6333 - How Was Jesus Created?

the question

Can you tell me how Nabi (Prophet) Isa was created in relation to his conception?

Summary of answer

Muslims believe that Prophet Jesus was created in this way; Allah commanded Jibril to blow through the neck of Maryam’s garment, and this breath went down and by the will of Allah entered her womb, so it became a soul that Allah had created.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The Miracle of Jesus' Creation in the Quran

Allah commanded Jibril to blow through the neck of Maryam’s garment, and this breath went down and by the will of Allah entered her womb, so it became a soul that Allah had created. Allah has explained how He created `Isa (peace be upon him), as He said (interpretation of the meaning):

{And she who guarded her chastity [Virgin Maryam (Mary)], We breathed into (the sleeves of) her (shirt or garment) [through Our Ruh Jibril (Gabriel)]} [Al-Anbiya’ 21:91]

Then Allah explains that the Ruh reached her womb, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And Maryam (Mary), the daughter of `Imran who guarded her chastity. And We breathed into (the sleeve of her shirt or her garment) through Our Ruh [i.e. Jibril (Gabriel)].} [At-Tahrim 66:12]

The verse (interpretation of the meaning):

{(The angel) said: ‘I am only a messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a

righteous son’} [Maryam 19:19] – indicates that the one who blew into her was Jibril, who does not do anything except by the command of Allah.

Was Jesus' Birth Instantaneous?

Some commentaries have been narrated from some commentators suggesting that her pregnancy lasted only a few seconds, but this is not clearly indicated by the texts. If that had been the case, it would have been a miracle in and of itself: people would have accepted that this was not a normal pregnancy as experienced by women, and they would not have accused her of fornication, as they said (interpretation of the meaning):

{O Mary! Indeed you have brought a thing Fariyy (a mighty thing).} [Maryam 19:27]

There follow comments on this matter from two of the great commentators, one from the past – Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) and one from more recent times – Ash-Shanqiti (may Allah have mercy on him). Imam Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The commentators differed as to the length of time (Maryam was) pregnant with `Isa (peace be upon him). The best known view of the majority is that she carried him for nine months… Ibn Jurayj said: Al-Mughirah told me, from `Utbah ibn `Abdullah Ath-Thaqafi, that he heard Ibn `Abbas being asked about the pregnancy of Maryam, and he said: no sooner had she conceived him then she gave birth!

This is strange, and it was based on what might be the apparent meaning of the ayah (interpretation of the meaning):

{So she conceived him, and she withdrew with him to a far place. And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a date palm.}” [Maryam 19:22]

The prefix “fa” here [in the phrase fa aja’aha Al- makhad - And the pains of childbirth drove her] indicates a succession of events, but things follow one another according to their own merits and characteristics, as in the ayah (interpretation of the meaning):

{And indeed We created man (Adam) out of an extract of clay (water and earth). Thereafter We made him (the offspring of Adam) as a Nutfah (mixed drops of the male and female sexual discharge and lodged it) in a safe lodging (womb of the woman). Then We made the Nutfah into a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood), then We made the clot into a little lump of flesh, then We made out of that little lump of flesh bones.} [Al-Mu'minun 23:12]

Here the fa' [translated as 'then'] implies a succession of events according to their own merits and characteristics. It is narrated by Al-Bukhari (3208) and Muslim (2643) that: "between each stage there are forty days."

And Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

{See you not that Allah sends down water (rain) from the sky, and then [fa'] the earth becomes green?} [Al-Hajj 22:63]

The apparent meaning – although Allah is able to do all things – is that her pregnancy was like that of other women… When Maryam felt that her people were becoming suspicious about her, she hid herself away from them "[in] a far place" [Maryam 19:22], i.e. far away so that she would not see them and they would not see her… she hid away from them and "placed a screen (to screen herself) from them" [Maryam 19:17 – interpretation of the meaning]. So no one could see her and she could not see anyone else. (Tafsir Ibn Kathir, 3/122)

Shaykh Ash-Shanqiti (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

We will not mention all the views of the scholars concerning the length of time Maryam carried `Isa (peace be upon him), because of the lack of evidence (daleel) for these views. The strongest opinion is that her pregnancy was like that of other women, even though its beginning was miraculous. And Allah knows best. (End quote from Adwa' Al-Bayan, 4/264)

Clarifying the Concept of 'Spirit of Allah' in Jesus' Creation

Some ignorant people interpret the verse (interpretation of the meaning):

{So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him (his) soul created by Me} [Sad 38:72] as meaning that the Messiah was a part of the spirit of Allah!

[The original Arabic says min Ruhi, lit. ‘of My spirit’]

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) explained that this interpretation is misguided, as he said:

With regard to the misinterpretation of the genitive (or possessive) construction [Idafah] in the verse (interpretation of the meaning):

{So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him (his) soul created by Me [min Ruhi, lit. ‘of My spirit’]} [Sad 38:72] – it should be known that when this construction appears in conjunction with the name of Allah, may He be Glorified, it may be one of two types:

- (The first) is qualities that cannot stand alone, such as knowledge, power, words, hearing, sight. Here the attribute is attached in a genitive construction (Idafah) to the One Who is described in this manner. So His knowledge, His words, His will, His power, His life are all attributes or qualities which are not created (because this refers to His Essence); the same applies to His Face and His Hand, may He be Glorified.
- The second kind are things which exist separately and are mentioned in Idafah (genitive construction), such as (His) house, (His) she-camel, (His) slave, (His) Messenger, (His) spirit. Here the created thing is connected by the genitive construction to its Creator, but in this case the Idafah implies that the thing mentioned is special and is honoured, and is thus distinguished from other things. For example, the House of Allah [meaning the Ka`bah] – although all houses belong to Allah – and the she-camel of Allah – although all camels belong to Allah and are created by Him. This Idafah is connected to the idea of His Divinity (‘Uluhiyah), which implies that he loves and honours the thing so described. In contrast, Idafah in the general sense has to do with His Lordship (Rububiyyah), which implies that He created and formed it. So the general kind of Idafah implies that He is the Creator of that thing, whilst the specific kind of Idafah implies that Allah has chosen that thing. Allah creates

what He wills and chooses some of His creation, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And your Lord creates whatsoever He wills and chooses.} [Al-Qasas 28:68]

So in this case – the phrase min Ruhi (lit. ‘of My spirit’), the Idafah (genitive construction) is of the specific type, not the general type, and it does not refer to the attributes of Allah. Think about this matter, for it will save you from the many errors into which people have fallen by the will of Allah. (End quote from Ar-Ruh, p. 154, 155)

In conclusion, the description of `Isa (peace be upon him) as the spirit (Ruh) of Allah is by way of honouring him. This Idafah (whereby the word Ruh (spirit) is connected in a genitive construction to the Name of Allah) does not serve to ascribe an attribute to the One Who is so described, as is the case in the phrases “the hand of Allah”, “the Face of Allah.” On the contrary, it connects the created being in a genitive construction to the Creator, as the Ka`bah is described as the House of Allah, and the she-camel – which was the miracle that Allah gave to His Prophet Salih (peace be upon him) – was described as the she-camel of Allah.

For more details, please see the following answers:

Was Jesus a Jew?

Where Is Jesus Now?

Muslims’ Belief About Jesus

Jesus in Islam

What Do Muslims Believe about Jesus?

And Allah knows best.