

# HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

And Shift from Monotheism to Trinity

Reflections & Sentiments

By E-Da`wah Committee



لجنة الدعوة الإلكترونية  
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جمعية النجاة الخيرية



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## Introduction

Controversy rages between Christians and non-Christians, including Muslims and the followers of the other faiths, and among Christians themselves over the issues of monotheism and the Trinity.

Though the Trinity has become a prevalent Christian doctrine recently and the monotheists have become a minority compared to the other Christian denominations, history tells us that the doctrine of the Trinity was not the prevalent Christian doctrine in the past, but it was rather such a doctrine which found favor with the idolatrous Roman Empire which newly converted to Christianity.

Pure monotheism had been and remained the very basis of the Christian creed until it was overshadowed by the doctrine of the Trinity which was supported by the idolatrous authority. However, monotheism continued to exist and be professed by considerable fellowship until Prophet Muhammad came up with the final monotheistic message of Islam and asserted monotheism as the doctrine explicitly preached by Jesus, and disowned all forms of Trinity, polytheism, and paganism which were introduced into the genuine Christian faith.

Therefore, monotheistic Christians embraced Islam for they found out that it is exactly identical to the previous divine messages of both Moses and Jesus as well as the revelations sent down to them.

## Monotheism during Jesus' Prophetic Mission



The Qur'an often harmonizes with the Bible, especially the New Testament, over the reported statements and acts of Jesus, as well as the incidents which took place, the quotations which were cited and the controversy which broke out during the period of time Jesus was sent.

The Qur'an tells us that the disciples believed in God as the Deity, as well as in the revelation He sent down and in Jesus as the prophet and messenger of God. For example, God says:

**But when Jesus felt [persistence in] disbelief from them, he said, "Who are my supporters for [the cause of] God?" The disciples said, "We are supporters for God. We have believed in God and testify that we are Muslims [submitting to Him]. Our Lord, we have believed in what You revealed and have followed the messenger [Jesus], so register us among the witnesses [to truth]."** ([Aal `Imran](#)3:52-53)

God also says:

**And [remember] when I inspired to the disciples, "Believe in Me and in My messenger [Jesus]." They said, "We have believed, so bear witness that indeed we**

**are Muslims [in submission to God].”** ([Al-Ma'idah](#) 5:111)

The verses of the New Testament concur with those of the Qur'an in this regard. Jesus is unequivocally described as "God's messenger" in the New Testament. We read: "And so, dear brothers and sisters who belong to God and are partners with those called to heaven, think carefully about this Jesus whom we declare to be God's messenger and High Priest. He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house." (Hebrews 3:1-2)

The Qur'an quotes Jesus as asserting that God is his lord and God and as commanding the worship of God alone. For example, we read:

**They have certainly disbelieved who say, "God is the Messiah, the son of Mary" while the Messiah has said, "O Children of Israel, worship God, my Lord and your Lord." Indeed, he who associates others with God – God has forbidden him Paradise, and his refuge is the Fire. And there are not for the wrongdoers any helpers.** ([Al-Ma'idah](#) 5:72)

The verses of the New Testament also concur with those of the Qur'an in this regard. There are several positions in the New Testament quoting Jesus as asserting that God is his God and as commanding the worship of God alone.

For example, in the New Testament, we read: Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" (John 20:17)

We also read: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46)

We further read: "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Matthew 4:10)

According to the above verses from the Qur'an and the Bible, it becomes crystal clear that Jesus admitted that God is his God and he commanded His worship and that the followers of Jesus believed in God as the Lord and the Deity and in Jesus as a prophet and messenger of God.

That is the pure monotheism which Muslims have professed up to date. That is to say, the message of Jesus was preaching monotheism like all other messages conveyed by all other prophets and messengers of God.

## Ascension of Jesus & Its Impact on Monotheism

Someone may wonder: Where have the divinity and worship of Jesus along with God come from? Where has the alleged Trinity come from? What are its historical origins?

It is quite safe to say that the Ascension of Jesus was not less controversial than his miraculous birth. Just as people disagreed over his birth, they also disagreed over his Ascension. The verses of both the Qur'an and the Bible indicate how considerable and bitter was the controversy over the Ascension of Jesus and consequently his very nature.

