



"No child is born except on Al-Fitra (Islam) and then his parents make him Jewish, Christian or Magian, as an animal produces a perfect young animal: do you see any part of its body amputated?" (Bukhari)



Imam Al-Ghazali: The Legacy of a Scholar and His Passing in Jumada Al-Ukhra

Imam Al-Ghazali, born in 1058 CE (450 AH) in Tus, Persia, remains one of the most celebrated scholars in Islamic history. Known as 'Hujjat al-Islam' (The Proof of Islam), his profound contributions spanned theology, philosophy, jurisprudence, and spirituality. Al-Ghazali's intellectual brilliance and spiritual depth positioned him as a central figure in the Islamic Golden Age, harmonizing Islamic thought with human experience. His passing in the month of Jumada Al-Ukhra (505 AH/1111 CE) marks a poignant chapter in the history of Islamic scholarship.

Imam Al-Ghazali excelled as a polymath, leaving a lasting imprint on Islamic sciences. After his early education in Tus and Nishapur, he studied under the renowned scholar Imam Al-Juwayni, mastering Islamic jurisprudence, theology, and philosophy. Later, he was appointed as a professor at the prestigious Nizamiyyah College in Baghdad, where his lectures captivated students and scholars alike.

However, a profound spiritual crisis led him to abandon his academic position and embark on a journey of inner transformation. This journey culminated in his magnum opus, Ihya' Ulum al-Din (The Revival of the Religious Sciences), a masterpiece integrating theology, ethics, and mysticism. Through this work, Al-Ghazali sought to bridge the gap between Islamic law and spirituality, emphasizing the importance of sincerity, humility, and devotion in worship.

The death of Imam Al-Ghazali in Jumada Al-Ukhra 505 AH (December 1111 CE) marked the end of an era but the beginning of an enduring legacy. According to historical accounts, he spent his final days in seclusion, dedicating his time to worship and reflection. On the morning of his death, he is said to have performed ablutions, donned his shroud, and prepared himself for the afterlife, embodying the principles of submission and preparedness he so often preached.

Imam Al-Ghazali's influence transcended his lifetime, shaping Islamic thought for centuries. His critique of Greek philosophy in Tahafut al-Falasifa (The Incoherence of the Philosophers) profoundly impacted the relationship between philosophy and theology in the Islamic world. Simultaneously, his work championing Sufism reinvigorated spiritual practices, aligning them with orthodox teachings.

The remembrance of Imam Al-Ghazali's passing in **Jumada Al-Ukhra** is not just a historical marker but a moment to reflect on his timeless contributions. His teachings remain a beacon for those seeking balance between knowledge, spirituality, and action, embodying the harmonious essence of Islam.

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*"Whoever wants his
supplications answered
and difficulties removed,
then let him relieve the
one in hardship."*
[Ahmad]



