

**Why was Christ incarnated?**  
**Episode 10**

Nahed: My dear viewers, you are most welcome again to our program "Questions About Faith" It is always our pleasure to answer all your questions. And again it is a pleasure and honor to have with us Reverend Father Zakaria Botros. Welcome to you Father.

Father: Thank you

Nahed: Reverent Father, in the previous episode we spoke about the beginning of creation and the fall of Adam. Would you please give us a brief summary so that the viewers would be able to follow our discussion. Please, go ahead.

Father: Thank you very much for having me as a guest. Our primary topic in this episode is the crucifixion of Christ. The issue of the crucifixion of Christ. We spoke in previous episodes about the Trinity and the Oneness, that we do not worship 3 gods. We spoke as well about the incarnation of God in the man Jesus Christ just as He was incarnated in the tree and in the mountain to Moses. Then afterwards we got to the issue of the crucifixion of Christ which is the purpose of the incarnation. Now Why the crucifixion? And Why all this fuss in order to achieve the redemption? So from the beginning God was incarnated in the form of man in order to be able to die for humanity to redeem it. We spoke about the first point about the crucifixion of Christ which was the beginning of the story and that was man's creation. God created man out of love. He loved us. He placed Adam in the Garden, looked after him, and made everything available to him. God does love us. He loves us. So after Satan was an angel in heaven and became proud and it came about that he fell and was separated from God, he envied Adam and Eve for the abundance they had and therefore wanted to make them fall and join him. So he went to Eve who spoke to Adam and they ate of the tree as we narrated the previous time.

Nahed: The two of them.

Father: Yes, both of them ate. Yes, a joint responsibility. Yes, and therefore they received a joint punishment. So the outcome of eating of the forbidden tree was that they were separated from God. They disobeyed. The commandment of obedience was broken because the Lord had told them "You shall not eat of that tree for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." But why did He place it there? As we explained in the previous episode; for the choice. God created man an intelligent being with free will, with free choice so there had to be a test of the choice in order to know if he was obedient and would keep away from it or would he follow the devil. So today..... Oh please go ahead

Nahed: The question for today Father is: "Can you clarify how sin entered man's life? And the second part what's the relation between sin and redemption?"

Father: Right.

Nahed: So let's now stick to the first part about how sin entered man's life.

Father: In point of fact, sin entered man's life as we have just explained through Satan's envy. He went to the forbidden tree and gave it to Eve. I mean, it is not the tree that matters. You know many people say it was an apple tree. And they cite as evidence that the larynx is called...

Nahed: Adam's apple.

Father: And they claim that when Adam was trying to swallow down the apple it stuck in his throat. But we know that this is all old folks tale. It doesn't really carry weight. Although the term is used scientifically. Adam's apple is nonetheless based on the

folklore. But it doesn't matter whether the tree was an apple tree or not and of course other people would think of it as a mango tree. Why? Because mango is called "*man go*" and man go is made of 2 syllables "man - go". All this is folk terminology it doesn't really have any significance and is actually groundless. But it is basically a symbol to obedience, a symbol to sin. Man wants to do his own thing, to live freely.

Nahed: Well, right now Father I have just recalled something from the Bible. The Bible says that when Eve viewed the tree she found it pleasant to the eyes. That means it looked so pleasant that it wet her appetite and made her stretch out her hand and eat of it.

Father: Quite right. Of course it was a natural real tree but it had spiritual implications.

Nahed: Yes.

Father: You know there are illustrations or representations. They are real things but they symbolize something else. Isn't that right? A reality that involves symbolism. When I say about someone that he is a lion; of course the lion is a lion, but it has another symbol, that is strength, courage, fearlessness etc... Of course the tree was a real tree but it had a spiritual significance which is obedience and eating of it is disobedience, breaking away from obeying God, the food itself doesn't matter rather what it signifies. The same is that story of the rat. The rat didn't matter, what mattered was that the curiosity of the man who wanted to know and therefore he removed the lid and was surprised to find a rat. Therefore Adam and Eve's eating of the tree means disobeying the commandment, they rebelled. We don't want You anymore. So sin entered their life. You know, sin here is a germ. The Bible in the book of Joshua son of Sirakh, it is one of the books that are not in our copy of the Bible, it is one of the secondary chronicle books that says the

following: “Because the germ of sin is rooted in him- in man- because the sickness of Adam and the devil was...

Nahed: Pride

Father: Pride. So he infected Adam and Eve with it. He took the tree and the fruit and said it is desirable. Look here. Then her mouth watered with pride. That's a metaphor I am using. So they ate and she was infected by the microbe by the germ of pride. We don't want God we want to be separated from Him. Both she and Adam fell into pride. Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. So they fell into pride. From that time on, the germ of sin started to flow with man's blood, not just in Adam and Eve, their descendents as well are that way. Let's check that out in the Bible and in the Quran as well.

