

14- Testimony of Christ's crucifixion.mp3

Nahed: My Dear viewer, you are most welcome to a new episode of the program "Questions About Faith". It is such a pleasure to answer all the questions that you send to us. It is also our pleasure to have with us Father Zakaria Botros.

You are most welcome, Father.

F Zakaria: Thank you

Previously, we have spoken about the fact of the crucifixion of Christ. So, as always, we would like you to give us a brief summary, for the sake of those among the viewers who are watching for the first time, to be able to follow along. Go ahead

F Zakaria: We started off talking about the fact of the Trinity and the Unity, then about Divine incarnation, and mentioned that the purpose of the Divine incarnation was the crucifixion. The crucifixion of Christ. And why's that? Because the Bible says, in the Gospel of John, chapter 3 and verse 16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." So then, crucifixion was for the purpose of redemption, so that mankind would not perish but be saved and have everlasting life. And this is an act of love on God's part. Why? At the beginning of creation God loved man, having created him in His image and after His likeness. Love. But that man got corrupted, the image was marred by sin. So again out of love, God desired to have mercy on him and save him, to recreate him anew. And that is

what was typified in the book of the prophet Jeremiah chapter 18, where an illustration has been given to the prophet Jeremiah with an application. What did He say to him? He said "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house" - that is the prophet Jeremiah. "And there he was making something at the wheel" - that's the instrument he uses to mold things. "And the vessel that he had made of clay was marred in the potter's hand", it got messed up. After he had made it into a beautiful vase it got messed up. So what did he do again? It says: "So he made it again into another vessel as it seemed good for the potter to make." God created us of mud, clay is mud, but we got marred, we got messed up. So He recreated us again out of the same love, and the recreation begins at the Cross. Because it was on the Cross that Christ died to redeem us and to recreate us anew. That's why it is written, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ Jesus, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away. Behold all things have become new." So when Christ died on the Cross it wasn't just a mathematical or logical procedure. It was an act of Divine love. His death was necessary for redemption. We have already covered the principle of redemption, as well as the prerequisites of the redeemer, and we said that they were all fulfilled in the person of Christ which is to be unlimited, and to be of the same kind of the redeemed, and to be pure in order not to deserve death for his own sin. So this is then the incarnated God Who redeemed mankind. This, in brief, was what we said about the crucifixion of Christ.

Nahed: Today however, we have a very important subject to discuss and I would like you to answer some

of the objections. They are not only a few, they are many which we received. So let's start with the questions of the objectors. The first question: The Quran says that Christ has not been crucified, "they did not crucify Him for certainty." What do you have to say about that?

F Zakaria: Good. As a matter of fact, this is not the only verse. There are many other verses that object to that.

Nahed: Well, anyway, all those verses indicate that Christ hasn't been crucified.

F Zakaria: It is important to mention those verses, so that the Muslim viewers would understand that we are aware of the dimensions of this fact, as far as the Quran is concerned. So would you allow me to mention them?

Nahed: Oh. Yes, of course. Go ahead.

F Zakaria: Surah 4 (Al Nesaa), verse 157 which says "And for their saying," talking here about the Jews "We killed God's Messenger Christ Jesus the Son of Mary, they neither killed Him" this is what you have been citing "even though it seemed so to them. They have not killed him for certain."

Another verse is in Surah 3 (Al Omran). It says the following: In order to be able to answer this part you must have a look at other Surahs from the Quran that address the issue. This is not the only Surah. No, there is a verse in the Quran in Surah 3 (Al Omran), that says "they plotted (talking about the Jews) while God plotted

however God is the best plotter." So God said "Jesus, 'Inni Mutawaffeka'" - which means will take Your life, "and lift You up towards Me and purify You from those who disbelieve". So the verse in Surah 3 (Al Omran) says "took Your life" before it says I will lift You up towards me.

Nahed: This is true, 'wafah' has no other meaning but death.

F Zakaria: Well for now let's go along with them to know where this will lead us. I don't want to jump to conclusions or give my own explanation now. I want to know what Islam says about it, because this is what concerns the Muslim viewers to understand what their book says, what their scholars say, what their jurisprudence say, and what their commentators say. But our opinion is of course known from the very beginning. All we do is just clarify. In Surah 19(**Mariam**) it says, "Peace be upon Me the day I was born and the day I shall die and the day I am raised to life again". So 'die' preceded 'raised to life again' . So in the previous verse from Surah 3(Al Omran), He died before He was lifted up.