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WINTER APPEAL 2024/2025

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| Date | | | Beginning Times | | | | | Jama'ah Times | | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| DAY | DATE | ISLAMIC | FAJR | SUNRISE | DHUHR | ASR | ISHA | FAJR | ASR | MAGHRIB | ISHA |
| Sun | 1 | 29 | 5:42 | 7:44 | 11:54 | 2:08 | 5:36 | 7:00 | 2:45 | 3:59 | 6:45 |
| Mon | 2 | 30 | 5:44 | 7:46 | 11:55 | 2:07 | 5:35 | " | " | 3:58 | 7:30 |
| Tue | 3 | 1 | 5:45 | 7:47 | 11:55 | 2:07 | 5:35 | " | " | 3:58 | 7:30 |
| Wed | 4 | 2 | 5:46 | 7:48 | 11:55 | 2:06 | 5:35 | " | " | 3:57 | " |
| Thu | 5 | 3 | 5:47 | 7:50 | 11:56 | 2:06 | 5:35 | " | " | 3:57 | " |
| Fri | 6 | 4 | 5:48 | 7:51 | 11:56 | 2:06 | 5:34 | " | " | 3:56 | " |
| Sat | 7 | 5 | 5:49 | 7:52 | 11:57 | 2:05 | 5:34 | 7:00 | 2:45 | 3:56 | 6:45 |
| Sun | 8 | 6 | 5:50 | 7:53 | 11:57 | 2:05 | 5:34 | " | " | 3:56 | 6:45 |
| Mon | 9 | 7 | 5:51 | 7:54 | 11:58 | 2:05 | 5:34 | " | " | 3:56 | 7:30 |
| Tue | 10 | 8 | 5:52 | 7:55 | 11:58 | 2:05 | 5:34 | " | " | 3:56 | " |
| Wed | 11 | 9 | 5:52 | 7:56 | 11:59 | 2:05 | 5:34 | " | " | 3:56 | " |
| Thu | 12 | 10 | 5:53 | 7:57 | 11:59 | 2:05 | 5:34 | " | " | 3:55 | " |
| Fri | 13 | 11 | 5:54 | 7:58 | 11:59 | 2:05 | 5:34 | " | " | 3:56 | " |
| Sat | 14 | 12 | 5:55 | 7:59 | 12:00 | 2:05 | 5:35 | 7:00 | 2:45 | 3:56 | 6:45 |
| Sun | 15 | 13 | 5:56 | 8:00 | 12:00 | 2:05 | 5:35 | " | " | 3:56 | 6:45 |
| Mon | 16 | 14 | 5:56 | 8:01 | 12:01 | 2:05 | 5:35 | " | " | 3:56 | 7:30 |
| Tue | 17 | 15 | 5:57 | 8:01 | 12:01 | 2:06 | 5:36 | " | " | 3:56 | " |
| Wed | 18 | 16 | 5:58 | 8:02 | 12:02 | 2:06 | 5:36 | " | " | 3:57 | " |
| Thu | 19 | 17 | 5:58 | 8:03 | 12:02 | 2:06 | 5:36 | " | " | 3:57 | " |
| Fri | 20 | 18 | 5:59 | 8:03 | 12:03 | 2:07 | 5:37 | " | " | 3:57 | " |
| Sat | 21 | 19 | 5:59 | 8:04 | 12:03 | 2:07 | 5:37 | 7:00 | 2:45 | 3:58 | 6:45 |
| Sun | 22 | 20 | 6:00 | 8:04 | 12:04 | 2:08 | 5:38 | " | " | 3:58 | 6:45 |
| Mon | 23 | 21 | 6:00 | 8:05 | 12:04 | 2:08 | 5:38 | " | " | 3:59 | 6:45 |
| Tue | 24 | 22 | 6:01 | 8:05 | 12:05 | 2:09 | 5:39 | " | " | 4:00 | 6:45 |
| Wed | 25 | 23 | 6:01 | 8:05 | 12:05 | 2:10 | 5:40 | " | " | 4:00 | 6:45 |
| Thu | 26 | 24 | 6:01 | 8:06 | 12:06 | 2:10 | 5:40 | " | " | 4:01 | 6:45 |
| Fri | 27 | 25 | 6:02 | 8:06 | 12:06 | 2:11 | 5:41 | " | " | 4:02 | 6:45 |
| Sat | 28 | 26 | 6:02 | 8:06 | 12:07 | 2:12 | 5:42 | 7:00 | 2:45 | 4:03 | 6:45 |
| Sun | 29 | 27 | 6:02 | 8:06 | 12:07 | 2:13 | 5:43 | " | " | 4:04 | 6:45 |
| Mon | 30 | 28 | 6:02 | 8:06 | 12:08 | 2:14 | 5:43 | " | " | 4:05 | 6:45 |
| Tue | 31 | 29 | 6:02 | 8:06 | 12:08 | 2:15 | 5:44 | " | " | 4:06 | 6:45 |

Dhuhr Jama`ah

1:00

1st Jumu`ah

12:25

2nd Jumu`ah

1:15

Islamic dates are subject to regional moonsighting reports.
Isha Jama'ah is early on weekends
Asr time ends 5 minutes before the published Maghrib time.

Islamic Diploma
13+ Boys



Fiqh and Aqidah
Sunday 10:30-12:00
U. M Koirul Islam

Tafsir of Surah Yasin
Sunday 12:00-1:30
U. Zakariyya Pathan

Tafsir of Surah Mulk
Wednesday 6:00-7:30
U. Mohammed Moreea

The REAL Christmas Story:

How a Prophet was turned into a god

By Abu Zakariya (islam21c.com)

On December 25th, Christians worldwide celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, whom they regard as their Savior & the second person of the Trinity. While much attention is often given to the links between Christmas & ancient pagan practices like Saturnalia or tree-decorating traditions, the deeper issue lies in how paganism influenced the doctrines of Christianity. This article examines how the divinity of Jesus & the Trinity arose in a pagan context, contrasting it with Islam's rejection of idolatry & its emphasis on monotheism.

The Core of Christmas

The essence of Christmas lies in the belief in Jesus' incarnation as "God the Son." While early Christianity began as a Jewish sect, its spread to non-Jewish Gentiles brought significant changes. Gentiles, steeped in Greco-Roman polytheism, interpreted terms like "Son of God" differently than Jews. Over time, these interpretations led to doctrines like the Trinity.