Nahed: I was about to say that it says in the Quran that Adam received words from his Lord and He forgave him.

Father: Not yet we're going to discuss this later on. But now we are speaking about the punishment of sin. All right. Let's see what the Bible says.

Adam, then the serpent said to the woman you shall not surely die. So she took of its fruit and ate, she also gave to her husband with her and he ate, and the eyes of both of them were opened; And they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves and made themselves coverings, and then God drove them out of the garden. All right. And from this time on, humanity inherited that germ. It says that “therefore just as through one man sin entered the world and death through sin.” And again in Romans it says “but I see another law in my members bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” There is a law of sin which is in the members. Law means rule, system.

Nahed: So that sin is inherited from one generation to another to another until today. Can't we say that it stopped or discontinued? It has been handed down.

Father: They have all turned aside. They have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good no not one. Doesn't it say so? So through one man sin entered the world and thus crept to all men and therefore in the Quran Surah 12 (**Yousef**) verse 53 it says "one's soul is prone to commit evil." Where did it get that evil from? By heredity. It is prone by heredity to commit evil. Let's have a look at the exegeses of Imam Al Razy الامام الرازي about this verse. He explains and says "it is inclined to obscenities, desirous to disobedience and the human nature, the human nature is eager to pleasures." This is the exegeses of Imam Al Razy on this verse from Surah 12 verse 53

Nahed: We still need a link between the two, because our beloved Muslims still claim that man is born sinless How come then that they are born sinless yet their soul is prone to commit evil? So then sin has been handed down by heredity, it's inside and therefore it is prone to do evil.

Father: You know those of the opinion that denies have not researched, they are just wanting to get rid of the problem. You tell them about this hereditary sin and they say 'No it is not hereditary.' Why? Just so. They just dispute with you because they don't want to admit it. But if he goes back to the books he will find that the soul is inclined to do evil. The human nature itself is desirous of pleasures and is inclined to obscenities. It is eager to disobedience.

Nahed: Where did the soul get that from unless man is born with it?

Father: Sin is the sin in blood itself. They have all turned aside, they have together become unprofitable. "There's none who does good, no not one, they have all turned aside, they have

together become unprofitable." Together with Romans 3:10. You know what Al Turmuzy الترمزى said- Now we come to those who want to understand- as an answer to the claim that it's not hereditary let's see what Al Turmuzy said..

Nahed: What did he say?

Father: He said, "Adam disbelieved and so did his offspring, and Adam sinned and so did his offspring."

Nahed: That's the inheritance of sin then.

Father: That's it certainly. Just as sin entered by Adam and Eve, the factors of heredity were passed down to the generations. Even the prophets?

Nahed: But they are merely human.

Father: Yes, they are merely human. Aren't they among the offspring of Adam? Even the prophets. Listen to this. In the Bible in Genesis chapter 12 the Bible explains that Abraham lied twice

Nahed: Twice not just once!

Father: Once to Pharaoh when he said that Sarah was his sister and once to Abimalek ابيمالك the same lie that she was his sister. He lied twice. Even Noah the Bible says that he sinned he got drunk he got naked in Genesis 9. Even Moses the prophet, the Bible shows as well that he sinned in Exodus chapter 9 he murdered; he murdered an Egyptian and ran away to the wilderness. So the prophets sinned.

But Does Islam I wonder admit this fact? This is a serious question, quite serious, isn't it? Well, let's check it out. What does the Quran say about the prophet Abraham? Abraham the prophet. In Surah 14 (**Ibraheem**) verse 41 what does he say? "Our Lord forgive me, forgive me..."

Nahed: both my parents...

Father: and believers on the day when the reckoning will be set up.” Forgive me! How could he ask forgiveness unless he knew that he was a sinner? To forgive means there was a sin. Isn't that right? The prophet Moses too in Surah 28 (**Al Kasas**) verses 15 and 16 what does it say? It says that he killed then he said “My Lord, I have wronged my own soul, forgive me” After he had killed the Egyptian. So Moses sinned too.

Nahed: Sinned too.

Father: Right now comes the thorny one.

Nahed: Let's still talk about it also.

Father: No one would be upset if we do?

Nahed: No, no one would be upset because it is a fact, we are not making it up

Father: Won't our dear viewers be upset? Well I'm telling the truth and God is my witness.

Nahed: Well, we started talking about the prophets so now let's talk about all of them.

Father: I'm not making anything up myself. I'm not alleging that but these are facts. Let me just find the reference first and the viewers will know who said that. Surah 48 (**Al Fath**) verse 2. Surah 48 verse 2 “God may forgive you for any offence of yours you have committed previously or whatever you may do later on.” Who may God forgive? I will leave it up to the viewers I don't want to be held reprehensible

Nahed: Would you please clarify this for us?