And this parallel verse shows that He died before He was raised to life again. And in Surah 5(Al Maeda) "when You took My life, You became the watcher over them." So here again we find "He died" and was being watched over while He was dead. There was watching over the Jews. So why was He watching them then while Jesus died? If He died, then that was it. There was no need for watching over them. These are some of the verses that talk about Christ's death. Now we look into the Muslim

scholars. What did Al Imam Al Razy say in his commentary on such things? Imam Al Razy said in his commentary volume 2 page 457, Ibn Abbas narrated as well as Mohamed Ibn Ishak that the meaning of "mutawafeeka" is "causing you to die". So "mutawafeeka" and causing you to die are the same.

Nahed: So we haven't got it wrong then.

F Zakaria: And Wahb said "Christ was made to die for 3 hours. "made to die for 3 hours". You find these things on the same page of Al Razy's commentary. He is attempting to explain what "wafat" means. And again on the same page it says, Ibn Ishak said "He was made to die for 7 hours. So now we have come to death and how long He died. So the time according to Wahb is 3 hours and 7 hours according to Ibn Ishak. Imam Baydawy however, in his commentary on the Quran on the same verse volume 2 page 128 tells us very peculiar words.

Nahed: In the commentary of Al Baydawy.

F Zakaria: Al Baydawy himself. What does he say? "Some hold that the humanity was crucified and the divinity ascended." Half of it is correct and the other half requires modification. The humanity was crucified, that is correct. They neither killed Him nor crucified Him, it was rather the humanity that was crucified and put to death, but the divinity was not crucified. The humanity was crucified. So this is a possible implication. The humanity was crucified and he says that the divinity ascended. And this is what it means to say they neither killed Him nor crucified Him for they did not kill Him

surely because divinity is immortal. So Al Baydawy in his commentary in an attempt to clarify it says, He died for 3 hours or 7 hours, yet He died in His humanity but the divinity was not affected. Al Baydawy came so close to the truth.

Nahed: very much.

F Zakaria: He said the humanity was crucified and this is what we believe because we do not claim that the divinity was crucified but we do not agree with him that the divinity ascended on high because the divinity was still in the body but it is imperishable as I gave you our illustration using the fire,

Nahed: The fire and the iron.

F Zakaria: The fire and the iron. As I hammer the iron fire is not affected because it is of another substance.

Nahed: But it still remains.

F Zakaria: It is still there united with the iron because I can never mould iron except with fire. So we need Christ to be crucified with the divinity residing within Him because the divinity is unlimited. And had Christ died without the divinity, then He would have been an ordinary man who just died.

Nahed: Would you please repeat this again?

F Zakaria: This part from Al Baydawy comes from his commentary. Al Baydawy's commentary volume 2 page

128 says, "It has been said that some claim that the humanity was crucified and the divinity ascended" in order to reconcile this verse because now He has been crucified and died for 3 hours or 7 hours and then the verse says that they have not killed Him for certain neither did they crucify Him, that is they did not crucify the divinity, because it ascended. This was Al Baydawy's opinion. And we tell him Baydawy, no. Both of them were together but the Godhead does not die, neither can it be crucified because it is like the fire in the iron it cannot be affected. He did not ascend; He did not need to ascend. And why so? Because God is everywhere

Nahed: Certainly.

F Zakaria: No place is empty of Him.
So this is as far as "they neither killed Him nor crucified Him" is concerned.

Nahed: O.K., the same verse says also "it was made to appear so to them". What do you say about that? What is that appeared so to them?

F Zakaria: Oh Yes. "They neither killed Him nor crucified Him for certainty, but it was made to appear so to them", so what does 'made to appear so to them' mean? Again we need to fall back on the Quran in order to check these things out. We will now refer to Imam Al Razy and see what he has to say about 'made to appear so to them'. Of course Al Baydawy explained it well. It "was made to appear so to them" means they thought they killed the divinity but it was never killed.

Nahed: This one is already finished.

