



OPEN ACCESS

Al-Azwa الإضاء

ISSN 2415-0444 ;E 1995-7904

Volume 36, Issue, 56, 2021

www.aladwajournal.com

Refutation of False Allegations upon Sayyidah Maryam (God Be Pleased with her) by Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad Qādiyānī

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Abstract

The dignity of Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) is well established in Christianity as well as in Islam. They both have great respect for Sayyidah Maryam's family. The Christians consider Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) as Mother of God (i.e. Jesus – one of three) while Muslims, having different points of view, regard her as a saintly woman. In the mid-nineteenth century A.D., Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad Qādiyānī appeared who claimed to be a subordinate prophet within Islam. It remained a main controversial point between his supporters and conventional Muslims, who believe Muḥammad (Peace be upon him) is the last Prophet and Messenger. Among his declarations, Mirzā Qādiyānī also claimed to be the Promised Messiah of the revelations, and superior to the Prophet 'Īsā (Peace be upon him) in every aspect. Having attacked such exalted personalities, he denied the miraculous birth of the Prophet 'Īsā (Peace be upon him) and said that Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) was a woman lacking sound character. He raised many false and blasphemous allegations regarding the dignity of Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her). This concludes the refutation of his outrageous allegations about Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her).

KEYWORDS

Sayyidah Maryam;
Mirzā Qādiyānī;
saintly woman;
Prophet; 'Īsā; false
allegations.



Date of Publication:
31-12-2021



Mirzā Qādiyānī Blaming Maryam

Mirzā Qādiyānī levelled various baseless allegations about Sayyidah Maryam and her holy family. At one place, while maligning the piousness of Sayyidah Maryam, he sarcastically says:

“Mary’s greatness lies in the fact that she abstained from marriage for quite a time and eventually yielded only due to the insistence of her elders during pregnancy. Certain people object that Mary married during her pregnancy, which is against to the teachings of the Torah. In this way, she wrongfully broke her covenant of remaining a virgin and also opened the door to polygamy, since Mary agreed to enter into matrimony with Joseph the Carpenter, though he was already married at the time.”¹

Mirzā Qādiyānī, while accusing Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her), states:

“Mary’s hanging out with her fiancée Joseph before wedlock is a strong testimony of an Israelite custom.”²

Distortion of Facts

Mirzā Qādiyānī, while twisting the facts, writes:

“Jesus, The Messiah, had four brothers and two sisters; all of them were his real brothers and sisters. I mean that they all were the offspring of Joseph and Mary.”³

Footnote, related to the text, provides information about brothers and sister of Jesus as:

“Christ the Messiah had four brothers and two sisters who were related to Christ by blood and were the children of Joseph and Mary. The names of his four brothers are Judas, James, Simon, and Justus. The names of his two sisters are Assia and Lydia.”⁴

According to Mirzā Qādiyānī, Mary did not want to marry but when her pregnancy became evident, her relatives compelled her to marry. Concerning the matter, the public criticized Mary for violating the law of the Torah. She not only broke the vow of virginity but also unlocked the gate of adultery. However, Joseph was already married but Mary assented to marry him.⁵

Main points of Mirzā Qādiyānī’s allegations about Maryam

1. Mary’s pregnancy before marriage
2. Breaking the Torah’s law
3. Breaking vow of virginity
4. Committing adultery
5. Marriage with Joseph who was already married

6. Hanging out with Joseph before Marriage
7. Mary's other children besides Jesus

1. Refutation of First Allegation: Mary's Pregnancy before Marriage

According to the New Testament, Mary neither violated the vow of virginity nor unlocked the gate of having premarital sexual relations with anyone. It reads in the book of Matthew and the book of Luke that the pregnancy of Mary was due to the Holy Ghost and when Joseph knew about the miraculous conception of Mary, he doubted at first but, after receiving the consoling message from the Angel in a dream, he became satisfied. Moreover, the New Testament also declared Mary as a virgin.⁶