For example, in the Qur'an, we read:

**That is Jesus, the son of Mary – the word of truth about which they are in dispute. It is not [befitting] for Allah to take a son; exalted is He! When He decrees an affair, He only says to it, “Be,” and it is. [Jesus said], “And indeed, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. That is a straight path.” Then the factions differed [concerning Jesus] from among them, so woe to those who disbelieved – from the scene of a tremendous Day. ([Maryam](#) 19:34-37)**

The Bible conveys to us the disagreement over the Ascension of Jesus and



highlights the state of doubt and uncertainty which prevailed among even his disciples following his Ascension. In the Gospel of Mark, we read: "Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen." (Mark 16:14)

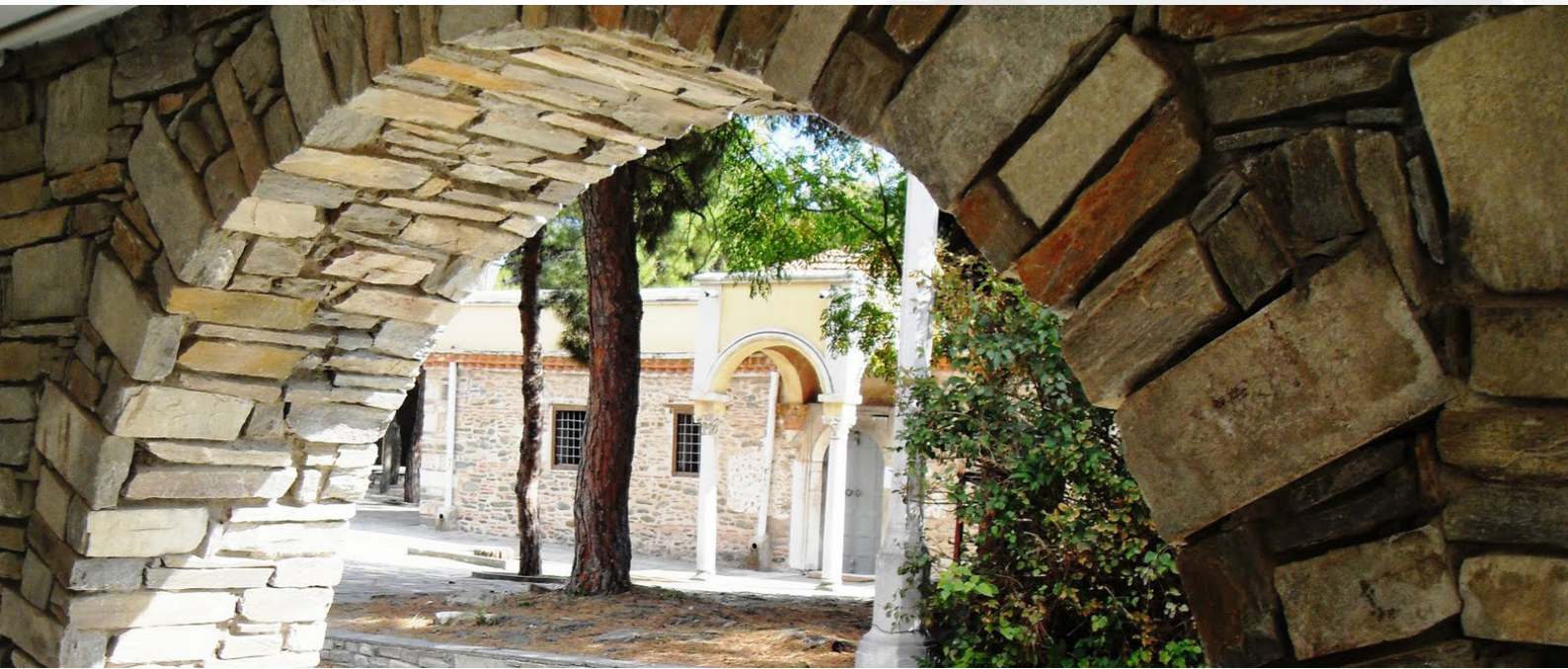
In the Gospel of Luke, we read: As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" (Luke 24:36-41)

In the Gospel of John, we read: Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." (John 20:24-27)

Thus, it has become quite evident now that the Ascension, not to mention the miraculous birth of Jesus, led to bitter controversy over his very nature. Therefore, history proves to us that the few centuries following the Ascension of Jesus marked an atmosphere of deep and sharp division in the Christian circles between monotheists who believed in God as the Only One God, polytheists who believed in Jesus as God and worshiped him along with God and other factions that were somewhere in between.

## **First Council of Nicaea & Establishment of the Doctrine of Trinity**



The above-mentioned division lasted even after the Roman Emperor Constantine's conversion to and profession of Christianity as the official faith of the Roman Empire.

Such division impelled Emperor Constantine to convene the First Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. to discuss the disagreements within the Church of Alexandria, settle dogmatic differences and unify the Christian creed. This was the first ecumenical council.

