Nasturiyyah, while some other people believed in trinity, like Israilliyyah. But, on the Day of Resurrection, all of these groups will testify to the falsehood of their beliefs.<sup>40</sup>

Despite all the emphasis Jesus placed upon the subject of monotheism and the worship of the One God, yet, after him, some groups among his followers differed and expressed different ideas about the Messiah.

Referring to this the verse says:

***“Then the sects did differ among themselves; and woe to those who disbelieved because of presence on the great day.”***

The history of Christianity is also good evidence proving that after the Christ, they differed greatly about him and about the subject of monotheism.

Some of them said:

*“He is God who has come down on earth and has brought a group of people to life and has caused others to die, then He ascended to heaven.”*

Others said:

*“He is the son of God”,*

while others said:

*“He is one of the three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”*

Yet others said:

*“He is the third of the three. God is the object of worship, Jesus is also an object of worship, and his mother also is an object of worship.”*

Finally, some his followers said that he was the servant of Allah and His Messenger.

Since deviation from the principle of Monotheism is counted as the greatest deviation of the Christians, at the end of the verse they are severely warned.

In the next verse, the Qur’an describes their state when they are present at the gathering–place of resurrection.

It says:

***“How well they will hear and see on the day they come to Us!...”***

But, now that they are in this life, these cruel people are in a manifest aberration busy with their transgression.

The verse continues saying:

***“...But the unjust (even) this day are in manifest straying.”***

In principal, the observation of that court in Hereafter and the effects of the deeds, remove the sleep of negligence from the eyes and the ears so that the blind–hearted ones will become aware and wise. But,

what a pity! This awareness will be of no avail to them.

## Surah Maryam – Verses 39 – 40

وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْحَسْرَةِ إِذْ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَرِثُ الْأَرْضَ وَمَنْ عَلَيْهَا وَإِلَيْنَا يُرْجَعُونَ

**39. “And warn them of the Day of Regret, when the matter shall have been decreed while they are (now) in negligence and they do not believe.”**

**40. “Verily We inherit the earth and all that are upon it and unto Us they shall be returned.”**

The gate of all misfortunes is negligence: negligence from the Lord, negligence from Hereafter, negligence from sins, negligence from plots, negligence from the poor and the deprived, negligence from the history and its courses, and negligence from adolescence, abilities, talents and preparednesses of development.

One of the names of Hereafter is ‘the Day of Regret’, regret for the missed opportunities and for the lost capitals. Death of a man in the state of negligence and faithlessness, is a source of regret.

Therefore, this verse addresses the Prophet (S) and commands him to warn the pagans of Mecca from the Day when the sinners will regret why they had not done some more good deeds. This Day is the Day of Resurrection. Some commentators say that in that Day only those who deserve punishment will regret.

In Sahih-i-Muslim there has been narrated by Abu-Sa’id-i-Khidri that the Prophet of Islam said:

*“When the people of Heaven will enter Paradise and the people of Hell will enter the Hell Fire, all of them will be called and, thus, their attentions will be attracted. Then, the death will be shown to them and they will be told: ‘Do you know death?’*

*They will say: ‘This is the death’, while they all know it. Then, the death will be perished and the people of Paradise will be said to that there will be no death and they are eternal; and the people of Hell will also be said to that there will be no death and they are eternal. This is the meaning of ‘And warn them of the Day of Regret’.”*

The believers in Imamate have narrated this tradition from Imam Baqir (as) and Imam Sadiq (as) who had added at its end that:

*“The people of Paradise will become so happy that if there were death there, all of them would die because of inconvenience.”*<sup>41</sup>

The verse continues saying:

***“...when the matter shall have been decreed...”***

On that Day, the affairs will become one-sided. A group of people go into Paradise while another group will be sent into Hell. Some commentators say that it means that the life of this world has ended and no one will come back to this world to recompense the events of the last; and on that Day all people will be treated justly.

***“...while they are (now) in negligence and they do not believe.”***

In this world, people are busy with some vain affairs and often forget the Hereafter.

In the next verse, Allah says that He will take up the inhabitants of the earth from the earth and He will inherit the earth and those who are on it, because there will remain no one on the earth to claim ownership or to be able interfere in it. The return of them all, after death, shall be to Him and none will govern them but Allah.

The verse says:

***“Verily We inherit the earth and all that are upon it and unto Us they shall be returned.”***

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1. Surah Al-Mulk, No. 67, verse 1
  2. Majma‘-ul-Bayan, Al-Burhan, As-Safi, and some other commentaries
  3. The Commentary of Majma‘-ul-Bayan, as well as Al-Burhan and As-Safi
  4. Qurar-ul-Hikam, vol. 2, p. 398
  5. Muntakhab-ul-Qurar, p. 159
  6. Qurar-ul-Hikam, vol. 1, p. 386
  7. Qurar-ul-Hikam, vol. 2, p. 143
  8. Al-Kafi, vol. 6, p. 22
  9. Tafsir-i-Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Khisal by Saduq, p. 637
  10. Tafsir-i-‘Atyab-ul-Bayan, and Majma‘-ul-Bayan
  11. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, the Commentary
  12. Wasa‘il-ush-Shi‘ah, vol. 7, p. 390
  13. Man-layahduruhul-Faghih, adapted from Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 332
  14. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 330
  15. Ibid
  16. The First University and the Last Prophet, vol. 7, p. 65
  17. Surah-An-Nisa’, No.4 verse 112
  18. Al-Kafi, vol. 4, p. 3058
  19. Kanz-ul-‘Ummal, vol. 3, p. 102
  20. Bihar-ul-‘Anwar, vol. 72, p. 194

21. Ibid
22. Ibid
23. Tafsir-i-Kanz-ud-Daghayegh
24. Bihar, vol. 82, p. 234
25. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, vol.7, tradition No. 18897
26. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, vol.82, p. 224
27. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, vol. 68, p.386
28. Wasa'il-ush-Shi'ah, p. 186
29. Wasa'il-ush-Shi'ah, vol. 6 p. 4
30. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, vol. 74, p. 85
31. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, vol. 16, p. 467
32. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, vol. 6, p. 468
33. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, vol. 16, p. 470
34. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, vol. 16, p. 475
35. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 15
36. 'Uyun'Akhbar-ir-Rida, vol. 1, p. 257
37. Furugh-i-'Abadiyyat, vil.1, p.253 narrated from Kamil-i-Ibn-i-'Athir, vol.2, p.54 & Bihar-ul-'Anwar, vol.18, p. 415
38. Surah Maryam, No.19, verse 30
39. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 31
40. Tafsir-i-'Atyab-ul-Bayan
41. The commentary of As-Safi, Majma'-ul-Bayan, and Al-Burhan

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