Mary was pregnant due to the Holy Ghost. The book of Matthew states:

“When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.”⁷

Similarly, Mary was a virgin and was never involved in premarital relations. The book of Matthew states:

“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”⁸

2. Refutation of Second Allegation: Breaking the Torah's Law

According to ancient Jewish tradition, betrothing had remained a lawful bond, and a legitimate separation could terminate this connection. Furthermore, a betrothed or affianced girl was attached to a marriage agreement.⁹

According to Jewish law, the punishment of stoning was inflicted on the fornicators. The book of Deuteronomy clearly states:

“If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die.”¹⁰

If disloyalty happened during this period, then the culprits had to face the same penalties as a married couple. However, they could not live together, but they had to perform their responsibilities like a married couple. Similarly, they were said not to indulge in any sexual activity.¹¹

Tradition of Israelites

According to the tradition of Israelites, when the virgins attained the age of maturity, they were ordered to marry. Following the tradition, the high priest compelled Mary to the wedding, and in response, Mary refused to get married by saying that she vows to remain a virgin.¹²

After receiving the response from Mary, the high priest announced to people that Mary chose an unprecedented way of living by pledging to remain unmarried throughout her life. So, after seeing all of this, the high priest decided not to coerce Mary concerning the wedding anymore and sought divine guidance to hand over her to some credible person.¹³

It shows that the high priest wanted to give Mary to some honest man's guardianship. Moreover, the evidence of getting pregnant from Joseph is also missing. After the denial response from Mary, the high priest entrusted the matter to God Almighty. So, convincing upon wedding was not due to the premarital pregnancy.

Furthermore, when the matter of wedding between Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) and Joseph is devoid of any strong evidence and the pregnancy of Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) was due to Allāh Almighty's command then how Sayyidah Maryam could be blamed to have broken the law of the Torah and on what grounds Mirzā Qādiyānī could have claimed so. Mirzā Qādiyānī was very curious to derive the evidence of premarital sexual bonds between Joseph and Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) but remained unsuccessful. The presence of Jewish law of stoning and acquittal of Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) and Joseph through the water of the ordeal eradicates Mirzā Qādiyānī's allegations about the saintliness of Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her).

3. Refutation of Third Allegation: Breaking Vow of Virginity

According to the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, Mary had taken the vow of virginity since infancy and had decided to remain unmarried forever by saying that I can't know anyone except God Almighty for Whom I had dedicated myself since my childhood. I can only pass a pure

life only in the protection of my Creator. I believe that living and serving only for the cause of my Lord must be my priority and this is the abode where I shall keep myself immaculate and chaste.¹⁴

Similarly, “The Martyrdom of the Holy and Glorious Apostle Bartholomew” also elucidates that Mary, while protecting her celibacy, was the first lady in the world to take the vow of virginity for the cause of the Lord.¹⁵

4. Refutation of Fourth Allegation: Committing Adultery

According to the Protevangelium of James, when the people of Israel blamed Joseph and Mary for committing adultery and did not listen to them concerning the matter, the high priest while, deciding the case, said that to prove their innocence, they must be tested with the water of the ordeal and God Almighty will decide concerning their purity. So, the water of the ordeal was given to Joseph and ordered him to go to the hill-country. On his way back to the city, he came without any harm. Similarly, after giving the water of the ordeal to Mary and sending her to the hill-country, she also entered the city safe and sound. When the crowd witnessed all of this and could not find any sign of wickedness, they realized that Joseph and Mary are acquitted of committing any sin.¹⁶

It can be concluded that Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) had taken the vow of virginity since her childhood and was not involved in premarital connection with anyone. Moreover, when accused of fornication, Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) and Joseph were declared acquitted through the water of the ordeal.

5. Refutation of Fifth Allegation: Marriage with Joseph

According to the New Testament, Saint Joseph, well known due to his piousness, is regarded as the husband of Mary. It raises controversy by damaging the dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary and associating Joseph’s children with Mary. Concerning the matter, some verses of the Holy Bible are worth to be noted.