This council was attended by about 318 bishops, including 16 bishops supporting Bishop Arius and 22 bishops supporting St. Alexander of Alexandria. The other bishops had not made up their mind yet.

Presbyter Arius argued for the supremacy of God, the Father, and maintained that the Son of God was created as an act of the Father's will, and therefore, that the Son was a creature made by God.

It is noteworthy that when Arius got up to explain his belief, loud noise was made and a deaf ear was turned so that his argument would not be heard.

It is also reported that Emperor Constantine allowed Athanasius, the 25-year-old assistant of Bishop Alexander of Alexandria, to speak, though he was not entitled to do. He was just a young deacon at the time.

It is also reported that reaching a resolution by the Council was not something easy, but rather required considerable effort. At the conclusion, the Council formulated the (Nicene) Creed from: "We believe in one God" to "and his kingdom will have no end".

At the same council, the feast of Easter was set to a Sunday in the lunar month of Nisan. The Easter computation was separated from the Jewish calendar.

The attending bishops pronounced clerical judgment by excommunicating Arius and his followers from the Church. Seeing the threat of continued unrest, Constantine also pronounced civil judgment, banishing Arius and his followers into exile.

The works of Arius were ordered to be confiscated and consigned to the flames while all persons found possessing them were to be executed. Nevertheless, the controversy continued in various parts of the Empire.

Bishop Alexander had already convened a synod of about a hundred Egyptian and Libyan bishops at Alexandria, which excommunicated and defrocked Arius and his followers.



# First Council of Constantinople

The most conclusive evidence for the fact that monotheism existed, had strong presence and was even widespread since the dawn of Christianity is its multiform re-emergence shortly after the bishop of Alexandria supported by the pagan Roman Empire stood up to Arius' teachings which were closer to monotheism.

After Athanasius, the Bishop of Alexandria, had fought against Arius' teachings for many years, other similar beliefs emerged towards the end of the fourth century of the Christian era, specifically during the reign of the Roman Emperor Theodosius I. Therefore, the second ecumenical council was convened in Constantinople in 381 A.D.

Those beliefs included that of the Macedonians or the Pneumatomachi. They denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit, hence the Greek name "Pneumatomachi" or "Combatants against the Spirit".

They also regarded the substance of Jesus Christ as being of "similar substance" (homoiousios) but not of the "same essence" (homoousios) as that of God the Father.

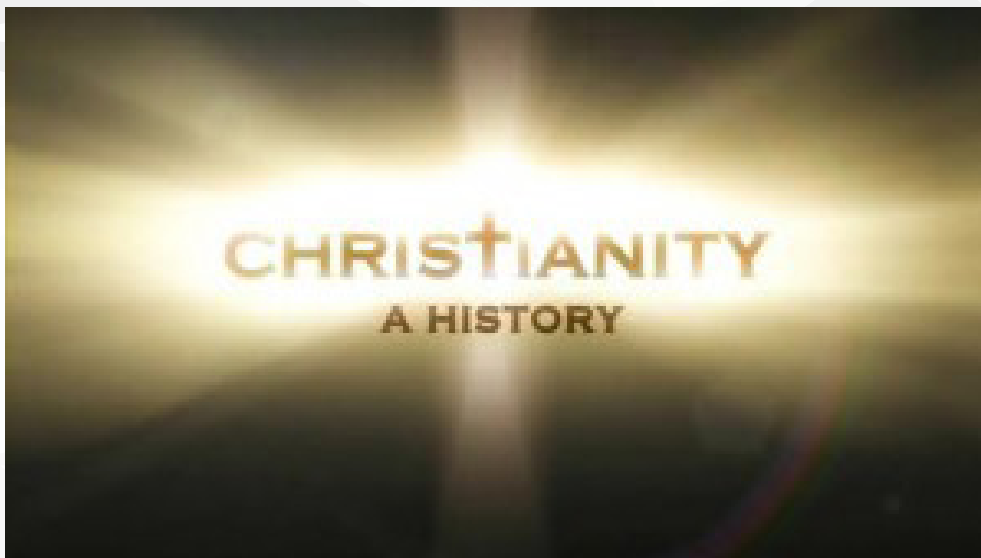
The Pneumatomachi were denounced in 374 by Pope Damasus I. In 381 A.D., the Pneumatomachian concept that the Holy Spirit was a creation of the Son, and a servant of the Father and the Son, prompted the First Council of Constantinople (also termed the Second Ecumenical Council) to add, "And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son is equally worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets," into the Nicene Creed. As a result of the Second Ecumenical Council, homoousios has become the accepted definition of Christian orthodoxy. Thereafter, the Macedonians were suppressed by the emperor Theodosius I.

