

Dear Clergy

This is a time of year in this society for finding peace and hopefully for remembering that there is a higher purpose somewhere in our lives, or that we used to feel this more than we do today. As a Muslim, I felt the need to write to my Christian friends this year to find a common ground – something we are commanded to do in The Qur'aan where God states that we are indeed closest to The Christians.

My thoughts, like yours, are turned towards Jesus (peace be upon him) and his pious mother Mary, may Allaah (God) be pleased with her. Yes, we know that The Muslims and The Christians have different dogmas for the position of Jesus, but it is with respect to Mary, Mother of Jesus, that I wish to find the common ground.

Recently the BBC put out a disgraceful documentary about Mary that was not only a scandal for its complete lack of journalistic credence, based purely on supposition and hypothesis, but an insult to Christians and Muslims alike and obviously timed to heap maximum offence on Christians in the run up to their Christmas celebrations. This shocking lack of charity on the part of the producers shows how insensitive we have become in our pursuit of throwing out all our traditions and history. I would like that all Christians and Muslims contact the BBC with complaints and I enclose information on how to do so at the end of my letter.

But I would also like to make clear to my Christian neighbours and friends the extent of the Muslims' objection to this program and its corrupt conclusions about Mary, a woman who Muslims believe will occupy the highest ranks in paradise and was an especially pious woman well beyond what they accuse her of in this awful documentary.

Muslims are left in no doubt about the gracious position of Mary in the sight of God and in our collective view and our prayers. There is a whole chapter in The Qur'aan called "Mary" that is dedicated to the virgin birth story. There is another chapter "Family of Imran" about the mother and father of Mary and how the birth of Mary was a special blessing to a pious family who raised her to be dedicated in her worship of God, not as some regular street child as criminally portrayed in the documentary. It is from these chapters and some of the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that I wish to make clear the basis for our complaint and to share it with my Christian friends.

Aside from its dramatic historical reconstruction techniques, designed to give credence to unfounded supposition, the program suggested that Mary could have conceived and borne her son Jesus (peace be upon him) in three other ways thus raising suspicion about her being a virgin.

1) It gave air to the idea that she might have conceived due to a secret lover. Although this idea was dismissed in the program, nevertheless this is one of the techniques of Satan. He injects poison into the minds and appears to remove it knowing that the poison's effect will linger on.

2) It suggested rape by a Roman soldier.

3) It suggested as most probable that she actually conceived on account of cohabiting with Joseph.

These are all possible for an ordinary woman, but Allaah tells us clearly that Mary was not any ordinary lady. She was protected, guided and nurtured by Allaah. Allaah frees her as well as her son from the calumnies that come about out of malice or misunderstanding of their special status assigned to them by Allaah. What Allaah tells mankind about her is amazingly simple although incredible to hard-hearted disbelievers who are more content with their own conjecture about the world than the reality told to us by The Almighty, The All-Knowing. But when Allaah speaks on a matter there is no room for conjecture.

Muslims do not doubt that ideas which challenge the information given us by Allaah about Mary are at best wrong and misconceived if not downright malicious lies brewed by the devil. Muslims are free from any need to indulge in shameful thought-play when the truth is made evident by the All-Knowing. It is basic charity to spare fellow humans ignorant confusion regarding those who are declared truly great and good by Allaah. The program producers seem oblivious to such charity, even at this time of year when even the irreligious are inclined towards being charitable.

Those who are too arrogant to admit that they do not know and cannot know better than Allaah will, however, stumble along in their pernicious and unworthy whimsical adventures until perhaps some of them are guided by Allaah to see the errors of their total foolishness. Meanwhile, more harm is heaped on those - Christians and Muslims alike - wishing to follow a pious life in this increasingly secular and materialist society.

Mary was born as a result of ardent prayers by her mother, the wife of Imran, for a child from Allaah. The wife of Imran vowed to dedicate the child (Mary) to His service if she gave birth. When Mary was born she had not been expecting a girl. She asked Allaah to protect Mary as well as her offspring from the evil of Satan. Allaah accepted her supplication as we are told and as we shall see.

When Imran's wife said, "My Lord, I have dedicated to You what is in my womb as an offering. So accept it from me; verily You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. Then when she gave birth to her she said, "My Lord, I have delivered her, a female¹" - and Allaah knew better what she gave birth to, and the male is not like the female - "and I have named her Mary and I seek refuge for her with You and for her progeny from Satan, the accursed." So her lord accepted her in favourable response and reared her up in a good rearing; and put her under the care of Zakareeya (a great Prophet, peace by upon him).

