

FOUR LEAFLET SHAMROCK

ZIA H SHAH MD



SAINT PATRICK'S DAY

Saint Patrick's Day is annually celebrated, on March 17, the day on which Saint Patrick died. The day is a national holiday in Ireland. In Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, it is widely celebrated but is not an official holiday. All over the world we see the symbol of Saint Patrick and Trinity in the form of three leaflet shamrock on display:



It is said that Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated by both Christians and non-Christians by wearing green, eating Irish food and/or green foods, imbibing Irish drink, and attending parades. There is a saying that, "Everyone wants to be Irish on St. Patrick's Day." The St. Patrick's Day parade in Dublin, Ireland is part of a five-day festival; over 500,000 people attended the 2006 parade. The largest St. Patrick's Day parade is held in New York City and it is watched by 2 million spectators. As well as being a celebration of Irish culture, Saint Patrick's Day is a Christian festival celebrated in the Catholic Church, the Church of Ireland, and some other denominations.



Happy St.Patrick's Day !

Saint Patrick introduced Christianity to Ireland. The way he introduced Christianity to Irish people speaks volumes about missionary appeal. The best clue may lie in the national flower of Ireland, the shamrocks. Encyclopedia Wikipedia has the following to say about Saint Patrick:

“Pious legend credits Patrick with banishing snakes from the island, though post-glacial Ireland never actually had snakes; Legend also credits Patrick with teaching the Irish about the concept of the Trinity by showing people the shamrock, a 3-leaved clover, using it to highlight the Christian belief of 'three divine persons in the one God' (as opposed to the Arian belief that was popular in Patrick's time). Whether or not these legends are true, the very fact that there are so many legends about Patrick shows how important his ministry was to Ireland.”¹ Even if these legends are not true this universal display of shamrock

serves to indoctrinate the gullible into Trinity. What we never see or hear is the fact that shamrock may also have 4 leaflets:



The Encyclopedia Britannica online has the following to say on this issue: “Before the end of the 7th century Patrick had become a legendary figure, and the legends have continued to grow. One of these would have it that he drove the snakes of Ireland into the sea to their destruction. Another, probably the most popular, is that of the shamrock, which has him explain the concept of the Holy Trinity, three Persons in one God, to an unbeliever by showing him the three-leaved plant with one stalk. Today Irishmen wear shamrocks, the national flower of Ireland, in their lapels on St. Patrick’s Day, March 17.”²

We share the joy of cultural celebration with our Irish countrymen, but what we take an exception to is the ‘doctrine of Trinity’. The proofs of Trinity, in general lie in rhetoric, gimmicks and legends like the ones associated with Saint Patrick. If Christians were to offer any serious proofs for their claim of Trinity, those should have been focused on showing the testimony of three Gods in Laws of Nature and study of nature. In the words of Khalifah Tul Masih IV, regarding European Christian philosophers, “Kierkegaard is proved so right in his warning to the priests to maintain a sullen silence about the divine mystery of Trinity; rather than invite trouble by venturing to defend it with instruments of reason.”³ But what Kierkegaard could not see is that, in this age of enlightenment, with millions of websites, it will be hard to hide behind the veil of ‘faith’ alone and run away from

reason and rationality. It is self evident that faith cannot be divorced from reason. If man needed faith alone, any cult would be as good as any religion and all human affairs will completely collapse. Therefore, let us subject the doctrine of Trinity to rational examination.

LAWS OF NATURE AND MONOTHEISM

In the words of Paul Davies, a Professor of Mathematical Physics and a prolific writer on the subject of 'Science and Religion', "The concept of the law of nature was not invented by any particular philosopher or scientist. Although the idea was crystallized only in the modern scientific era, its origins go back to the dawn of history, and are intimately bound up with religion. **Our distant ancestors must have had a rudimentary notion of cause and effect.** The purpose of making tools, for example, has always been to facilitate the manipulation of the environment. Although certain regularities of behavior were apparent to these early people, the vast majority of natural phenomena remained mysterious and unpredictable."⁴

From these early beginnings the systematic human observations began to grow. The pantheistic cultures of Hinduism or Buddhism believed that the physical world was a holistic tapestry of interdependent influences. According to this view God's relationship with Nature is that of a partner rather than that of a sovereign. This holistic conceptualization did not yield to objective study of nature that required a degree of reductionism.

