

## Christ God in the Gospel and the Quran

How to understand the quranic verse surat V; The Table, 116: “Then God will say: “Jesus son of Mary, did you ever say to mankind: “Worship me and my mother as gods besides God?” Jesus will answer, “Glory be to you, I could never have claimed what I have no right to. If I had ever said so, You would have surely known of it. You know what is in my mind, **but I know not what is in Yours**. You alone know what is **hidden**”.

Is the verse “I know not what is in Yours” a negation of Christ’s divinity?

Answer:

This verse is not a negation of Christ’s divinity. In order to understand it, one should:

- a) Place it in its historical context in relation to the polytheistic Arabs of the VIIth century.
- b) Compare it with the Gospel’s text.

### a) Historical context

It has been difficult to demonstrate to the polytheistic Arabs that there is but one unique God who, furthermore, incarnated in the person of Christ. It is clear that what they understood was that Jesus and Mary were two separate gods, comparable to the multitudes of gods they worshiped. This verse contradicts this polytheistic belief.

### b) Compare it with the Gospel’s text

The words of Christ, addressing himself to God: “I know not what is in Yours”, are interpreted by some as a negation of the divinity of Christ because he is unaware about what is in God. We demonstrate -by comparing it with the Gospel’s text- that this hasty interpretation is wrong, because the Quran, in the Surat 4; Women 47, presents itself as a **confirmation** of the Gospel and, moreover, invites us to find the “best of the arguments” (Surat XXIX; Spider, 46) in order to follow the “straight path” towards God (Surat I; Fatiha, 6-7)

The Quran confirms Christ’s words who, in the Gospel, was addressing himself to his Apostles. They asked him, regarding the end of times and the moment of his return: “Tell us, when is this going to happen, and what sign will there be of your coming and of the end of the world?” (Mt 24,3) He answered: “As for that day and hour, nobody knows it, neither the angels of heaven, **nor the Son**, no one but the Father alone” (Mt 24,36).

This means that Christ was not to declare “what he had no right to” as expressed by the quranic verse. The apostles were incapable of understanding the immensity of the divine Plan, of “**what was hidden**” according to the Quran.

Furthermore, Christ “can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees the Father doing: and whatever the Father does the Son does too” (Jn 5,19). And also: “I do nothing

of my own accord. What I say is what the Father has taught me”, said Jesus (Jn 8,28). Some would like to see in these evangelical verses a negation of the Divinity of Christ. This is not the case! Below we explain why.

Jesus, addressing himself to the Jews, said: “Before Abraham ever was, I am” (Jn 8,58). This irritated the Jews who wanted to lapidate him, they understood that he considered himself God incarnated. How could Christ already exist before Abraham? Certainly not with his body that was created by God in the womb of Mary eighteen centuries after Abraham. It is therefore the Spirit of Christ as God that existed before Abraham and incarnated in Mary. Moreover, Jesus said: “**I came from the Father** and have come into the world” (Jn 16,28). This is the reason why Jesus furthermore said: “Now, Father glorify me with that glory I had with you **before** ever the world existed” (Jn 17,5) and also: “I came from the Father and have come into the world” (Jn 16,28).

Therefore, one must discern in Christ the physical aspect, his created body, and the divine dimension. It is this eternal divine dimension which animates and instructs this created body which takes its information from the Father. This is why Jesus had said: “I do nothing of my own accord. What I say is what the Father has taught me”. In the quranic language this corresponds to the verse: “You know what is in my mind, but I know not (*as a human body*) what is in Yours”. And in the Gospel’s verse: “I do nothing of my own accord. What I say is what the Father has taught me; he who sent me is with me” (Jn 8,28). The bodily part of Christ only knows what is revealed to him by divine will. And “For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything He himself does” (Jn 5, 20).

However, because of the human intelligence’s limitations which is incapable of grasping “what is hidden” (Surat V, The table,116), the Son cannot reveal all at once to a restricted human mentality, closed to the divine plans and to the divine Essence (The Trinity, The Messiah’s Divinity, The Eucharist, The Crucifixion). In the same verse of the Table, Jesus addressing himself to God, says: “You alone know **what is hidden**”. These are the many truths that Jesus, in this same quranic verse, “has no right to tell” people of limited intelligence.

Therefore, Christ’s answer is not a negation of his divinity, but a limitation to what he could reveal at that moment. It is with a spirit of fatherly pedagogy and divine wisdom, that Christ furthermore said: “I still have many things to say to you **but they would be too much for you to bear now**” (Jn 16,12). This will be the Holy Spirit’s mission, to reveal, later on, the plenitude of the mysterious divine plan to those who welcome it: “The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything” (Jn 14,26). And also: “When the Spirit of Truth comes, He will lead you to the complete Truth” (Jn 16,13).

