240271 - What is the difference between the creation of `Isa (peace be upon him) and that of other humans?

the question

After reading questions no. 216397 and 6333, can we say that the difference between the creation of `Isa (peace be upon him) and other humans is that Allah sent Jibril (peace be upon him) with the soul of `Isa (peace be upon him), whereas in the case of other humans, Allah sends an angel to breathe the souls into them after one hundred and twenty days? Is there any hadith which indicates the name of that angel? Are there any other differences between the creation of `Isa (peace be upon him) and that of other humans?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, appointed a noble angel to create `Isa from his mother; that angel appeared to her in human form.

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And [mention] the one who guarded her chastity, so We blew into her [garment] through Our angel [Jibril], and We made her and her son a sign for all people} [Al-Anbiya' 21:91]

{And [the example of] Mary, the daughter of 'Imran, who guarded her chastity, so We blew into her [garment] through Our angel [*ruhina*]} [At-Tahrim 66:12].

This angel was Jibril (peace be upon him), as is indicated by the context of the verses and as is indicated by the description of him as a *ruh* [spirit; translated here as angel] and as a messenger [*rasul*], and the fact that the word *ruh* is mentioned in conjunction with the Lord of Glory [*ruhina* – Our spirit/angel].

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{Recount [O Muhammad] in the Book the story of Maryam, when she withdrew from her family in a place towards the east.

She screened herself from them, then We sent to her Our Angel [Jibreel], and he appeared before her in the form of a perfect human being.

She said: I seek refuge in the Most Merciful from you; [do not come near me] if you fear Him!

He said: I am only a Messenger from your Lord, [to announce] to you the gift of a righteous son.

She said: How will I have a son when no man has touched me, and I have never been unchaste?

He said: Thus it will be. Your Lord says: That is easy for Me; We will make him a sign to humankind, and a mercy from Us. It is a matter already decreed} [Maryam 19:16-21].

Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The words {She screened herself from them} mean: She concealed herself from them and secluded herself. Then Allah, may He be exalted, sent Jibril (peace be upon him) to her, and he appeared to her in perfect human form.

Mujahid, ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, Ibn Jurayj, Wahb ibn Munabbih and as-Suddi said regarding the words {then We sent to her Our Angel}: This refers to Jibril (peace be upon him).

What they said is the apparent meaning of the Quran, as Allah, may He be exalted, said elsewhere:

{The faithful Spirit [Jibreel] has brought it down

to your heart so that you may be one of the warners}

[Ash-Shu`ara 26:193-194].

(End quote from *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, 5/219-220)

Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, created His Prophet `Isa (peace be upon him) in this manner, in a way that was different from the way in which other people are created, by way of highlighting to people the might, will and choice of the Creator, and that He, may He be blessed and exalted, creates whatever He wills and chooses, and no one can put back His decree.

Allah, may He be exalted, says:

{The likeness of `Isa before Allah is as the likeness of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him, 'Be!' and he was} [Al `Imran 3:59].

Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Allah, may He be exalted, says {The likeness of `Isa before Allah}, meaning in terms of His power, as He created him without a father, {is as the likeness of Adam}, for Allah, may He be exalted, created Adam without a father or a mother; rather He created him from dust, then He said to him, 'Be!' and he was. It is more appropriate to say that the One Who created Adam is able to create `Isa. (End quote from *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, 2/49)

Ibn Kathir (may Allah be pleased with him) also said:

{She said: How will I have a son when no man has touched me, and I have never been unchaste?} In other words, Maryam was astonished by that and said: How will I have a son? meaning: in what way will this son be born from me, when I have no husband and it cannot be imagined that I would commit immoral deeds? Hence she said: {when no man has touched me, and I have never been unchaste [*baghi*]}. The word *baghi*, translated here as unchaste, refers to a woman who fornicates.

{He said: Thus it will be. Your Lord says: That is easy for Me} – that is, the angel said to her, in response to her question: Allah has said that He will create a child from you, even though you do not have a husband and you do not commit immoral actions, for He is able to do whatever He wills. Hence He said: {We will make him a sign to humankind} that is, proof and evidence to the

people of the might of their Maker and Creator, Who creates them in different ways. He created their father Adam without any male or female, He created Hawwa' from a male without a female, and He created all others from male and female, except for `Isa, whom He brought into existence from a female without a male. Thus there are four ways of creating, which are indicative of the perfect power and great might of Allah, besides Whom there is no god worthy of worship and there is no Lord except Him.

The words {and a mercy from Us} mean: We will make this boy a mercy from Allah, one of the prophets who call people to worship Allah, may He be exalted, alone and affirm His oneness... (End quote from *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, 5/220)

See also the answer to question no. 6333.

To sum up, Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, created `Isa (peace be upon him) from a mother without a father. He gave the task of breathing his soul into his mother to a noble angel and trustworthy messenger, namely Jibril (peace be upon him), whom Allah, may He glorified and exalted, called *Ruh al-Qudus* (the Holy Spirit).