According to The Catholic Encyclopedia, a girl named Melcha or Escha or Salome was married to forty years old Joseph. After living together for forty-nine years, Joseph’s wife gave birth to four sons and two daughters. After her death, Joseph, at the age of ninety, espoused to Mary, who was nearly twelve to fourteen years old.¹⁷

Different opinions are presented in determining the age of Joseph at the time of marriage. Some said Joseph was thirty-three, while others said

he was fifty years old. But Saint Epiphanius mentioned that Joseph was eighty years old at the time of marriage.¹⁸

This statement is also corroborated by Bernard L. Fontana. He expounds that it is none other than the Apocryphal scriptures which convinced a majority of Christian scholars to frame a notion that at the age of forty, Joseph married for the first time and had six children. At the time of passing his first wife, Joseph was at the age of eighty-nine years.¹⁹

It shows that there were more than seventy-five years of age gap between Joseph and Mary.

Joseph as Custodian

As everyone was interested in becoming Mary's supervisor so, the matter was decided by pulling rods upon different people, and by luck, Joseph was selected as a guardian. The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew mentions that when the high priest summoned up Joseph and said to him: to step in get his rod. At the very moment, Joseph seemed much nervous and went forward shuddering since he was called by the high priest in a somewhat much loudly manner. After holding the rod in his hands, an exceptionally gorgeous and snow-white dove came and started circling his head, and after hovering up the temple's rooftops, and eventually disappeared into the skies.²⁰

When people started congratulating Joseph upon selection, he showed reluctance at the time of taking Mary under his guardianship. Thus he tried to prove himself unworthy due to his old age and the presence of his grandchildren. On this occasion, Joseph said:

“I am an old man, and have children; why do you hand over to me this infant, who is younger than my grandsons?”²¹

He further explained:

“I shall be her guardian until I can ascertain concerning the will of God, as to which of my sons can have her as his wife. Let some virgins of her companions, with whom she may meanwhile spend her time, be given for a consolation to her.”²²

Joseph was selected as Mary's guardian. Making this point more strong, a famous Christian scholar says that Mary had been informed by God Almighty that the role of Joseph regarding your chastity would be of a custodian and a father. So, the supplications of Mary concerning her vow of virginity were heard by God Almighty and thus she committed to her pledge and remained subservient.²³

Similarly, Anne Besant elucidates that being exceedingly old, Joseph could not be considered as a husband for Mary. Moreover, the presence of his six children by his first wife was also a deterrent cause in this way. So, remaining under his supervision seems a more appropriate option rather than becoming her husband.²⁴

It becomes evident that Joseph, due to his old age and children, did not want to marry. Moreover, he wished to get Mary married to one of his sons, and, more significantly, Mary remained a virgin, and Joseph's selection was made for Marys' guardianship.

6. Refutation of Sixth Allegation: Hanging out with Joseph before Marriage

It seems appropriate to present the role of Yūsuf al-Najjār concerning support to Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) in the light of Islamic history to eliminate all the delusions and fabrications of Mirzā Qādiyānī.

Al-Ṭabarī, while describing the pious character of Yūsuf, elucidates that Mary had a relative named Joseph the Carpenter since Temple has been a great asylum and serving there was considered one of the sacred acts so they kept engaged in worship in the Temple, located near the Mount Zion, and executed the obligations like scenting, sweeping and cleaning. Due to their devotion and faithfulness, they were both very popular among the people.²⁵

It shows that Yūsuf was in service to the Mosque due to his God-fearing character, and he also had a passion for worship.

Al-Ṭabarī mentioned that Yūsuf refrained to accuse Sayyidah Maryam due to her flawless character. So, when the miraculous birth of Jesus was about to happen, Joseph took the first stand among the public to negate the pregnancy of Mary. By seeing this unusual condition, he felt perplexity and found himself unworthy to identify the veracity. A thought came into his mind to charge Mary with illegal ties with someone but the purity and god-fearing nature debarred him to take such austere stand. Furthermore, Mary used to spend most of her time serving the Temple.²⁶

Likewise, a remarkable dialogue also occurred between Yūsuf and Sayyidah Maryam regarding the miraculous birth of the Prophet 'Īsā (Peace be upon him) and after the discussion, Yūsuf became convinced.