Another belief is that of Apollinaris. It appeared to him that the union of complete God with complete man could not be more than a juxtaposition or collocation. Two perfect beings with all their attributes, he argued, cannot be one. They are at most an incongruous compound, not unlike the monsters of mythology. Inasmuch as the Nicene faith forbade him to belittle the Logos, as Arius had done, he forthwith proceeded to maim the humanity of Christ, and divest it of its presumably noblest attribute, and this, he claimed, is for the sake of true Unity and veritable Incarnation.

He failed to submit even to the more solemn condemnation of the Council of Constantinople, 381, whose first canon entered Apollinarianism on the list of heresies.

At the close of this council Emperor Theodosius issued an imperial decree (30 July) declaring that the churches should be restored to those bishops who confessed the equal Divinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and who held communion with Nectarius of Constantinople and other important Oriental prelates whom he named.

# First Council of Ephesus



Only a few years after the convention of the Council of Constantinople, the Council of Ephesus was convened in 431 A.D. This third ecumenical council, an effort to attain consensus in the church through an assembly representing all of Christendom, confirmed the original Nicene Creed, and condemned the teachings of Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople that the Virgin Mary may be called the Christotokos, "Birth Giver of Christ" but not the Theotokos, "Birth Giver of God".

Nestorius' doctrine, Nestorianism, which emphasized the distinction between Christ's human and divine natures and argued that Mary should be called Christokos (Christ-bearer) but not Theotokos (God-bearer), had brought him into conflict with other church leaders, most notably Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria. Nestorius himself had requested that the Emperor convene council, hoping to prove his orthodoxy, but in the end his teachings were condemned by the council as heresy. The council declared Mary as Theotokos (God-bearer).

Nestorius was requested to recant his position or face excommunication. Nestorius was removed from his see, and his teachings were officially anathematized.

This precipitated the Nestorian Schism, by which churches supportive of Nestorius, especially in Persia, were severed from the rest of Christendom and became known as Nestorian Christianity, the Persian Church, or the Church of the East, whose present-day representatives are the Assyrian Church of the East, the Chaldean Syrian Church, the Ancient Church of the East, and the Chaldean Catholic Church. Nestorius himself retired to a monastery, always asserting his orthodoxy.

## Questions

Had the doctrine of the Trinity been the predominant belief since the dawn of Christianity and had monotheism not been a deep-rooted belief which had strong presence, would such bitter controversy have taken place over the very nature of God in Christianity?

Had the Trinity been a clear-cut, evident and generally accepted in the sight of all Christians from the very beginning, is it logical that the greatest patriarchs and bishops would have disagreed over it throughout history as we have just read?

# The Early Monotheistic Christian Denominations

## Ebionitism

It is a Jewish Christian movement that existed during the early centuries of the Christian era. They regarded Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah while rejecting his divinity and insisted on the necessity of following Jewish law and rites. The Ebionites used only one of the Jewish Gospels, revered James the Just, and rejected Paul the Apostle as an apostate from the Law.

There is possible reference to Ebionite communities, existing some time around the 11th century, in northwestern Arabia, in *Sefer Ha'masaot*, the "Book of the Travels" of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela, a rabbi from Spain. These communities were located in two cities: Tayma and Tilmas, possibly Sa'dah in Yemen.

The majority of Church Fathers agree that the Ebionites rejected many of the precepts central to Nicene orthodoxy, such as Jesus' pre-existence, divinity, and atoning death.

The Ebionites are described as emphasizing the oneness of God and the humanity of Jesus, who by virtue of his righteousness, was chosen by God to be the messianic "prophet like Moses" (foretold in Deuteronomy 18:14–22) when he was anointed with the Holy Spirit at his baptism.

## Paulianism

It is a 3rd-century belief concerning the nature of Christ, denying his divinity by asserting that he was inspired by God and was not a person in the Trinity. It is ascribed to Paul of Samosata who denied a distinction of persons in God and maintained that Christ was a mere man raised above other men by the indwelling Logos.



## Monarchianism

Monarchianism is a set of beliefs that emphasize God as being one person, in direct contrast to Trinitarianism which defines God as three persons coexisting consubstantially as one in being.

Various models of resolving the relationship between God the Father and the Son of God were proposed in the 2nd century, but later rejected in favor of the doctrine of the Trinity as expounded at the First Council of Constantinople, which confirmed the concept of God as one being consisting of three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Two models of Monarchianism have been propounded:

- Modalism (or Modalistic Monarchianism) considers God to be one person appearing and working in the different “modes” of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The chief proponent of modalism was Sabellius, hence the view is commonly called Sabellianism. It has also been rhetorically labeled Patripassianism by its opponents, because according to them it purports that the Person of God the Heavenly Father suffered on the cross.
- Dynamic Monarchianism holds that God is one being, above all else, wholly indivisible, and of one nature. It reconciles the “problem” of the Trinity (or at least Jesus) by holding that the Son was not co-eternal with the Father.