Father: In the Saheeh of Al Bokhary volume 2 on page 134. Let's see what it says "The messenger of God used to implore saying 'Oh God I seek refuge with You from the torment of the grave and from the torment of hell fire.'" He is seeking God's protection from the torment of the grave and the fire why? Yes, he's afraid.

Nahed: There is sin.

Father: There's something .Yes, there is sin. In Al Bokhary again "The messenger of God -may God's peace and prayer be upon him- none of you will be admitted to heaven except by the grace of God. He was asked 'Not even you oh messenger of God?' He answered 'Not even I unless God encompasses me with His mercy.'

Nahed: Then the statement our Muslim brothers make about man being born sinless is actually faulty.

Father: Let's check it out. In a book entitled "Raid Al Salheen" رياض الصالحين by Imam Al Nawawy الامام النووي page 9. Now the problem is our dear viewers do not read do not research, do not understand. He doesn't read if he reads he doesn't understand and if he does understand he doesn't apply. It's a whole process of total rejection of all sorts of discussion of the fundamental tenets of the faith which is the problem. Yet this is the responsibility. Now to what Al Nawawy says "The messenger of God said 'I repent to God per day a hundred times' I repent to God per day a hundred times...

Nahed: In one day!

Father: What does he repent from? What do people repent from!

Nahed: Sin of course.



Father: What the people repent of? Yes, certainly it's sin and a hundred times implies a lot. These are not my own words this is in a book called Riad Al Salheen by Imam Al Nawawy page 9.

You know they should burn these books so that they would not be taken against them.

And the experts of Sunna, everybody knows what Sunna means, it means tradition or it may mean the Sunni people like the majority in Egypt. They say "It is permissible that prophets may commit cardinal sins before their prophethood." So cardinal big sins are permissible such as murder adultery.. etc. before the commencement of their prophethood. And as to minor sins it is permissible for the prophets to commit them, that is to commit some of them before their prophethood on purpose and after the prophethood unintentionally"

Nahed: That means that the prophets even after the commencement of their prophethood do sin.

Father: Well, as I've just said this is the Sunni doctrine. As you know there is a difference between the Sunnis and the Shiites

Nahed: Yes ,yes definitely.

Father: So as far as the Sunni doctrine is concerned this is what they ought to believe. And again it is permissible that prophets may commit major sins before their prophethood; that is they may kill and so forth as to the minor sins such as lying, hypocrisy, dissimulation, robbery any such things it is permissible that prophets may commit them I mean commit some of them before their prophethood intentionally, and after their prophethood unintentionally. That is sin is inevitable whether intentionally or unintentionally there is still sin. Right? So this business of sin entering man and requiring punishment for it by God poses a problem. We still got a problem here.

Nahed: This takes us to the second part of the question which is the relation between sin and redemption.

Father: Oh, yes, now we are talking seriously, sin and punishment as a consequence. We know so far that God has created man in the best form and pattern, placed him in the garden out of love. Under the seduction of the devil, man fell into sin with the result of dying because the wages of sin is death, banishment away from God's presence. And ever since then sin spread to all mankind including the prophets. Now there is punishment. Why? Simply because God is a just ruler. He stated that the wages of sin is death and God's words are unchangeable. There is death, there is punishment. In Psalm 7 verse 11 we see the clarification of this fact. "God is a just judge" a just judge and in Surah 16 (**Al Nahl**) in the Quran verse 90 it says also "God commands justice", and in Surah 13( **Al Raad**) in verse 41 it says "God decides. There is no way to reverse His decision" He is a judge and this requires Divine justice. He cannot overstep His own justice. His justice is absolute, it is untouchable.

Nahed: But what about mercy?

Father: This is not the time for it yet. But let me first finish talking about justice. Justice says there must be punishment. Punishment for Adam and his offspring. The wages of sin is death, the soul that sins must die. "On the day you eat of the tree you must surely die." There is a death verdict. What is this death? What kind of death? This death verdict is divided into three types. And it's very important to get to know them because some results will follow from them. The first foremost and the most serious verdict is that of spiritual death. That is separation from God.

Nahed: Excuse me Father. This is a very difficult point and it's very important to clarify it to our beloved viewers in Islam.

They ask, how can one be separated from God? What is it like to be separated from God?