According to Ibn Kathīr:

“فقال: يا مريم هل يكون زرع من غير بذر؟ قالت: نعم فمن خلق الزرع الأول! ثم قال: فهل يكون شجر من غير ماء ولا مطر؟ قالت: نعم، فمن خلق الشجر الأول! ثم قال: فهل يكون ولد من غير ذكر؟ قالت: نعم إن الله خلق آدم من غير ذكر ولا أنثى”²⁷

“He asked: O Maryam, does a field grow without a seed? She said: Yes, who created the first field! Then he asked: does a tree grow without water or rain? She said: Yes, who created the first tree! Then he asked: Can a boy be born without a male? She said: Yes, verily, Allāh Almighty created Ādam without male and female.”

Al-Ṭabarī elucidates:

“فلما قالت له ذلك وقع في نفسه أن الذي بها شيء من الله عز وجل، وأنه لا يسعه أن يسألها عنه”²⁸

“When she told him that, it occurred to him that what was happening to her was a divine thing and that he should not ask her about it.”

After receiving the substantiating response from Mary, Joseph considered the matter must have been destined by the Lord and thus refrained to inquire anymore concerning it.

Al-Ṭabarī also described the assistance of Yūsuf which he rendered to Sayyidah Maryam throughout her challenging circumstances. When the pregnancy of Mary became evident, Joseph took all the responsibilities of the Temple and relieved her due to the deterioration of her health condition. As the time arrived for the birth of Jesus, God Almighty ordered her to depart the place for if the people pursued her; they would surely attempt to assassinate the baby. Afterward, Joseph migrated with her to Egypt, and during this troublesome period, he endured with Mary.²⁹

In the end, it becomes apparent that Yūsuf was well-known for his God-fearing nature and served the Mosque. Though he was not the husband of Sayyidah Maryam, he was the only person who immensely supported her in stressful circumstances. Seeing all of this, Mirzā Qādiyānī’s misconceptions and allegations regarding Yūsuf and Sayyidah Maryam come to an end.

7. Refutation of Seventh Allegation: Mary’s other Children besides Jesus

According to the New Testament, six persons (James, Joses, Simon, Judas, and two girls) are considered to be the siblings of Jesus. Catholic and Orthodox believe in perpetual virginity, thus rejecting the concept of

the siblings of Jesus. On the other side, the Protestant scholars hold a little obscurity regarding the virginity of Mary. The first opinion deems them to be the biological siblings of Jesus. The second point of view considers the supposed siblings of Jesus as the children of Joseph from his former marriage. While the third point of view asserts that they were the cousins of Jesus. The debate also revolves around the literal translation of the Hebrew word Adelpnos which entails the meaning of kinship and blood-brother both.

The Holy Bible about Siblings

The book of Matthew mentions:

“For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.”³⁰

It further reads:

“Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?”³¹

Likewise, the book of Mark mentions:

“There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him.”³²

It reads also:

“Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.”³³

The book of Luke states:

“Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.”³⁴

The book of John also mentions:

“After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.”³⁵

It further reads:

“His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judæa, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.”³⁶

The book of Acts states:

“These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.”³⁷

Similarly, 1 Corinthians states:

“Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?”³⁸

The book of Galatians also mentions:

“But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother.”³⁹

It appears that the Holy Bible mentions some verses to prove the brethren of Jesus, but omitted the sisters’ names. It is worth to be noted that Mirzā Qādiyānī acquired information about other supposed children of Sayyidah Maryam from “The History of Joseph the Carpenter”. The text is a description by the Prophet ‘Īsā (Peace be upon him) on the Mount of Olives about the life of Joseph. It states that Joseph had four sons (Judas, Justus, James, and Simon) and two daughters (Assia and Lydia) from his first wife.