As for other humans, they are created from the meeting between the waters of the man and woman. Then if it be Allah's will to create a child, fertilization occurs, and the soul is breathed into the embryo after one hundred and twenty days, according to the majority of jurists.

Al-Bukhari, 3208, and Muslim, 2643, narrated that Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) , who is the most truthful one, told us: "The creation of any one of you is put together in his mother's womb for forty days, then he becomes a '*alaqah* (a clinging clot) for a similar period, then he becomes like a lump of flesh (*mudghah*) for a similar period, then Allah sends to him an angel who breathes the soul into him and is enjoined to write down four things: his provision, his lifespan, his deeds and whether he is doomed (to Hell) or blessed (destined for Paradise)."

So the forming and shaping of the embryo, the writing down of what is decreed for him, and the breathing of the soul into him are done by the angel who is appointed to do that, by the command

of Allah, may He be exalted.

This angel, Jibril (peace be upon him), is the one who was appointed to breathe the soul of `Isa (peace be upon him) into his mother Maryam, by the command of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, according to the scholarly view regarding the matter that is most likely to be correct.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Regarding the Messiah, it was said that Maryam gave birth to him, and he is called al-Masih ibn Maryam (the Messiah son of Maryam), so the Messiah is part of Maryam, and he was created after his soul was breathed into the womb of Maryam, as Allah, may He be exalted, says:

{And [there is another example] in Maryam, the daughter of ‘Imran, who guarded her chastity. We blew into her [garment] through Our angel} [At-Tahrim 66:12]

{And [mention] the one who guarded her chastity, so We blew into her [garment] through Our angel [Jibril], and We made her and her son a sign for the worlds

{And [mention] the one who guarded her chastity, so We blew into her [garment] through Our angel [Jibril], and We made her and her son a sign for all people} [Al-Anbiya’ 21:91].

With regard to Hawwa’, Allah created her from a substance that was taken from Adam, just as He created Adam from an earthly substance, namely water, dust and wind which dried out until it became dry clay. Hence it cannot be said that Adam begat Hawwa’, or that Adam was begotten from dust, but it may be said of the Messiah that Maryam begat `Isa; thus he came from two sources: from Maryam and from the breath that Jibril breathed into her. Allah, may He be exalted, says:

{then We sent to her Our Angel [Jibreel], and he appeared before her in the form of a perfect human being.

She said: I seek refuge in the Most Merciful from you; [do not come near me] if you fear Him!

He said: I am only a Messenger from your Lord, [to announce] to you the gift of a righteous son.

She said: How will I have a son when no man has touched me, and I have never been unchaste?

He said: Thus it will be. Your Lord says: That is easy for Me; We will make him a sign to humankind, and a mercy from Us. It is a matter already decreed.

So she conceived him and withdrew with him to a remote place} [Maryam 19:17-22].

She only conceived him after the soul was breathed into her, so it cannot be said that she carried him [the embryo] without a soul, then the living soul was breathed into him, like other humans. Hence there is a difference between the breathing in of the soul that led to pregnancy and the breathing in of the soul that signals the beginning of life. (End quote from *Majmu` al-Fatawa*, 5/271; see also: 5/266)

Shaykh as-Sa`di (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his *Tafsir*, p. 530:

When Jibril came to her in human form, in the shape of a perfect, handsome man, {She said: I seek refuge in the Most Merciful from you; [do not come near me] if you fear Him!}. Then Allah rewarded her with a reward that matched her deed, and He blessed her with a son without a father; rather Jibril (peace be upon him) breathed into her and she conceived, by Allah's leave. (End quote)

He also said on p. 874:

{And [there is another example] in Maryam, the daughter of 'Imran, who guarded her chastity} that is, she protected herself and refrained from immoral actions, because of her perfect religious commitment, chastity and dignity.

{We blew into her [garment] through Our angel}, meaning that Jibril (peace be upon him) blew into the neckline of her chemise, and his breath reached Maryam, and from her came `Isa ibn Maryam (peace be upon him), the noble Messenger and great leader. (End quote)

See also: *Tafsir al-Qurtubi*, 18/204) and *Adwa' al-Bayan*, 3/449.

The scholars differed as to how long Maryam was pregnant with `Isa (peace be upon him).

The majority are of the view that the pregnancy lasted nine months, as is the case with other humans.

`Ikrimah said that it lasted for eight months, and he said: Hence no child born at eight months' gestation will survive, so as to protect the unique character of `Isa.

It was narrated from Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: No sooner did she become pregnant but she gave birth.

The view that is most likely to be correct is that she carried him as all women carry their children [i.e., the pregnancy lasted nine months].

See also the answer to question no. 45820.

With regard to the angel who is appointed to breathe the soul into the foetus, we have not come across any religious text that clearly states his name. Researching and asking about that is doing something that is not required, and there is no benefit to be gained from finding out what his name is.

And Allah knows best.