F Zakaria: That they killed the divinity, crucified the divinity. It "was made to appear so to them" but He was not crucified, that is the divinity, because He ascended in Al Baydawy's opinion. Al Razy however, commenting on this verse said such unusual words, unusual. And I hope after having said that, no not I hope, I'm sure after having said that, no one watching the program now will ever use this verse again for the intended meaning

Nahed: Let's hear it then.

F Zakaria: So what did Al Razy say then in volume 3 of Al Razy's commentary page 350. Please bear with me and I ask the viewers also to watch with me step by step. What does Al Razy say? "If it is permissible to say that God most high would cast the likeness of a man upon another", they say made so to appear to them means someone else other than Him was crucified and they disagreed regarding that person. Some said a Roman soldier went to arrest him, so God cast the likeness of Jesus upon the soldier, and he was taken instead of Christ while Christ ascended. Others said no, it was not a Roman soldier it was Judas

Nahed: The traitor,

F Zakaria: The traitor who betrayed Him. Are you following? He was also with them and God cast His likeness upon him. Others say no no no it was someone called Simon upon whom He cast His likeness. That is Simon the Syrenian.

Nahed: The one who carried the Cross?

F Zakaria: Who carried the Cross. Yet, another group says it was someone called Sargious and one will never know where they got him from; they said Sargious was crucified instead of Him. You see commentaries are all conflicting which is an evidence of falsity. I mean if some witnesses testify in a case at court and one says yes I've seen Mohamed doing that while another says no it wasn't Mohamed it was Hassan and the third would say no, it was Ali.

Nahed: Then all witnesses will be rejected.,

F Zakaria: This would be it, they would drop the case. You see my point. Moreover, Al Razy says "if it is permissible to say that God most high would cast the likeness of someone upon another, this would open the door to sophistry." Who says so?

Nahed: Al Razy.

F Zakaria: Al Razy says so. This opens the door to sophistry. And why Mr. Al Razy? He answers as follows: "Because maybe if we see Zaid, it could be that he is not Zaid, for perhaps God cast the likeness of Zaid upon someone else." This would open the door to sophistry. Someone would say I met Tom today then you will say no, you haven't met Tom. Believe me I met Tom . You would answer him no God cast the likeness of Tom upon Dick. You only saw Dick and you thought it was Tom.

Nahed: Of course. This is absolutely illogical. This bit about "it was made to appear so to them".

F Zakaria: That's Al Razy saying that not us, he is a great Imam. Listen to this . He goes on to say, "So perhaps we see Zaid and it could be that he isn't Zaid. Why? Because God had cast the likeness of Zaid upon someone else." Then you won't trust anything. He gave another example. "And if someone marries" he actually uses their own word which I don't like to say. Excuse me for not quoting it. "And if a man marries Fatema it could be that he has not married Fatema for God may have cast upon Khadiga the likeness of Fatima. So he would marry Khadiga assuming she was Fatema." Absolute sophistry. Isn't it? Very unusual. This is Al Razy commenting on "was made to appear so to them". He says hey folks "was made to appear so to them" does not mean He cast his likeness upon someone else, this is absolute nonsense , inconceivable. And now he establishes a very very very serious rule. What does he say? "If it is permissible" this is Al Razy again on the same page. "If it is permissible to cast the likeness of someone on another then marriage, divorce, property will no more be trusted, because maybe the likeness of this one was cast upon that one, and this one replaced that one because we have opened the door to sophistry, just as he says.

Nahed: The strange thing is that many people hold on to this verse and they say see, it "was made to appear so to them", it was not He Himself, even though they open the door to sophisticated issues that they themselves cannot tackle.

F Zakaria: The problem and the issue is that they don't want to understand. Nobody wants to understand. All what they want to do is object. No, it is just like that. Please MR. try to understand. No there's no understanding about it. God said that and it must be that. O.K. what did the commentators say? I don't want to know. What about the jurisprudence? I don't want to know. It is like that. Why? Because he is afraid. When someone is afraid. Let me give you an example. Let me tell you this small joke. One needs to throw in some humor otherwise he'll be too serious. You know families usually buy things for the kids sometime ahead of the feast such as clothing, suits and dresses for the girls and so forth. And they place them in the wardrobe. So what happened was that the kid was absent from the room, I mean from the house, so the mother started to ask ' where is that boy? If he is absent and silent, then he is up to mischief '. She went on looking for him and she found him in the bedroom. What was he doing? He had opened the wardrobe and put on the pants for the feast way ahead of the feast, he put them on. 'Hey sonny, what are you doing? How dare you put on the pants of the feast?' He said, 'Oh believe me Mummy, it is not me I didn't put them on Mummy.' She said 'What do you mean? The pants are on you.' He said, 'No mummy they put me on.' Afraid. Afraid. So he rejects the reality and tries to justify it with anything, even with nonsense. If anyone studies and understands, he'll be able to know the truth.