Set against this way of looking at the world were the monotheistic religions. Almost 2000 years BC, Allah revealed himself to the prophet Abraham^{as} and gave him a powerful message of Monotheism. As the teachings of Monotheism, got established in the Middle East, the Jews conceived of God as the Lawgiver. This God being independent and separate from His creation, imposed laws upon the universe from without. Nature was supposed to be subject to laws by Divine decree.⁵

Sir Isaac Newton saw that there is no changing of the laws of nature and that the Universe follows the rules of mathematics. He published his Principia in 1687. But fifty years before Newton, Galileo Galilee had said, "The book of the universe

is written in mathematical language, without which we wander in vain through the labyrinth.”⁶ The scientists were borrowing from each other, until one could track it back to the teaching of Monotheism in the Holy Quran and the Torah. Allah Said in the verse of Sura Rum, “So set thy face to the service of religion with single-minded devotion. And follow the nature made by Allah, the nature according to which He has fashioned mankind. **There is no altering the creation of Allah.** That is the right religion - but most men know not.” (Al Rum 30:31)

According to Paul Davies, “In Renaissance Europe, the justification for what we today call the scientific approach to inquiry was the belief in a rational God whose created order could be discerned from a careful study of nature. Part of this belief came to be that God's laws were immutable.”⁷ Scientific culture was dominated by adherence to the absolute invariance of laws of Nature, The laws of nature underwrote the meaningfulness of the, scientific enterprise and assured its success. To prove claim of Paul Davies, let me quote an example as mentioned by John Barrow , ‘In the absence of “the concept of a divine being who acted to legislate what went on in the natural world, whose decrees formed inviolate 'laws' of Nature, and who underwrote scientific enterprise,’ Chinese science was condemned to a ‘curious stillbirth’.⁸ There were certainly other factors in the development of science, but it cannot be denied that monotheism was a powerful necessary paradigm, for the budding flower of science to blossom.

After several centuries of scientific development, now when we look at our Universe, it can speak to us of only one Creator, call him Allah or by whatever name but there cannot be three creators of this world.⁹ There are no creations of the Holy Ghost or of Jesus Christ^{as} that we can see.^{10 11 12} We Muslims love Jesus Christ dearly and applaud him as a great prophet. But he did not create anything to merit a status equal to Allah All-Mighty.^{13 14 15} The Holy Quran says: Is He, then, Who creates like one who creates not? Will you not then take heed?¹⁶ There is one theme in the creation of this universe be it living or non-living. In the living beings there is similar RNA and one kind of DNA. Theory of evolution ties all living beings to one ancestry or lineage.

Dr. Abdus Salam, the corecipient with Steven Weinberg and Sheldon Lee Glashow of the 1979 Nobel Prize for Physics for their work in formulating the electroweak theory, which explains the unity of the weak nuclear force and electromagnetism, had inspiration of his work from his belief in Unity of God.¹⁷ “To a Muslim mystic, Allah is to be sought in eternal beauty. And for Salam, beauty comes through finding new, subtle, yet simplifying patterns in the natural world. Anything that threatens to confuse the issue seems to him ugly, filling him with an utmost physical revulsion and driving him to clean it away, much as one would remove mud from a shrine.”¹⁸ The physicists are now working on a string theory that will unite all forms of matter and energy into one. If there had been in the heavens and the earth other gods besides Allah, then there would have been chaos in the Universe.¹⁹ This is the fundamental nature of multiple egos and entities, with contradicting visions, struggling with each other.²⁰

In the words of Promised Messiah^{as}, “The Holy Quran sets forth an argument in support of His being One, without associate, by stating:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا²¹
وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَهٍ²²

That is, had there been any other god besides the One Who combines in Himself all perfect attributes, both heaven and earth would have been corrupted. Since it was inevitable that at times this plurality of gods would have acted against one another, and their differences would have resulted plunging the universe into chaos, each one of them would have worked for the welfare of his own creation; for whose comfort, he would have considered it permissible to destroy others. This too would have led to chaos.”²³

It is easy for unprejudiced who has not been indoctrinated with the concept of Trinity, to see that our Universe speaks of one Creator, call him Allah or by whatever name but there cannot be three creators of this world.²⁴