Paul continues this teaching while addressing himself to the Corinthians:

1Co 3,1-3 : “And so, brothers, I was not able to talk to you as spiritual people. I had to talk to you as people still living by your natural inclinations, still infants in Christ. I fed

you **milk** and not solid food, **for you were not able to take it** and even now, you are still not able to, **for you are still living by your natural inclinations**".

One must have received the Holy Spirit to understand God and be able to judge: "The spiritual person, on the other hand, can assess the value of everything, and that person's value cannot be assessed by anybody else" (1Co 2,15).

The Holy Spirit is given to us men so that "our mind is to be renewed in spirit so that we could put on the New Man that has been created on God's principles, in the uprightness and holiness of the truth" (Eph 4,23). "For the spirit explores the depths of everything, even the depths of God" (1Co 2,10-15).

How many people during Christ's time in Palestine and Muhammad's time in Arabia were ready to believe in the divine truths? How many people still today, twenty centuries after Christ, are ready to believe in the truths revealed by the Holy Spirit of which the most important are:

- 1- The divine Trinity
- 2- Jesus is the Christ announced by the prophets (Many amongst the so-called Jews, Christians or Moslems do not believe this)
- 3- Jesus is the divine incarnation on earth
- 4- The Kingdom of God as well as his Temple is WITHIN US; this Kingdom being spiritual, not political. They are not in geographical places: Jerusalem, Rome, Mecca etc...
- 5- The bread and the wine taken around Christ's Holy Table are really his Body and his Blood.
- 6- Monogamy and marital fidelity.
- 7- The uselessness of animal sacrifices, geographical pilgrimages, pure and impure meals... etc for the salvation of the soul.

All these truths – which the Christ revealed through the Holy Spirit after him – could not have been understood by his apostles and the Arabs of their times... and are still not understood today by the vast majority of men. The Christ, who acts pedagogically, according to the principles of God, could not clash with the men of his time and reveal them all these truths frankly and all at once. This is why he often spoke in parables, knowing that he addressed himself to hearts hardened by pleasure, materialism and mundane irregularities. The apostles themselves could not understand it. While speaking about monogamy and condemning the divorce, they said to him: "If that is how things are between husband and wife, it is it advisable not to marry. He answered them: It is not everyone who can accept what I have said..." . The divine pedagogy appears in these words of Christ: "It was because you were so hard-hearted, that Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but it was not like this from the beginning" (Mt 19,1-12). The Quran too, reveals this pedagogy concerning monogamy, by reducing the number of marriages to four wives, then recommending monogamy for salvation (Quran IV, The Women, 3-4 and 129; see also our text "A look of Faith at the Quran").

Neither the Apostles at the time of Christ, nor the Arabs at the time of Muhammad had received the plenitude of the Holy Spirit in order to be able to understand the vastness of the divine plan at the service of man drowned with stubbornness in ignorance and vice. St. Paul himself declares that he received only “the **first-fruits** of the Spirit” (Rm 8,23).

Jesus followed the divine plan, entrusting to the Holy Spirit what is incommunicable. He respected the fragile human condition while humiliating himself all the way to the cross. God humbled himself through Christ in order to be able to talk to man face to face. St. Paul expressed himself as follows: “He (Jesus), being in the form of God, did not count equality with God something to be grasped. But he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming as human beings are; and being in every way like a human being, he was humbled yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. And for this God raised Him high, gave him the Name above all other names; so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father”(Ph 2,6-11).

Christ therefore, was the Father’s instrument in order to be able to talk to man’s heart, deaf and blind to the divine truths. He incarnated himself “taking the form of a slave, becoming as human beings are” to talk face to face to men and then send them his Holy Spirit.

This is why nowadays, Christ, still Him, in order to achieve his work “will manifest himself a second time (but outside the body) to those who are waiting for him (*the “wise virgins” of the parable: Mt 25*), to bring them salvation” (Hb 9,28 / 2 Tim 4,8). He will not manifest himself again in the body, but in the Holy Spirit.

Christ who said to his Apostles not knowing the hour of his Return (Mt 24,36) and who, in the Quran, said to the Father not knowing his secrets, knew very well the hour and the time and the divine secrets. But it was not the moment to reveal some salutary truths which only the Holy Spirit has the mission to reveal to those who nowadays welcome it.

Blessed are the pure of hearts capable of hearing and understanding the murmurs of the Holy Spirit.

*(see the text “The Divinity of Jesus” on our site).*