## Arianism

Arianism in Christianity is the Christological (concerning the doctrine of Christ) position that Jesus, as the Son of God, was created by God. It was proposed early in the 4th century by the Alexandrian presbyter Arius and was popular throughout much of the Eastern and Western Roman empires, even after it was denounced as a heresy by the Council of Nicaea (325).

Arianism is often considered to be a form of Unitarian theology in that it stresses God’s unity at the expense of the notion of the Trinity, the doctrine that three distinct persons are united in one Godhead. Arius’ basic premise was the uniqueness of God, who is alone Self-existent (not dependent for its existence on anything else) and immutable; the Son, who is not self-existent, can-

not therefore be the self-existent and immutable God. Because the Godhead is unique, it cannot be shared or communicated. Because the Godhead is immutable, the Son, who is mutable, must, therefore, be deemed a creature who has been called into existence out of nothing and has had a beginning. Moreover, the Son can have no direct knowledge of the Father, since the Son is finite and of a different order of existence.

The Council of Nicaea, which condemned Arius as a heretic and issued a creed to safeguard "orthodox" Christian belief, was convened to settle the controversy. The creed adopted at Nicaea states that the Son is homoousion tō Patri ("of one substance with the Father"), thus declaring him to be all that the Father is: he is completely divine. In fact, however, this was only the beginning of a long-protracted dispute.

# Monotheistic Christians & Profession of Islam upon the Advent of Prophet Muhammad

## An-Najashi (Negus)



An-Najashi was the title of the king of Abyssinia. One Najashi, namely As-hamah ibn Abjar, who was contemporary with Prophet Muhammad embraced Islam, became a good Muslim and was counted as a grand Companion of Prophet Muhammad though he did not migrate to Medina or even meet Prophet Muhammad. He died during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad who offered funeral prayer for him in absentia. It is not reported that Prophet Muhammad offered funeral prayer for an absent deceased except An-Najashi.

In *Siyar A`lam An-Nubala'*, Adh-Dhahabi reported that when `Amr ibn Al-`As and `Abdullah ibn Abi Rabia`h (or `Imarah bn Al-Walid) asked An-Najashi to extradite the Companions who migrated to Abyssinia, the following conversation took place between An-Najashi and the grand Companion Ja`far ibn Abi Talib:

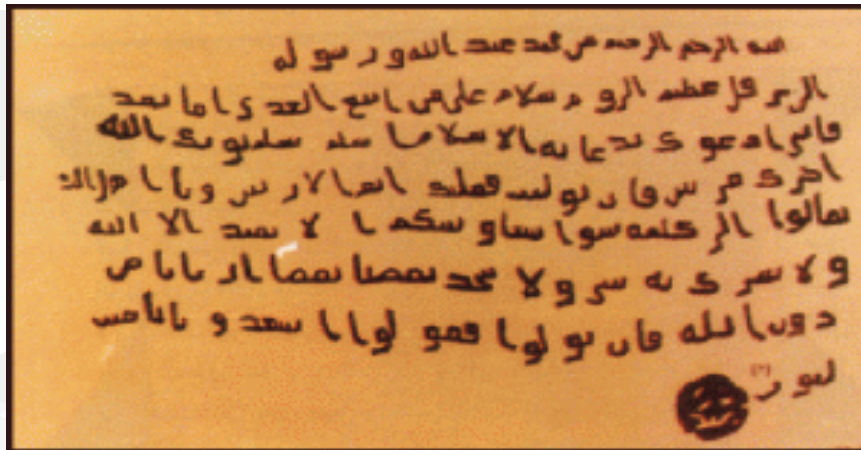
An-Najashi wondered: "Do you memorize some revelation he (Prophet Muhammad) received from God?" Ja`far replied: "Yes." An-Najashi said: "Read it to me!" Then Ja`far read to him the opening verses of the Chapter of Maryam (Mary). Thereupon, An-Najashi kept crying until he moistened his beard and his bishops also kept crying until they moistened their scriptures. Then, An-Najashi said: "Indeed, this (Qur'an) and the revelation conveyed by Moses get out of the same lantern. Go where you like. By God, I will not, and even may not extradite you!"