Jude and Joseph are not identified in the canonical gospels. Whereas Jesus’s sisters are mentioned in Matthew 13:56 and Mark 6:3, but their names, Assia and Lydia, are given in the Apocryphal gospels.

The Catholic Encyclopedia proposed three names for Joseph’s first wife; Escha, Melcha, and Salome. Joseph married at the age of forty and had four sons and two daughters. They passed matrimonial life for forty-nine years. Among the sons, James was considered the youngest of all.⁴⁰

Similarly, The History of Joseph the Carpenter, while mentioning the children of Joseph from his former wife states that other sons were Simon, Judas, and Justus while Assia and Lydia were the names of Joseph’s two daughters.⁴¹

Despite being Joseph’s children from his previous marriage, Mirzā Qādiyānī deliberately attributed these children to Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her). Moreover, “The History of Joseph the Carpenter” not only elucidates this reality but also rebuts Mirzā Qādiyānī’s contemptible allegations.

First Point of View

According to New Bible Dictionary, one point of view, keeping in view the book of Luke 2:7 and the book of Matthew 1:25, mentions that they are actual children of Mary and Joseph. In the fourth century, Helvidius supported this theory and was cursed.⁴²

Arguments

In support of this theory, the book of Matthew states:

“And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.”⁴³

Likewise, the book of Luke mentions:

“And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.”⁴⁴

While strongly supported this view, John Schultz elucidates that it seems indispensable to consider these children of Joseph and Mary as biological and real siblings of Jesus. Despite this veracity, a considerable number of Christians still believe that they were not actual offspring of Mary but Joseph's children by his first wife. Besides, the evidence of Mary's virginity has no base in the Holy Bible since Joseph had already taken her as a wife.⁴⁵

Supporting the same concept, William H. Brackney, writes that apart from Jesus, Joseph and Mary had other children as well and the notion of Mary's perpetual virginity is negated through this which has been the fundamental doctrine of Catholic Christians. In Rome, several Bishops exerted much to oppose Bonosius with the help of the pope but in vain. After that, he was greatly endorsed by Saint Ambrose.⁴⁶

It clearly shows that the Holy Bible mentions the brethren of Jesus, but there is no strong indication of Mary and Joseph having normal intimate relations after Jesus. It seems to be an ambiguous meaning of the verses.

Second Point of View

There is a second theory regarding the siblings of Jesus, which suggests that they were the children of Joseph from his previous marriage. The concept was presented in the third century, and later on, Saint Epiphanius maintained it in the fourth century. However, this theory has no corroborating proof but yet, had been acknowledged by the Eastern Orthodox Church.⁴⁷ Moreover, Joseph had a first wife named Salome, and with her, he had children.⁴⁸

The Catholic Encyclopedia, while revealing this reality, expounds:

“When forty years of age, Joseph married a woman called Melcha or Escha by some, Salome by others; they lived forty-nine years together and had six children, two daughters and four sons, the youngest of whom was James.”⁴⁹

Similarly, Joseph's children were mentioned in The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew. It reads:

“And Joseph having come to a feast with his sons, James, Joseph, and Judah, and Simeon and his two daughters, Jesus met them, with Mary His mother, along with her sister Mary of Cleophas, whom the Lord God had given to her father Cleophas and her mother Anna, because they had

offered Mary the mother of Jesus to the Lord. And she was called by the same name, Mary, for the consolation of her parents.”⁵⁰

Although, the children ascribed to Joseph had been acknowledged by various Christian scholars such as Epiphanius, Clement, and Origen but, ⁵¹ the piece of information related to Anne having married three times was rejected by Baronius and Bellarmin.⁵²

But a very marvelous story is told in the footnotes of “The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew” which reads:

“Anna, the mother of the blessed Mary, was very beautiful; when Joachim was dead she was married to Cleophas, by whom she had a second daughter. She called her Mary and gave her to Alphaeus to wife; and of her was born James the son of Alphaeus, and Philip his brother. And her second husband having died, Anna was married to a third husband named Salome, by whom she had a third daughter. She called her Mary likewise, and gave her to Zebedee to wife; and of her were born James the son of Zebedee, and John the Evangelist.”⁵³

It appears that Mary of Cleophas and Mary of Salome were the sisters of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Moreover, Anna married three times, first to Joachim, second to Cleophas, and third to Salome, and amazingly she had two more daughters named Mary. Whatsoever the case may be but the emphasis here is upon the negation of the biological children of Joseph and Mary.

While emphasizing this point, a renowned Christian scholar Saunders states, however, the Holy Bible is silent about the childhood narratives of Jesus. Similarly, except Jesus, no other child is ascribed to Joseph and Mary. Only the phrase ‘the son of Mary’ is always seen annexed with Jesus while ‘sons of Mary’ or ‘a son of Mary’ terminologies are absent.⁵⁴

It becomes evident that various Christian scholars acknowledged that the persons mentioned in the Holy Bible as the siblings of Jesus were the children of Joseph from his previous marriage. Likewise, Mary of Cleophas was the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. But this proposition is merely based upon non-canonical statements which a majority of the Christians do not acknowledge.

Third Point of View

The third point of view holds that they were the cousins of Jesus. Keeping in view the importance of the perpetual virginity of Mary, Jerome

supported this theory passionately. Now, it had been approved by the Roman Catholics.⁵⁵

The Holy Bible

The book of Mark states:

“There were also women looking on afar off: among who was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome.”⁵⁶

The book of John states:

“Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.”⁵⁷

The book of Matthew mentions:

“Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee’s children.”⁵⁸

It further reads:

“And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.”⁵⁹

In support of this concept, Jerome elucidates that the gospels of Mark 15:40 and Matthew 13:55-56 which mention the siblings of Jesus were the children of Mary’s elder sister whose name was Mary of Clophas and her mother was different from Mary’s mother. So, these siblings were the cousins of Jesus.⁶⁰

Making this point stronger in the light of the Holy Bible, Saunders introduces each of them separately by stating that Mark 15:40 mentions Mary of Clophas having two sons named James and Joses. The book of Luke 6:16 mentions that James had one son Judas while Luke 6:15 considers Alphaeus as the father of James the Lesser. On the other side, the book of Matthew 20:20 states that Zebedee had two sons named John and James the Greater.⁶¹

In responding to the verses of the Holy Bible, which mention the siblings of Jesus, David Bordwell states that for this reason, the Church has never recognized the other children of Mary apart from Jesus. Likewise, James and Joseph were the sons of another Mary who was the follower of Jesus, and more importantly, she was the woman identified as ‘the other Mary’ in the book of Matthew.⁶²

Likewise, Suprenant states although some verses of the Holy Bible mention the siblings of Jesus and it creates a grievous question regarding the perpetual virginity of Mary after the birth of Jesus. But a careful

pondering over the verses and keeping in view the contextual background resolves that they were not real offspring of Mary.⁶³

It shows that some Christian scholars regard these children as the cousins of Jesus. They maintain that Mary had a sister named Mary, who was the wife of Clopas. But the Holy Bible nowhere gives us a categorical statement regarding the sister of Mary. So the theory of Mary's sister looks suspicious.

