



# Civilizations Exchange & Cooperation Foundation

## Christmas from an Islamic Perspective

As the preparations for the Christmas Holiday are underway in the U.S and around the world, it might be of interest to see how Muslims perceive the birth of Jesus.

It is worth noting that there are no detailed descriptions of the births of other prophets in the Qur'an like that of the story of Prophet Jesus and his miraculous birth. When I came to the U.S. and served as Imam of the Islamic Society of Baltimore, Masjid Al Rahmah, in 1989, I saw my fellow Christian Americans celebrate Christmas. It occurred to me that this would be a good time to introduce myself to the community and I sent holiday greeting cards by mail to the entire neighborhood. In that same spirit, I would like to share this letter with host families as well as with the YES and other cultural exchange students, who come here from predominately Muslim countries or Muslim communities, to better understand Christmas from the Islamic perspective. It will give students an opportunity to share what the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad said about Jesus, as one of God's greatest prophets and messengers to mankind, with their friends and host families. It will also give students a chance to show the reverence that Muslims feel toward Prophet Jesus and his family. This type of discussion could be one of many memorable experiences for both students and their host families during their time in America.

### The Angels Deliver the “Word of God” to Mary

*“Behold! The angels said: ‘O Mary! God gives you good news with a Word from Him. His name will be Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, held in honor in this world and the Hereafter and in (the company of) those nearest to God.’”* Chapter 3, Verse 45

### Merry Wonder!!

The Qur'an recorded the question of wonderment by Mary when she said:

*“O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has ever touched me? He said: Even so, Allah creates what He pleases; when He has decreed a matter, He only says to it, Be, and it is.”* Chapter 3, Verse 47

### Details of Jesus' Birth

Chapter 19, titled Mary, gives a full description of the birth and several miracles surrounding Jesus' birth in verses 16 - 36, which may be recited daily by 1.5 billion Muslims all over the world in their five daily prayers.

### Miracles in the Qur'an Performed by Jesus

In addition to the birth of Jesus, the Qur'an recorded many of the miracles, which God bestowed upon Jesus such as speaking from the cradle and the ability to cure lepers and the blind.

*“Then will Allah say: "O Jesus the son of Mary! Recount My favor to thee and to thy mother. Behold! I strengthened thee with the holy spirit, so that you did speak to the people in childhood and in maturity. Behold! I taught you the Book and Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel and behold! You made out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by My leave, and you breathed into it and it became a bird by My leave, and you healed those born blind, and the lepers, by My leave. And behold! You brought forth the dead by My leave.*

***And behold! I did restrain the Children of Israel from (violence to) you when you did show them the clear Signs, and the unbelievers among them said: 'This is nothing but evident magic.'*** Chapter 5, Verse 110.

### **Christians in the Qur'an**

In the following verse, Muslims are instructed to consider all of these blessings when they are dealing with the followers of Jesus:

***"We gave (Jesus) the Gospel (Injeel) and put compassion and mercy into the hearts of his followers."***  
Chapter 57, Verse 27

### **Spiritual Unity**

The following verse, among others, is a testimony for all the Muslims that their belief is not complete, if they do not believe in and revere all the prophets and, in particular, Moses and Jesus, their followers and the scriptures they received from Almighty God, who also revealed the Qur'an. It gives a clear message for the family of the house of Abraham to stand united, and not to let the forces of hate, fanaticism, extremism, and ignorance, which existed during the time of Prophet Muhammad, as well as in 2009 and beyond, to separate them:

***"Say ye: "We believe in God and the revelation given to us and to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that 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.""*** Chapter 2, Verse 136

### **Prophet Muhammad affirms Unity**

Prophet Muhammad himself sought to erase any distinctions between the message he taught and that taught by Jesus, who he called God's "spirit and word." Prophet Muhammad said:

***"Both in this world and in the Hereafter, I am the nearest of all people to Jesus, the son of Mary. The prophets are paternal brothers; their mothers are different, but their religion is one."***

### **Peace Be Upon Him**

With all of this in mind, it is incumbent on every Muslim, when they say or hear Jesus' name, to repeat (A'laihi assalam – peace be upon him).

For that and more, CECF wishes all the host families and exchange organization staff, who celebrate Christmas and with whom we have been delighted to work:

***Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday Season!***

Sincerely,



Imam Mohamad Bashir Arafat  
President