On the next day, at Amr ibn Al-`As' request, An-Najashi summoned the Companions and wondered: "What do you believe about Jesus?" Ja`far replied: "We have the same belief which our Prophet affirmed. We believe that he is God's servant, messenger, spirit and word which He communicated to Mary, the Virgin." Then, An-Najashi struck the ground, picked up a rod and said: "Jesus did not come out with as much as this rod more than what you said." Then, patriarchs around him kept snorting. Then, he said: "Even though you snort, by God! Go where you like. You are safe in my land."

Ibn Ishaq reported: Ja`far ibn Muhammad quoted his father as saying: "The Abyssinians rebelled and revolted against An-Najashi whom they accused of the renunciation of their faith. So he prepared ships for Ja`far and his comrades and told them: "Board the ships! If I am defeated, go away. If I clinch victory, stay here." Then, he had a piece of writing in which he bore witness that there is no god but God, Muhammad is God's servant and messenger and Jesus is God's servant, messenger, spirit and word which He communicated to Mary. Then, he kept this piece of writing in his garment.

Thereupon, he went out to the Abyssinians who lined up for him. Then he wondered: "O people of Abyssinia, am I not the worthiest one to rule over you?" They said: "Yes." He asked: "How have you found my rule?" They answered: "It is the best rule." Then, he asked: "So what is wrong with you?" They replied: "You have renounced our faith, alleging that Jesus is just a servant (of God)." Then, he asked: "What do you believe about Jesus?" They replied: "He is the son of God." Then he made a signal at his chest towards the piece of writing, indicating his belief in the piece of writing. But, the Abyssinians thought that he meant by this signal that he agreed with them. Then, they became pleased with him and dispersed. When An-Najashi died, Prophet Muhammad offered funeral prayer for him and prayed to God for his forgiveness.

# Heracle (Heraclius)



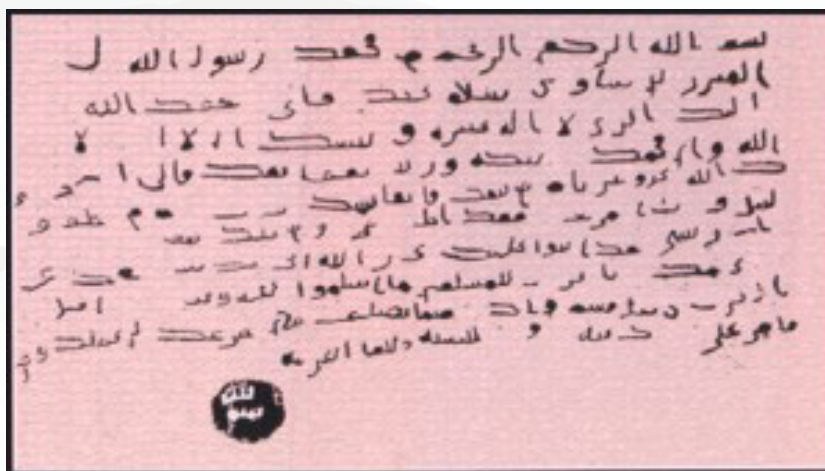
Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Imam Ahmad, and other hadith compilers reported on the authority of `Abdullah ibn `Abbas that Prophet Muhammad wrote to Caesar and invited him to Islam ... When the letter of Prophet Muhammad reached Caesar, he said after reading it, "Seek for me anyone of his people (Arabs from Quraish tribe) if present here, in order to ask him about Muhammad." At that time, Abu Sufyan ibn Harb was in the Levant with some men from Quraish who had come (to the Levant) as merchants ... Abu Sufyan said, "Caesar's messenger found us somewhere in the Levant so he took me and my companions to Jerusalem and we were admitted into Caesar's court."

Heracle kept asking Abu Sufyan about Prophet Muhammad and Abu Sufyan kept answering his questions. Then, Heracle said to Abu Sufyan: "These are really the qualities of a prophet who, I knew (from the previous Scriptures) would appear, but I did not know that he would be from amongst you. If what you say should be true, he will very soon occupy the earth under my feet, and if I knew that I would reach him definitely, I would go immediately to meet Him; and were I with him, then I would certainly wash his feet." Abu Sufyan added, "Caesar then asked for the letter of the Messenger of God and it was read. It read: "In the name of God, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful, (This letter is) from Muhammad, the servant and messenger of God to Heraclius, the Roman Emperor. Peace be upon the followers of guidance. Now then, I invite you to Islam, so embrace Islam and you will be safe; embrace Islam and God will bestow on you a double reward. But if you reject this invitation of Islam, you shall

be responsible for misguiding the peasants (i.e. your nation). O people of the Scriptures! Come to a word common to us and you, that we worship none but God, and that we associate nothing in worship with Him; and that none of us shall take others as lords besides God. Then if they turn away, say: Bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him) (3:64)”

Abu Sufyan added, “When Heraclius had finished reading, there was a great hue and cry caused by the Byzantine royalties surrounding him, and there was so much noise that I did not understand what they said. So, we were turned out of the court. When I went out with my companions and we were alone, I said to them, ‘Verily, Ibn Abi Kabsha’s (i.e. the Prophet’s) affair has gained power. This is the King of Bani Al-Asfar fearing him.’” Abu Sufyan added, “By Allah, I remained low and was sure that his religion would be victorious till God converted me to Islam, though I disliked it.”