¹ Ibn Abbas states that the Jews only accepted men into dedicated service

Whenever Zakareeya called on her in her chamber he found with her provision (wonderful fruits out of season). He said, "O Mary, from where have you received this?" She said, "It is from Allaah. Verily Allaah gives provision to whomsoever He wills without measure.²" [Surah Aal-i-Imran (3): 35-37³]

Abu Hurairah ⁴ reports that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said:

"There is not any new-born baby born except that Satan touches it at birth⁵. So the baby starts crying from being touched by him except MARY AND HER SON (who escaped being molested by the Satan)"

[Bukhari & Muslim⁶]

Mary could not possibly have had any illicit relationship with anyone because Allaah accepted her well in His service and endowed her with a noble character as she grew. She was entrusted to no less than a prophet, called Zakareeya, which ensured that she had a truly pious and upright guardian. Zakareeya was the husband of her maternal aunt. Allaah looked after her needs and supplied her with food miraculously. This is not a blessing given to the impious or to the one disfavoured by Allaah!

A person spared from the touch of Satan and brought up under the care of a prophet while reared by Allaah with good character can never be suspected of illegitimate relationship, let alone going so far as to conceive a child out of wedlock. This is a serious slander against one of the most chaste of women.

And (remember) when the angels said, "O Maryam! Verily Allaah has chosen you, and PURIFIED you and has selected you over the women of all the beings." [Surah Aal-i-Imran (3): 42]

Only that person who is vile will seek to demean her honour after knowing that Allaah not only chose her but also purified her. Look at the three sayings of the Messenger of Allaah (peace by upon him) below and three distinct and dignified facts will become apparent straight away about this noble, honourable, pious and chaste lady who was known as Mary, mother of Jesus (peace be on him).

Ali reported that the Messenger of Allaah said:

"THE BEST WOMAN (IN HER TIME) was Maryam, daughter of Imran, and the best woman (of the prophet's time) is Khadijah (his wife), daughter of Khuwaylid."

² This was miraculous provision from God to Mary, showing her great status

³ Chapter 3 of The Qur'aan – "The Family of Imran" – verses 35-37.

⁴ Abu Hurairah was a great companion of The Prophet Muhammad (peace by upon him)

⁵ Note that this touch is not meant that a newborn child has Sin, this is not a concept accepted by Islam.

⁶ Bukhari and Muslim are the two most authentic collections of sayings of The Prophet Muhammad (peace by upon him)

[At-Tirmidhi⁷]

Abu Musa al-Ash'ari reports that the Messenger of Allaah said:

"Many men have reached perfection but none from the women have REACHED PERFECTION except Maryam daughter of Imran and Asiyah, the wife of Pharaoh."
[At-Tabari⁸]

Ibn Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allaah said:

"The BEST AMONG THE WOMEN OF PARADISE are Khadijah daughter of Khuwaylid, Fatimah daughter of Muhammad, Maryam daughter of Imran and Asiyah daughter of Muzahim, wife of Pharaoh."
[Ahmad]

The blessed and final Messenger of Allaah Muhammad (peace be upon him) established once and for all, till the end of time, that Mary was the best women of her time, that she had been a perfect lady, in faith, character and constitution, and that she is amongst the best four women of Paradise. These three facts are confirmed about her by the one sent by Allaah to inform mankind about the Truth. The words of Allaah and His Messenger are more than enough; there is no need for confirmation of revelation by digging up ancient sites looking for scraps of documents on which to speculate using our limited intellects.

(Remember) when the angels said, "O Maryam! Verily, Allaah gives you the glad tidings of a word from Him, his name will be the Messiah, Isa (Jesus), the son of Mary, held in honour in this world and in the Hereafter, and of those who are near to Allaah. He will speak to the people, in the cradle and during manhood, and he will be amongst the nearest to Allaah." She said, "O my Lord! How can there be a son to me and THERE DID NOT TOUCH ME ANY MAN?" He said, "So it will be. Allaah creates what He wills. When He decrees a thing He but says for it 'Be', and it is." [Surah Aal-i-Imran (3): 45-47]

In the above statements Allaah uses the word 'create' instead of the word 'does' as in the narration about Zakareeya in the same chapter verse 40, precisely so that no one can have the evil thought about how she came to be pregnant with her baby Jesus (peace be upon him). This verse confirms the virgin birth of Jesus (peace be upon him) and for those who doubt such a miracle then they should not forget that Allaah is able to do all things just as He created Adam (peace be upon him) without neither a mother nor a father!