THE PLANT KINGDOM

Who originates creation and then repeats it, and Who provides for you from the heaven and from the earth? Then is there a god besides Allah? Urge them: Bring forward your proofs if you are telling the truth.” (Al Naml 27:65)

Plants called shamrock include the wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) of the family Oxalidaceae, or any of various plants of the pea family (Fabaceae). As mentioned before, according to Irish legend, St. Patrick, patron saint of Ireland, first chose the shamrock as a symbol of the Trinity of the Christian church because of its three leaflets bound by a common stalk. Wood sorrel is shipped from Ireland to other countries in great quantity for St. Patrick's Day.²⁵

It is common knowledge that leaves come in different styles, shapes and sizes. However, the vast majority of the leaves have a single leaf or leaflet. So if leaves were to serve as an argument for anything, they can only be an argument for One Supreme God. But what is a better argument for monotheism in Plant Kingdom is the fact that all plants have descended from one ancestry and have one kind of RNA. In plants RNA is the basis of genetics like DNA in the animal kingdom.

If there is a mystery in leaves, it is not in the number of leaflets in shamrock but is in the mechanisms that help leaves to seek light, it is in the molecule of chlorophyll and it is in the fact that the leaves make the food for the whole animal kingdom from very basic raw materials of carbon dioxide, water and few minerals, and cook the food, if you will, through the agency of sunlight.

If there is mystery and miracle in the plant kingdom, it lies in the interplay between the creation and the word of God. All Knowing God mentioned about His creations forcefully in the Holy Quran centuries before the invention of microscope that was needed to see the presence of pollens and sexes in flowers:

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ وَمِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

“Holy is Allah, Who created in pairs, of that which the earth grows, and of themselves, and of that which they know not.” (Al Yasin 36:37)



If there is mystery and miracle in the plant kingdom, it lies in the mechanisms that help water be sucked up from the roots to the leaves of Australian Mountain Ash trees up to 435 feet high.²⁶

Incidentally, the Ahmadi Muslims believe that even miracles occur within the realms of ‘laws of nature’, whether those are known to us at present or not. This is the creation of Allah. Now show me what others besides Him have created. Nay, but the wrongdoers are in manifest error. (Al Luqman 31:12)

IS LITERAL SON OF GOD POSSIBLE

بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةٌ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ
وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

“Originator of the heaven and the earth! How can He have a son when He has no consort, and He has created everything and has full knowledge of all things?”
(Al Anaam 6:102)

From the Human Genome project we know that each human being is coded by approximately 50,000 to 100,000 genes. They are spread over 46 chromosomes half of which one gets from ones mother and half from the father. To determine the paternity of any human being the conventional method is to study the genes of the individual and his or her parents. Whenever, there is a question or debate about paternity, the genes and the chromosomes are examined.

With this in mind, let us review the following analysis, about son ship of Jesus Christ^{as}, by Khalifah Tul Masih IV, Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad in his book, *Christianity a Journey from Fact to Fiction*:

“First of all, let me remind you that the mother and father participate equally in producing a child. The cells of human beings contain 46 chromosomes, which carry the genes or character bearing threads of life. The ovum of a human mother possesses only 23 of the 46 chromosomes, which is half the number found in each man and woman. When the mother's ovum is ready and available for insemination, the other half of the chromosomes which it lacks, is provided by the male sperm, which then enters and fertilizes it. This is the design of God, otherwise, the number of chromosomes would begin to double with every generation. As a result the second generation would have 92 chromosomes; humans would soon be transformed into giants and the entire process of growth would run amok. God has so beautifully planned and designed the phenomenon of the survival of species that at productive levels of regenerative cells, chromosomes are halved in number. The mother's ovum contains 23

chromosomes and so does the father's sperm. As such, one can reasonably expect half the characters bearing genes of the child to be provided by the female and half by the male partner. This is the meaning of a literal son. There is no other definition of being a literal son which can be ascribed to any human birth. There are variations in the methodology of course, but there are no exceptions to the rules and principles just explained.