Arguments about Jesus Cousins

The Meaning of Adelpnos

Aramaic language was spoken at the time of Jesus. So, due to the limitation of the language, people did not find a word for nephew, cousin, or other relatives. If anyone wants to say cousin, then one had to say "son of my father's brother" or more simply "brother".⁶⁴

The Holy Bible was initially translated into the Greek language, and it rendered the word "adelpnos" like a brother. So keeping this meaning in view, if we understand those verses presented in support of the siblings of Jesus then they might be the cousins of Jesus. Since the word 'adelpnos' holds several meanings like cousins or stepbrothers or nephews. Thereby, wherever this term came in the Holy Scriptures, it does not always render the meaning of real or blood brothers.⁶⁵

Likewise, at the time of rendering the Old Testament into the Greek language, Jews confronted the problem of translating the word 'adelpnos'. During the process, they discovered two methods to overcome this problem. The first method was to translate the word 'adelpnos' as a brother while the second was to render it as a nephew in a somewhat altered manner. Since Jews were well conscious of the Hebrew terms and sayings, so, for their convenience, they preferred to translate the word 'adelpnos' as a brother.⁶⁶

The Holy Bible also supports this theory. The book of Genesis reads:

"And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren."⁶⁷

It further reads:

"And Laban said unto Jacob, because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? Tell me, what shall thy wages be?"⁶⁸

These verses of the Holy Bible conclude that the word "brethren" does not always mean a real brother.

The Incident of Jesus Missing

According to the Holy Bible that Jesus was lost at the age of twelve and then found. In the entire incident, there is no indication of Jesus' other siblings. The book Mark also refers to Jesus as 'the son of Mary' instead of calling Him 'a son of Mary'. More importantly, the siblings of Jesus, who are considered as the children of Mary, were never ascribed to Mary's sons or daughters in the Holy Bible. Additionally, the Greek term also supports the reality of Jesus being the only son of Mary.⁶⁹

The Event of Crucifixion

Another significant evidence of Jesus being the only son of Mary was the event of the crucifixion. Jesus at Cross gave His mother into his disciple's custody rather than his siblings. Keeping in view this critical moment, it appears that Jesus had no siblings. Because, if Jesus had real siblings then he would have enjoined any of them to take care of His mother and could have not ignored the relationship.⁷⁰

Harsh Attitude of the Brethren

In ancient times, an elder brother had the right to advise their young brothers, but vice versa was considered an act of dishonour. If Jesus is first-born and, elder then his brothers could not have insulted Him. We discover this reality in the book John, the brethren of Jesus directing Him to leave Galilee and settle in Judea to make a large number of devotees and get popularity since it is not appropriate for Him to live here anymore. On another occasion, we find brethren scorning Jesus by saying 'mad'. So, this kind of attitude can only be imagined only if Jesus is younger than his cousins. Moreover, in the book of Matthew 1:25, the expression 'first-born' also eradicates the suspicion of Jesus' younger siblings since, in the light of ancient Jewish law, the only elder brother was entitled to advise his younger.⁷¹

It becomes quite evident that these logical arguments and the meaning of "adelphos" not only refute the concept of Jesus' siblings but also eliminate the suspicion about the phrase "first-born".

Mirzā Qādiyānī about Maryam's Family

Mirzā Qādiyānī also blasphemed the Holy family of Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her). He states:

"Jesus's three paternal and maternal grandmothers were fornicators and prostitutes, from whose blood Jesus came into existence."⁷²

Briefly, Mirzā Qādiyānī strived to prove that Sayyidah Maryam was involved in premarital sex with Joseph and the Prophet 'Īsā (Peace be

upon him) was the result of that adultery. In doing so, he also tried to defame the Holy family of Sayyidah Maryam. Each statement of Mirzā Qādiyānī is groundless and false. The Holy Qur’ān clearly and thoroughly rejects these allegations expounded by Mirzā Qādiyānī Ghulām Aḡmad Qādiyānī.

Parents of Mary

No information about the parents of Mary are available from the Holy Bible. Only Apocryphal scriptures provide some information about them.