## Al-Mundhir Ibn Sawa



Al-Mundhir ibn Sawa was the King of the Persian Gulf during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad. He was a Christian as his people, namely `Abd Shams, were Christians. Prophet Muhammad wrote him a letter in which he invited him to Islam.

Then, Al-Mundhir embraced Islam but he was not a member of the delegation who attended from Bahrain to meet Prophet Muhammad. Instead, he wrote Prophet Muhammad a letter affirming his profession of Islam.

Al-Mundhir’s letter to Prophet Muhammad read: “O Messenger of God, I read your letter, which you wrote to the people of Bahrain extending to them an in-

invitation to Islam. Islam appealed to some of them and they entered the fold of Islam, while others did not find it appealing. In my country, there live Magians and Jews; therefore, you may inform me of the treatment to be extended to them."

In reply to Al-Mundhir's letter, Prophet Muhammad wrote: "In the name of God, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful, (This letter is) from Muhammad, the Messenger of God to Al-Mundhir ibn Sawa. May peace be on you! I praise God, Who is One and there is none to be worshipped except Him. I bear witness that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is a servant and messenger of God.

Thereafter I remind you of God. Whoever accepts admonition does it for his own good. Whoever followed my messengers and acted in accordance with their guidance; he, in fact, accepted my advice. My messengers have highly praised your behavior. I authorize you to deal with your people. So let Muslims follow Islam. I forgive the offences of the offenders. Therefore, you may also forgive them. Whoever wants to continue in their Jewish or Magian faith should be made to pay tribute."

## **Waraqah ibn Nawfal**

Waraqah ibn Nawfal was the cousin of Prophet Muhammad's first wife, Lady Khadijah, the Mother of the Believers. He was a Christian before Prophet Muhammad's prophethood, but he embraced Islam at the outset of Prophet Muhammad's prophethood.

In his Sahih, under the Chapter of the Outset of Revelation, Al-Bukhari reported on the authority of `Aishah that Khadija accompanied Prophet Muhammad to her cousin Waraqah ibn Naufal ibn Asad ibn `Abdul `Uzza, who, during the pre-Islamic period, became a Christian and used to write writings with Hebrew letters. He would write from the Gospel in Hebrew as much as God wished him to write. He was an old man and had lost his eyesight. Khadija said to Waraqah, "Listen to the story of your nephew, O my cousin!" Waraqah asked, "O my nephew! What have you seen?" The Messenger of God described whatever he had seen. Waraqah said, "This is the same one who keeps the secrets (Angel Gabriel) whom God had sent to Moses. I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people would drive you out." The Messenger of God asked, "Will they drive me out?" Waraqah replied in the affirmative and said, "Anyone who came out with something similar to what you will come out with was treated with hostility; and if I should remain alive till the day when you will be driven out then I would support you strongly." But after a few days Waraqah died.

It is noteworthy that Waraqah ibn Nawfal was the first person to bring Lady Khadijah glad tidings about Prophet Muhammad's prophethood after she had told him about what happened during Prophet Muhammad's journey with her slave Maysarah along with her caravan travelling to the Levant, especially the cloud which was shading him until he came back to Mecca.

It is reported that he said to her: "If this is true, O Khadijah, Muhammad will be the prophet of this nation. I have known that this nation waits for a prophet who is about to appear." (*Ar-Rawd Al-Unuf*: vol. 2, p. 161) About one month later, Lady Khadijah married the Messenger of God. Waraqah composed a poem apparently after this conversation, given the mention of Prophet Muhammad's journey with Khadijah's caravan, the glad tidings about Prophet Muhammad's prophethood and the promise to follow him.

In his *Musnad*, At-Tayalisi reported that Waraqah ibn Nawfal and Zayd ibn `Amr ibn Nufayl went out in quest of the true religion. So they went to a monk at Mosul. The monk said to Zayd ibn `Amr ibn Nufayl: "Where have you come from, O camel rider?" He replied: "From Abraham's household." The monk wondered: "What do you seek after?" He replied: "I seek after the true religion." He said to him: "Come back for the one you seek after is about to appear at your homeland."