Nahed: O.K. Reverend Father, we have now covered “was made to appear so to them”, but they also ask: Isn't repentance enough for forgiveness? So why the crucifixion?

F Zakaria: Isn't repentance enough for forgiveness?

Yes, repentance is a prerequisite for forgiveness, but forgiveness is not granted by mere repentance. And of course this objection regarding forgiveness stands from Surah 2 (Al Baqara) verse 37, you mentioned this in a previous session

"Adam received words from his Lord and he repented to Him, He is the relenting, the merciful." But does this mean forgiveness? He simply repented. Repentance is a human act whereas forgiveness is a divine act. So I must repent but repentance is not all there is to it. For we still need to.. You know repentance means you regret the past and repentance is also a confession or a resolution not to sin in the future. You would say I have repented of the past, this was the last time, I will never do that again. This is repentance. But does repentance fix the problem? For instance, you are driving your car, somebody came and hit the car and wrecked it, and then he climbs out and says I'm really sorry, I will never hit your car again.

Nahed: Oh, yes, but he didn't fix it. He didn't repair it.

F Zakaria: He has not compensated you for the car, right? The car was totally lost absolutely wrecked, but he comes around and says I'm sorry, I know my mistake, I'm sorry Mam. Be certain that later on I will never hit your car again. What good is that to you?

Nahed: Nothing.

F Zakaria: Nothing. So repentance is required and resolution is required, not to repeat the mistake again, but

compensation is indispensable, and the compensation is exactly what Christ did. He died instead of us. That is, we were sentenced to death, and our sin could not have been forgiven unless the sentence was executed which is the divine justice. But then mercy intervened and He offered Himself to redeem us. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Alright?

Nahed: Alright. In fact we have already clarified this fact in previous sessions but we would like to repeat it again in order for everyone watching to know exactly what it is, because we're asked this question so often Father. God forgave us, God pardoned our sin.

F Zakaria: That is true but we still are in need of atonement. Repentance is good but it requires atonement. Let's see the atonement in Christianity.

In Christianity, in the Gospel of John, I mean the first epistle of John chapter 2 verses 1 and 2 say the following:

" My little children these things are right to you so that you may not sin and if anyone sins we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only but also for the whole world". Isn't that right?

Does the Quran, I wonder, talk about propitiation?

Of course in Surah 5 (Al Maeda) verse 89 "God will not take you to task for what you may rattle off in your oaths." What does rattle off mean? It means a false oath. "In your oaths", that is when you swear He will not take you to task for what you rattle off in your oaths. That is when you swear ***falsely***. So if you utter any such word

God will not take you to task, "but He does take you to task for anything you have sworn to solemnly", that is you have intended to do, solemnly. Like someone deciding to go and swear in a courthouse. "Take you to task for anything you have sworn to solemnly", that is in an oath. If you make a false oath intentionally; He will take you to task then. Then what? What's the solution? The solution. Let's look at the solution in the same verse. Propitiation for it. Propitiation for it, for the oath means feeding 10 paupers, or clothing them or freeing a captive that is a slave, to free a slave. Whoever does not find these three, then he should fast for 3 days. That is what propitiation involves in order to free yourselves from any oath". So a false oath requires one of 4 propitiations. ***So how much more*** .. How much more sin against God? So here is the propitiation. Is that clear? ***Clear***

Let's look here again at something else. In Surah 64 (Al Taghabon) verse 9, it says the following, "He will propitiate the misdeeds of anyone who believes in God and has acted honorably". God will propitiate his misdeeds "and show him into gardens through which rivers flow. So God must atone for man's sins. Here it says propitiate. If you believe in God and act honorably God will propitiate your sins. So there is propitiation. Right? We have mentioned that propitiation here is not the same as calling someone an infidel and for that reason there exists the sacrifice on the feast of sacrifice, the ADHA feast and the sacrifices and offerings we spoke about previously. Well how can one ignore this propitiation and claim that repentance alone makes for forgiveness?

