

Tuesday, September 21, 2010 - Jesus Christ is The Son of God

The greatest confession mankind can ever make is, "Jesus is The Christ, The Son of The Living God!" This confession can be made because of the certainty one can have in the statement: Jesus Christ is The Son of God. Yet billions of individuals (some dead, some living, and some yet to be born) deny, or will deny, the deity which the Holy Scriptures claim for God's only Son. As we conclude this brief study of Islam, let us focus on what the Muslim culture believes versus the facts of the scriptures.

The Qur'an mentions Jesus many times, but declares that Jesus is only a prophet and that he was not crucified. Isa (Jesus) is mentioned 93 times in the Qur'an. It describes his virgin birth, calling Isa the "son of Mary" 23 times. Jesus is given more honorific titles in the Qur'an than any other prophet (including Muhammad.) Those titles include "prophet", "messiah", "messenger", "word", and "spirit and mercy of God." However, they do not recognize Christ as The Son of God.

Mark R. Hooper, who spent five years as a full-time missionary in Bombay, India and taught missions and anthropology at Freed Hardeman University for 16 years, states in his article, "The Muslim View":

"The Islamic religion has a strong tradition of belief in Jesus as a prophet of God. Muslims hold Isa, the Arabic name for Jesus in the Qur'an, in very high regard due to this God-given prophet status. The Muslim believes that what the Qur'an says about Jesus is the ultimate authority, superseding the Gospels (Injil) that have been corrupted by Christians. He believes that the Islamic view of Jesus does not diminish his status, underrate his character, or degrade his great personality in any way. He thinks Jesus is portrayed more respectfully in the Qur'an than in the Bible. The primary logic for this is the Muslim rejection of the cross. The Muslim reasons that God would not allow one of his prophets to undergo such a shameful death. The Muslim, therefore, believes he honors and respects Jesus more than Christians by denying the fact that the crucifixion is true. Honoring Jesus, along with the other important prophets in Islam, culminating with Mohammed, is important to all Muslims. However, Mohammed (the author of the Qur'an) stops short of attributing to Jesus the essence of deity, preferring instead to embrace a monotheistic theology devoid of the trinity."

A Muslim recently made the following comment. **"There are no Jewish writings that prophesied the appearing of 'God' on earth in the form of a man."** He said this in a denial of the Christian claim that Jesus of Nazareth possessed the nature of "God" in the flesh. He further asserted that Christ never even claimed that he was the **"Son of God."** This gentleman has correctly portrayed the Muslim view of Jesus Christ. One apologist for Islam has argued that **"Jesus never claimed to be a god or the Son of God."** He contended that Christ **"was only the servant and apostle of the Lord"** in the very same sense that others (like Moses) were messengers of God before him. Another Islamic writer claims that there is no authentic biblical

evidence that Jesus ever affirmed that he was the **“Son of God”**.

Such statements are all the proof one needs to understand that those who choose to make up religious doctrines of their own, will ignore all evidence to the Divinity of Christ. What evidence do we have of the Divine Nature of Christ?

It was prophesied from the beginning in the Old Testament that a Savior would come. The expectation of a personal Savior is implicit in the promise of the seed of the woman (**Gen. 3:15**) and in the blessing of Noah upon Shem (**Gen. 9:26-27**). It was further expanded in God's promises to the patriarchs (**Gen. 12:1-3**) and in the prophecy of Shiloh's coming (**Gen. 49:10**). It is seen in the Messianic prophecy of **Isa. 9:6**: **“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called ‘Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.’”**

Jesus of Nazareth appeared with the bold claim that it was he who was the subject of these Old Testament prophecies—he was the Messiah, and, therefore, the Savior. Early in his ministry he went to his home town of Nazareth. He entered the synagogue and, taking the prophecy of Isaiah, he found the scripture (**Isa. 61: 1-2**) which read: **“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord”** (**Luke 4: 16-19**). Following the reading he said, **“Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing,”** and with those words Jesus declared himself to be Messiah and Savior. His Messianic claims in the Fourth Gospel are clear and significant. He asserted that he was the **bread of life (John 6:35)**, **the water of life (John 7:37-38)**; **the light of the world (John 8:12)**, **the good shepherd (John 10:11)**, **the son of God (John 10:36)**, **the resurrection and the life (John 11:25)**, **the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6)**, **the true vine (John 15:1)**, and **the king of the Jews (John 18:37)**.

No one but the Savior of the world could make and substantiate such Messianic claims. Indeed, every claim that Jesus made was clearly substantiated by his miracles and by his perfect life. The angel announced his birth to the shepherds by saying, **“For to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord”** (**Luke 2: 11**). The Father attested his divine Sonship at his baptism (**Matt. 3: 17**) and at his transfiguration (**Matt. 17:5**). Inspired apostles acknowledged him as Savior time and again (**John 3:17; Acts 4:12; 13:23; Rom. 5:8-10**). Over 360 Old Testament prophecies regarding Jesus Christ and all were fulfilled. The evidence is overwhelming that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed man's Savior and The Son of God.

Islam's Qur'an asserts that Jesus was not crucified; rather, the Savior's death was only “made to appear” as such. Actually, it is alleged, he was “raised up” unto God without dying on the cross (Sura IV.157-158). This allegation is absolutely void of evidence.

Note the following from scripture:

1. The Old Testaments prophets foretold the death of Christ. The Lord was to be pierced (**Ps. 22:16; Zech. 12:10**), led as a lamb to the slaughter (**Isa. 53:7**), slain as the Passover victim (**Ex. 12:1ff; cf. 1 Cor. 5:7**), and enter into Sheol (**Ps. 16:10; cf. Acts 2:22-32**) — the realm of the dead.

2. Jesus himself declared that he would be killed (**Matt. 16:21**), and that his body would be in the grave three days (**Matt. 12:40**).

3. The New Testament spokesmen uniformly affirmed that Jesus died. Peter proclaimed this message (**Acts 2:23; 3:15; 1 Pet. 1:18-21**), as did Stephen (**Acts 7:52**), Paul (**Acts 13:28; 1 Cor. 15:1**), and others (**Rev. 5:9; 11:8; 12:11**).

In addition, secular history confirms that Christ died. Josephus, the Jewish historian, refers to Jesus' death (Antiquities 18.3.3). The Roman writer, Tacitus, said that Christ was "executed" by Pilate (Annals 15.44). The early enemies of Christianity, e.g., Celsus and Lucian, also conceded that Jesus was put to death, as did the Patristic writers of the ante-Nicean period. The evidence for the death of the Lord is absolutely overwhelming.

The supreme sign that Jesus promised he would give to verify his claim to be Savior was his resurrection from the dead, (**John 2: 19; Matt. 12:40; 16:4**). The Apostle Paul said that he was "**designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead**" (**Rom. 1:4**). The certainty of Jesus' resurrection is the certainty that he is the Savior, and his resurrection from the dead is the best attested fact in all of the Scriptures.

"Jesus is The Christ, The Son of The Living God!" Woe unto those who refuse to make that great confession.