Focusing our attention on the birth of Jesus, let us build a scenario about what might have happened in his case. The first possibility, which can be scientifically considered, is that Mary's unfertilized ovum provided the 23 chromosomes as the mother's share in the forming of the embryo. That being so, the question would arise as to how the ovum was fertilized and where did the remaining 23 essential chromosomes come from? It is impossible to suggest that Jesus' cells had only 23 chromosomes. No human child can be born alive with even 45 chromosomes. Even if a human being was deprived of a single chromosome out of the 46 necessary for the making of all human beings, the result would be something chaotic, if there was anything at all. Scientifically, Mary could not provide the 46 chromosomes alone, 23 had to come from somewhere else.

If God is the father then that presents several options. One; God also has the same chromosomes that humans have, and these must have been transferred somehow to the uterus of Mary. That is unbelievable and unacceptable; if God has the chromosomes of human beings it means he is no longer God. So as a consequence of belief in Jesus as the literal 'Son' of God, even the divinity of the Father is jeopardized.

The second possibility is that God created the extra chromosomes as a supernatural phenomenon of creation. In other words, they did not actually belong to the person of God, but were created miraculously. This would automatically lead us to reject Jesus' relationship to God as one of child and father, and would result in the all-embracing relationship of the Universe to God, that is, the relationship of every created being to its Creator.²⁷

No matter how hard we may try, there does not seem to be any way out of this riddle of paternity, except to exchange the doctrine of Trinity for the doctrine of Monotheism. We invite our Christian brethren to the common teaching of Monotheism which is in fact still clearly present not only in the Old Testament but also in the New Testament, as is reviewed in another article in this volume,

Trinity: in the Holy Quran and the Bible. In the words of the Holy Quran, "Say to the people of the Book, 'Let us agree upon one matter which is the same for you and for us, namely, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partner with Him.'" (Ael Imran 3:65) We invite our fellow Christian brethren to a pure concept of monotheism. Acceptance of this teaching will take away the fundamental conflict that exists between mainstream Christian doctrine and rationality. In the words of Jesus Christ^{as}, "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32) Indeed, if we accept or yield to any truth, it guides us to greater and greater truth.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Patrick.

² <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-5541/Saint-Patrick>.

³ Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad Khalifah Tul Masih the IV. Revelation, Rationality, Knowledge and Truth. Islam International Publications Limited 1998. Page 50.

⁴ Paul Davies. The Mind of God. Simon & Schuster, 1998. Page 73-74.

⁵ Paul Davies. The Mind of God. Simon & Schuster, 1998. Page 75.

⁶ Martin Goldstein. How We Know: An Exploration of the Scientific Process. Westview Press, 1980. Page 208.

⁷ Paul Davies. The Mind of God. Simon & Schuster, 1998. Page 77.

⁸ John Barrow. Theories of Everything. Page 35.

⁹ The Holy Quran. Al-Mu'minun 23:118.

¹⁰ The Holy Quran. Al Ahqaf 46:5.

¹¹ The Holy Quran. Al A'arf 7:192.

¹² The Holy Quran. Al Luqman 31:12.

¹³ The Holy Quran. Al Nahl 16:21.

¹⁴ The Holy Quran. Al Furqan 25:3-4.

¹⁵ The Holy Quran. Al Hajj 22:74.

¹⁶ The Holy Quran. Al Nahl 16:18.

¹⁷ Dr. Abdus Salam. Review of Religions. March 1995.

-
- ¹⁸ Abdus Salam, C. H. Lai, Azim Kidwai. *Ideals and Realities: Selected Essays of Abdus Salam*. World Scientific, 1989. Page 442.
- ¹⁹ The Holy Quran. Al Anbiyya 21:23.
- ²⁰ The Holy Quran. Al-Mu'minun 23:92-93.
- ²¹ Publisher note: The Holy Quran, Al Anbiyya 21:23.
- ²² Publisher note: The Holy Quran, Al Muminun 23:92.
- ²³ *Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Ruhani Khaza'in*, Vol. 1, pp. 515-521, sub-footnote 3.
- ²⁴ The Holy Quran. Al-Mu'minun 23:118.
- ²⁵ <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9067112/shamrock>.
- ²⁶ David Attenborough. *The Private Life of Plants*. Princeton University Press, 1995. Page 52.
- ²⁷ Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad in his book, *Christianity a Journey from Fact to Fiction*. . Islam International Publications Limited, 2006. Page 2-3.