Nahed: Namely, repentance alone is no good.

F Zakaria: But necessary.

Nahed: It is necessary for a beginning.

F Zakaria: Yes, as a beginning. As a human act.

Nahed: But it is the work of God to atone for your sins.

F Zakaria: Right?

Nahed: I think it is clear now. O.K. the most important question. They say what is the crime of the innocent Jesus so that God would take Him to the Cross on behalf of the people? It's well known that the Lord Jesus is sinless and that He is a holy and innocent man. So by what fault should He be crucified for the people?

F Zakaria: Good question. A good question. Would God be fair to send an innocent person instead of the wicked people? Is that justice? This is the approach they take. O.K. let's look up Surah 2 (Al Baqara) verse 60. I would have loved to bring the Quran with me but I did not want to offend the viewers because it is only to be touched by the purified even though I am pure, I mean by the blood of Christ. But I don't want to be a stumbling block to anyone. But what I am saying now is a citation from the Quran. Surah 2 (Al Baqara) verse 60 says the following. "That was because they disbelieved God's signs", that is the people, the Jews, "and killed the prophets without having any right to". What does it mean 'killed the prophets without having any right to'? They killed them. Isn't it? How could then God allow prophets to be killed

although they were innocent? Again another part. Surah 2 (Al Baqara) verse 86 "yet every time when a messenger comes to you with what you yourselves do not fancy ", talking to the Jews here every time, "yet every time some messenger comes to you with what you yourselves do not fancy why do you act so over bearing? One group you have rejected while another group you kill". Do they kill the prophets? And is that fair? Do you want to say that killing the prophets being innocent is O.K. but you object to the killing of Christ? Don't you believe that Christ is a prophet? O.K. He got killed. What's wrong about that?

Nahed: That is He wasn't the first one.

F Zakaria: No not the first one, not the first innocent one, but God will reward the prophet and condemn the murderer, the wrongdoer. O.K.?

Nahed: O.K.. Here is another question Father. How can you possibly believe in a crucified God? Namely someone dead? And the completion of the question says and who ruled the universe during His death and burial?

F Zakaria: Right. This is the bit that Al Baydawy said but he did not explain it very well. "The humanity was crucified but the divinity was not affected". The humanity was crucified but the divinity was intact. So it is the humanity that died, the body but the divinity is imperishable as I told you. It's like the iron and the fire, the part you can hammer is the iron but the fire cannot be affected. So it is the humanity that died. As to the Godhead, He fills the heaven and the earth; He is

everywhere, alive, omnipresent. I mean He can not be affected by the crucifixion of the body.

Nahed: Well I would like to make it clear to our beloved Muslims that Christ is a perfect man and the Godhead resided within this perfect man. So in terms of humanity, He acted as a human, but as God it is a completely different story.

F Zakaria: And as a man He could suffer pain ***and weep*** and eat and dress, not just that and die also but the Godhead cannot be affected. The Godhead cannot eat, drink or die.

Nahed: O.K. now we come to a question that poses itself, although it came late. How can God be incarnated in a man who eats and drinks, and uses the toilet? Isn't that defilement to the name of God?

F Zakaria: It is really a logical question and it is frequently asked. But I want to say something. I want to ask this person one question. He says that the body in which Christ lived had stool, food and drink; won't the Godhead be defiled by being in such a body? Let me ask him a question. Is God omnipresent or not?

Nahed: Certainly.

F Zakaria: Well if He does not exist in a place, then He is a limited God. If we say God is not here, we maintain that God is limited. So then God is present everywhere. Right? O.K. is God present in the dirty places in the

world? ***Sure***. Is He affected by them? Is He defiled by them?

Nahed: O.K. that's the logic.

F Zakaria: He is like the sun; he cleanses a dirty place, and will not be affected or defiled by it.

Nahed: As we conclude our session we thank you Reverend Father Zakaria for these clarifications. May God bless you and bless your ministry and Lord willing we will have many more meetings.

Dear viewer, the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified and He died for the sake of your salvation and redemption. I thank you. Until we meet again. God willing. Thank you. We'll see you again.

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