## **Nestorian Monk: Bahira**

At-Tirmidhi and Al-Hakim reported on the authority of Abu Bakr ibn Abu Musa Al-Asha`ri on the authority of his father that Abu Talib traveled to the Levant, and the Prophet left with him, along with some older men from Quraish. When they came across the monk they stopped there and began setting up their camp, and the monk came out to them. Before that they used to pass by him and he wouldn't come out nor pay attention to them. They were setting up their camp when the monk was walking amidst them, until he came and took the hand of the Messenger of Allah. Then he said: "This is the master of men and jinn, this is the Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds. God will send him as mercy to men and jinn." So some of the older people from Quraish said: "How do you know that?" He said: "When you came along from the road, neither a rock nor a tree was left, except that it prostrated, and they do not prostrate except for a prophet. And I can recognize him by the seal of prophethood which is below his shoulder blade, like an apple." Then he went back, and made them some food, and when he brought it to them, he [Prophet Muhammad] was tending camels. So he said: "Summon him." So he came, and there was a cloud over him that was shading him. When he came close to the people, he found that they had sat down under the tree's shade before he came. So when he sat down, the shade of the tree leaned towards him. He (the monk) said: "Look at the shade of the tree leaning towards him." While he was standing with them,



telling them not to take him to the Romans – because if the Romans were to see him, they would recognize him by description, and they would kill him – he turned, and there were seven people who had come from among the Romans. So he received them and said: “Why have you come?” They said: “We came because a prophet is going to appear during this month, and there isn’t a road left except that people have been sent to it, and we have been informed of him, and we have been sent to this road of yours.” So he said: “Is there anyone better than you behind you?” They said: “We only have news of him from this road of yours.” He said: “Do you think that if there is a matter which God wishes to bring about, there is anyone among people who can prevent it?” They said: “No.” So they gave him their pledge, and they stayed with him. And he said: “I ask you by God, which of you is his guardian?” They said: “Abu Talib.” So he kept adjuring him until Abu Talib returned him (back to Mecca).

## Salman Al-Farisi

In his *Musnad*, Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of `Abdullah ibn `Abbas that Salman Al-Farisi had a long conversation with him, in which he said: “I was a Persian man ... I strove hard in the Magian religion ... I passed by one of the Christian churches, where I could hear their voices as they were praying ... When I saw them, I was impressed with their prayer ... I said to them: ‘Where did this religion originate?’ They said: ‘In the Levant’ ... I sent word to the Christians saying: ‘If any Christian merchants come to you from the Levant, tell me about them.’ He said: ‘Some Christian merchants came to them from the Levant ... and I went out with them, until I came to the Levant ...

Salman kept serving monks, one after another, from the Levant through Mosul and Nusaybin to Amorium. When the monk of Amorium was about to die, and Salman asked him to tell him about the next monk to serve, he said to him: ‘O my son, by God, I do not know of anyone who follows our way to whom I can advise you to go. But there has come the time of a prophet, who will be sent with the religion of Abraham. He will appear in the land of the Arabs and will migrate to a land between two harrahs (lands with black rocks), between which there are palm trees. He will have characteristics that will not be hidden. He will eat of what is given as a gift but he will not eat of what is given as charity. Between his shoulder blades is the seal of prophethood. If you can go to that land then do so.’

Then, Salman traveled to Arabia and stayed in Medina. When he knew that the people of Medina were gathering in Quba’ to receive a man whom they believed to be a prophet, he went to him.

Salman said: "I had something that I had collected, and when evening came, I went to the Messenger of God when he was in Quba', and I entered to him and said to him: 'I have heard that you are a righteous man and that you have companions who are strangers and are in need. This is something that I have to give in charity, and I see that you are more in need of it than anyone else.'

I brought it near to him and the Messenger of God said to his companions: "Eat," but he refrained from eating. I said to myself: 'This is one.' Then I went away and collected some more.

The Messenger of God settled in Medina, then I came to him and said: 'I see that you do not eat (food given in) charity; this is a gift with which I wish to honor you.' The Messenger of God then ate some of it and told his companions to eat too. I said to myself: 'This is two.'

Then I came to the Messenger of God when he was in Baqi` Al-Gharqad, where he had attended the funeral of one of his companions and he was wearing two shawls and was sitting down among his companions. I greeted him, then I moved behind him, trying to look at his back to see the seal that my companion had described to me. When the Messenger of God saw me going behind him, he realized that I was trying to ascertain something that had been described to me, so he let his garment drop from his back, and I saw the seal and recognized it. Then I embraced and kissed him, while weeping ... Then, Salman embraced Islam and became a good Muslim.



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