Father: Very good. Very nice question. OK. Let's assume that there's a couple of friends. They built a relationship, or a son and his father. The son lives in his father's house enjoying his riches rejoicing in him. He loves him and is happy with him. The son sins against his father, says to him "I don't want to live with you" like the parable of the prodigal son in the Bible. The son came to his father and said "give me my portion of the inheritance" "My dear son, do you want to inherit me before I even die?" "I don't care, give me what I deserve and that's it." He's a good man loving so he gave him his portion of the inheritance. The son took it and squandered it in a dissipated living among fornicators and prostitutes in drunkenness and so forth. He was separated from his father there was no more relationship. God is omnipresent but the love relationship that was between the 2 of them was rejected by the sinner. He doesn't want God. He doesn't want to submit to Him anymore. He wants to do his own thing to do whatever he feels like, to follow his own desires, to pursue his own pleasures, to give in to his drives and to fulfill his lusts. Where's God now in his life?

Nahed: This way he is completely separated from God. So that's what you mean by separation from God.

Father: Well, the expression separation means to be cut off, to keep away from God's commandment, to keep away from God's presence and to forget about God.

Nahed: That's the first kind of death.

Father: This is the spiritual death. Right? Spiritual, which is separation from God and Why so? Because God is a Spirit. God is life and when one is separated from life and spirit he experiences death the Spirit of God is not in the heart, and man

is separated from God, now separated from the Spirit of God so he ends up in the state of death.

Nahed: What about the 2<sup>nd</sup> kind of death?

Father: Oh wait a minute Does Islam maintain the same? Christianity says therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden. He is now separated and thus death spread to all men. Sorry excuse me. Is there in Islam something like that? Of course it says “Descend from it all of you.” This is Surah 20 verse (**Taha**) 124: Descend from the garden all of you. Imam Al Nassafy امام النسفي comments on this verse saying “This denotes the 2 of them and their descendants to descend down.” That’s the separation, to clear out from God’s presence. This is the first death.

As to the 2<sup>nd</sup> death which is the moral death the disgrace. The Bible says that sin is a reproach to any people it is disgraceful to be sinful. Do you know so and so? Yes, oh take care, pay attention, he has a bad reputation. It’s a reproach it’s a reproach to any people. I wonder if Islam admits such disgrace of sin? Oh yes. It says God let them taste this is in Surah 39 (**Al Zomor**) verse 26 Surah 39 verse 26 it says the following “God let them taste disgrace, disgrace shame. During worldly life while torment in the hereafter will even be greater.” Surah 39 (**Al Zomor**).

Nahed: That is about Adam and Eve and their descendents.

Father: Yes, all sinners, for any sin God lets them taste disgrace during worldly life here is the shame, and Sheikh Abd Allah Yousef الشيخ عبدالله يوسف who translated the Quran into English with commentary on page 1188 in his book he says he comments on the Quran saying “Sin often bears the fruit of shame and disgrace in worldly life but the greater punishment is in the afterlife.” So there is punishment so the punishment in the hereafter is eternal fire. Eternal hellfire. So the punishment of

sin is separation from God, disgrace and shame then the hellfire eternally.

Nahed: So these are the three.

Father: What does he say about this hellfire? He says “God says to the wicked depart from me you cursed into the everlasting fire.” That’s in Matthew 25 and in Matthew 13 it says the following “and cast them into the furnace of fire there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” Now is there something like this in Islam? Oh yes, most definitely Surah 72 (Al Gen) verse 23 “Anyone who disobeys God and His messenger will have hellfire to live in forever.” That was in Surah 72(Al Gen), And in Surah Al Bakara verse 81 says “rather anyone who commits evil will find his mistake with him in those who will become inmates of the fire.” Whoever commits evil and his mistake with him in those who will become inmates of the fire. So then this must be the death sentence as a result of sin separation from God shame and disgrace in life then hellfire in eternity as punishment. That means in an eternal state of torment unquenchable fire and worms that do not die. You know the concept of “Gehenam” comes from a Hebrew root. There was a valley behind the temple into which the left overs of the sacrifices were thrown and then set fire in them in order not to rot, a huge big fire crackling because of the fat and very fierce and still some of the skin would be left on the side of the valley, and would be infested with worms as if God I mean Christ was telling them ‘you see those disgusting things those things that you are afraid of. This will be the eternal destiny of man just like that fearsome fire and worms that do not die.’ This valley was called “Henom” هَنُوم and of course you know that Henom is the nickname of lady, so that valley was called Henom and the Hebrew word for valley is “Go” so “Gohenom” means the valley of fierce fire, and hence Christ said that they will spend eternity in Gohenom the eternal fire where the image is like that.

Nahed: We truly thank you Father. The clarifications are terrific and of course we will continue to talk about this subject because it is really extensive and we face so many questions with it.

Father: And you know we haven't come the point if redemption yet.

Nahed: Thank you dear viewers and I repeat if you have any questions or would like to receive a Bible please write to us. Thank you and we'll see you next time.