⁷ Another collection of sayings of The Prophet (peace be upon him)

⁸ Another collection of sayings of The Prophet (peace be upon him)

This verse also confirms the prophethood of Jesus by a unique and stunning miracle. He spoke as a new-born child and defended his mother's honour. This was the only way that the people could understand the miraculous birth was indeed a miracle and that Jesus was in fact a chosen Prophet of Allaah.⁹

This slander of fornication against one of the leading ladies of Paradise started with the Jews of her time. Many scholars have mentioned this and even Christians in the olden times took great exception towards the Jews for their false charge that Jesus (peace be upon him) was an illegitimate child. Allaah cleared her honour and exposed this filthy lie against both her and her pure son Jesus (peace be upon him). It is a great shame that this despicable mentality of accusing the pious and the chaste is coming from some of the very people who you would think would know better! Some of the "expert" historians on this program were Christian, clearly misguided in their beliefs if they can bear witness to such filth against the mother of Jesus, and to collaborate in these lies with Jews who have no time for Jesus and indeed their forefathers tried to kill him. And even today humble Christians are persecuted in Bethlehem whilst some of their brothers foolishly take sides with the Zionist project that brings mayhem to the birthplace of Jesus. Surely my decent Christian friends should reject this unchristian behaviour from these program makers and co-conspirators who seem misguided in their faith along with others who I understand (from a recent poll) are now rejecting the virgin birth under pressure from people who couldn't care less about Christ (peace be upon him).

She said, "Verily, I seek refuge with the Most Gracious from you, if you do fear Allaah." (The angel) said, "I am only a messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a righteous son." She said, "How can I have a son when NO MAN HAS TOUCHED ME AND I AM NOT A FEMALE FORNICATOR?"

[Surah Maryam (19): 18-20¹⁰]

And MARY the daughter of Imran, who GUARDED HER CHASTITY; and We breathed into her of Our Spirit; and she testified to the truth of the words of her Lord and of His revelations, and WAS ONE OF THE DEVOUT WORSHIPPERS.

[Surah At-Tahrim (66): 12¹¹]

Allaah decreed that one of the greatest prophets be born to Mary and attended to his arrival by many miracles and wonderful happenings. Some of these are mentioned in the noble Qur'aan, some in the authentic words of the Messenger to mankind, Muhammad (peace be upon him) and some from trustworthy scholars and narrators. From her conception of Jesus (peace be on him) while she was still a virgin to that of cattle prostrating, from the miracle of a radiant light

⁹ Note that the verse mentions that Jesus (peace be upon him) will speak in manhood, the actual Arabic text indicating old-age. This confirms what is mentioned elsewhere that Jesus will return to The Earth as a major sign of the Day of Judgement approaching. He was taken up to heaven by Allaah in his middle years and this verse mentions he will speak in his later years, confirming that he will return and live for some time (40 years) on The Earth.

¹⁰ Chapter from The Qur'aan called "Mary", verses 18-20.

¹¹ Chapter from The Qur'aan called "Prohibition" verse 12.

emanating to the heavens to that of baby Jesus (peace be on him) defending her mother Mary from her arms, they all support common-sense and human decency that such an arrival of a child cannot but be ascribed to an important and distinguished lady, who is an honour to the entire human race. The words spoken by the baby Jesus (peace be on him) to those who were aghast at the sight of her carrying a child in her arms was enough to quash all attempts to decry her honour. A prophet was always of a noble birth and never the product of an illicit relationship.

Then she brought him to her people, carrying him. They said, "O Mary! Indeed you have brought a horrendous thing. O sister of Harun, your father was not a man who used to commit adultery nor was your mother an unchaste woman!" Then she pointed to him. They said, "How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?" He (Jesus) said, "Verily, I am a servant of Allaah, He has given me the scripture and MADE ME A PROPHET. And He has made me blessed wherever I be, and has enjoined on me prayer and charity as long as I live. And to be dutiful to my mother, and made me not arrogant, unblessed. And peace be upon me the day I was born and the day I die and the day I shall be raised alive." [Surah Maryam (19): 27-33]

Thus we understand that Jesus miraculously spoke as a baby and defended his mother. And so as people who love Jesus and Mary, we are obliged to defend them also even though Allaah has no need of anything and He is able to do all things including the defence of His noble messengers and servants.

To defend Mary I urge you to write to the BBC complaining about the program. We should all be ashamed to let the public service broadcast put out this rubbish, so insensitively timed so as to reap maximum offence to Christians in their time of celebration.

To complain to the BBC, write to:

**Head of Programme Complaints,
BBC Broadcasting House,
London.
W1A 1AA.**

Re: Documentary "Mary" screened on the evening of 21st December 2002.