Anne was the name of Mary’s mother.⁷³ She was of the Davidic family⁷⁴ and was a resident of Nazareth. Besides, she belonged to a religious family and was married to Joachim.⁷⁵

Mary’s father’s name was Joachim. He was also a descendant of King David. Since his early ages, he was well-known due to his God-fearing and honesty. He married a pious lady like him named Anne. Being childless for years, they prayed to God fervently and were blessed with Mary.⁷⁶

God Almighty bestowed the generous nature to the parents of Mary. Due to their kind and helping nature, they made three portions of their belongings. They allocated one portion for Lord and the temple, and the second was reserved for the needy people, while they retained the third portion with them.⁷⁷

The Ancestry of ‘Imrān

‘Imrān belonged to David’s family. Describing his ancestry chain, Ibn Kathīr mentions:

”عمران بن ماثان بن العازر بن اليود بن اخنر بن صادوق بن عيازور بن الياقيم بن ايود بن زريابيل
بن شالتال بن [يوحينا بن برشا بن أمون بن ميشا بن حزقا] بن احاز بن موثام بن عزريا بن يورام بن
يوشافاط ابن ايشا بن ايبا بن رحبعام بن سليمان بن داود عليه السلام“⁷⁸

“‘Imrān bin Mathān bin al-Āzar bin al-Yūd bin Akhnar bin Ṣādūq bin ‘Ayāzūr bin al-Yāqīm bin Aybūd bin Ziryābīl bin Shāltāl bin [Yuhīnā bin Barshā bin ‘Amūn bin Mīshā bin Hizqā] bin Aḡhāz bin Muthām bin ‘Azriyā bin Yūrām bin Yūshāfāṭ ibn īshā bin ībā bin Raḡub’ām bin Sulymān Bin Dāwūd (Peace be upon him).”

It shows that the parents of Sayyidah Maryam were very pious and God-fearing. Moreover, Sayyidah Maryam and her father both belonged to David’s family.

The Dignity of Maryam's Family

The Holy Qur'ān, while describing the dignity of the Holy family of Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her), mentions:

”إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ“⁷⁹

“Lo! Allāh preferred Adam and Noah and the Family of Abraham and the Family of ‘Imrān above (all His) creatures. They were descendants one of another. Allāh is Hearer, Knower.”

Similarly, describing the rank of Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her), The Holy Qur'ān states:

”وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَىٰ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ“⁸⁰

“And when the angels said: O Mary! Lo! Allāh hath chosen thee and made thee pure, and hath preferred thee above (all) the women of creation.”

It further states:

”مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ“⁸¹

“The Messiah, son of Mary, was no other than a messenger, messengers (the like of whom) had passed away before him. And his mother was a saintly woman.”

Mentioning about her virginity, the Holy Qur'ān elucidates:

”وَالَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَجَعَلْنَاهَا وَابْنَهَا آيَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ“⁸²

“And she who was chaste, therefor We breathed into her (something) of Our Spirit and made her and her son a token for (all) peoples.”

It further remarks:

”وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَتَ عِمْرَانَ الَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّهَا وَكُتِبَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَّا حُرْمَةٌ“⁸³

“And Mary, daughter of ‘Imrān, whose body was chaste, therefor We breathed therein something of Our Spirit. And she put faith in the words of her Lord and His scriptures, and was of the obedient.”

Concluding Remarks

After analyzing the views of Mirzā Qādiyānī, it can be concluded that the intention of Mirzā Qādiyānī was only to defame the pious personality of Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) and her family. In doing so, he used abusive and blasphemous language and grounded his accusations upon falsehood. All of his allegations have no

solid grounds in the Muslim as well as in the Christian literature. Moreover, he deliberately distorted the facts and strove to prove Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) unchaste and impious. Despite claiming of being a Muslim and believing in the Holy Qur'ān, he disregarded the verses related to the chastity of Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) and snubbed the dignity of her family as well. He completely overlooked the acquittal of Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) and Joseph from the charge of committing fornication by the water of the ordeal. Despite knowing the previous marriage of Joseph and his six children, he intentionally ascribed those children to Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her). Mirzā Qādiyānī's entire literature about Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) and her family comprises of hideous and profane materials which earn no authenticity in the view of the Muslims and the Christian as well. Further, the approach of Mirzā Qādiyānī towards Sayyidah Maryam (God be pleased with her) and her family resembles the Jews.

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