Jewish Context of "Son of God"

The Bible uses terms like "Father" & "Son of God" figuratively. In Jewish tradition, "Son of God" did not imply literal divinity:

"Is he not your Father, your Creator, who made you & formed you?" (Deuteronomy 32:6)

"I said, 'You are gods; you are all sons of the Most High.'" (Psalm 82:6)

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9)

These verses show that being called "sons of God" denoted righteousness or a special relationship with God, not equality with Him. Even Jesus referred to himself as being sent by God, not as God:

"The only Father we have is God himself." (John 8:41)

The Jewish writers of the New Testament used figurative language consistent with their traditions. If "Son of God" implied divinity, such language would not also describe angels (Job 1:6) or Adam (Luke 3:38). However, as Christianity spread to Gentiles, this language was reinterpreted through a pagan lens.

Pagan Influences on Christian Beliefs

Gentiles, influenced by Greco-Roman polytheism, saw "Son of God" through the lens of their mythologies, where gods frequently became human. Stories like Zeus fathering Hercules as a "god-man" shaped their understanding of Jesus. This shift is evident in the Acts of the Apostles, where Paul's miracle led Gentiles to declare him a god:

"The gods have come down to us in human form!" (Acts 14:11)

Despite Paul's protest, the people insisted on worshiping him as Zeus:

"Even with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them." (Acts 14:18)

Such incidents illustrate how the Greco-Roman audience naturally deified humans. Early Christian leaders, like Justin Martyr, acknowledged the similarities:

"What we believe about Jesus as the Son of God is not different from what you [pagans] believe about the sons of Jupiter."

Trinity: A Blend of Jewish & Pagan Beliefs

Church Fathers, like Gregory of Nyssa, openly admitted that the Trinity arose from combining Jewish monotheism with Greek polytheism:

"The Jewish dogma is destroyed by the acceptance of the Word & belief in the Spirit, while the polytheistic error of the Greeks is made to vanish by the unity of the nature."

Even titles like "Savior of mankind" & "Son of God," commonly associated with Jesus, predated him. Roman emperors like Julius Caesar & Augustus were given similar titles. For example, an inscription for Augustus calls him:

"The native Zeus & Savior of the human race."

The parallels are striking. Like Jesus, these figures were considered divine saviours, their humanity blurred by their perceived godhood. This historical backdrop shows how early Christians did not invent these concepts but inherited them from the Greco-Roman world.

Islam's Rejection of Idolatry

In contrast, Islam eliminated idolatry & restored the monotheism of Abraham. Pre-Islamic Arabia was steeped in idol worship, with 360 idols housed in the

Ka'ba. The Qur'an replaced ambiguous language, such as "Father" or "Son of God," with clear terms like "Creator" & "creation," ensuring no confusion between God & man:

"The Christians said, 'The Messiah is the son of God': they said this with their own mouths, repeating what earlier disbelievers had said." (Qur'an 9:30)

The Qur'an emphasizes God's transcendence & humanity's servitude, avoiding any anthropomorphic descriptions:

"We created man – We know what his soul whispers to him: We are closer to him than his jugular vein." (Qur'an 50:16)

Islam's Social Transformation

Islam not only clarified theological concepts but also reformed society. Pre-Islamic Arabia suffered from widespread injustices, including female infanticide, slavery, & exploitation. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) introduced equality, justice, & the worship of one God. As Ja'far bin Abi Talib explained to the king of Abyssinia:

"We were an uncivilized people, worshipping idols, eating carrion, & committing abominations... until God sent us an apostle... who commanded us to worship God alone & to renounce the stones & images which we & our fathers formerly worshipped."

In just 23 years, Islam eradicated idol worship, replacing it with pure monotheism. This transformation was grounded in the Qur'an's wisdom, which warned against relying on ambiguous interpretations:

"Some of its verses are definite in meaning – these are the cornerstone of the Scripture – & others are ambiguous. The perverse at heart eagerly pursue the ambiguities." (Qur'an 3:7)

Conclusion

The doctrines of Jesus' divinity & the Trinity arose from a blend of Jewish monotheism & pagan traditions, reflecting the cultural environment in which early Christianity developed. Biblical passages demonstrate that "Son of God" was originally figurative, but the Greco-Roman audience reinterpreted it through their polytheistic lens. In contrast, Islam's clarity in describing God & its rejection of idolatry restored the pure monotheism of Abraham, reforming not only theology but society itself.

Activity

Find the names of some famous companions of the Prophet. Can you write anything about their lives? Send to imam@masjidabubakr.co.uk

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Abu Bakr | Umar |
| Uthaman | Ali |
| Zubayr | Talha |
| Abdurrahman Bin Auf | Saeed |
| Abu Ubaidah | Sa'ad |
| Ibn Masud | Hamza |
| Abu Hurairah | Abu Ayyub |
| Khalid Bin Walid | |

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