**Talking to your kids about Jesus: 12 talking points for parents**

*By Samana Siddiqi*

It's impossible to ignore Christmas when you're living in America and other Christian-dominated countries, with the decorations, holiday sales, classroom artwork and parties, and of course, the yearly television Christmas specials. Although the holiday has become more secular over the years, it is still about celebrating the birth of Prophet Jesus or Isa as he is called in Arabic, peace be upon him.

Muslim parents take various approaches to dealing with the holiday, similar to how parents of other faiths may decide to not discuss or talk about it, embrace it in a full-fledged manner or choose a method somewhere in between.

Regardless of what way is chosen, this is still an ideal time to discuss the personality of this great Prophet and Messenger of God. It will not only serve as an important Islamic lesson for the kids, but it can also teach them how much they share with their Christian neighbors, peers and classmates who celebrate the holiday. The following are a couple of ideas. You can choose which points to emphasize or omit depending on the age, level of understanding or interest of your child in this topic.

1. Jesus was a great and noble Prophet and Messenger of Allah, as were Muhammad, Abraham, Moses, and Noah, to name just a few other Prophets Muslims revere. May God's peace and blessings be upon all of them. In Arabic, he is called Isa . (Note: you may want to read a short book about Isa in Islam).
Muslims love Jesus just as we love all of the Prophets Allah sent to guide human beings to Him.
2. All of the Prophets of Allah loved Him, obeyed Him and taught their families, friends and communities how to do the same.
3. Jesus was born to a great woman named Maryam, who is called Mary in English. She was deeply committed to Allah and lived her entire life in obedience to Him. She, like her great son, is a beautiful example of how a person who loves God should live their life. The 19th Surah of the Quran is named after her. You may want to recite and read the translation of this Surah, or at least the portions that talk of her, particularly verses 16 to 35.
4. Prophet Jesus, peace be upon him, did not have a father. His birth was a miracle because other human beings always need a father and mother to be born.
5. Another example of a Prophet who was born without not just a father, but a mother as well, was Adam, peace be upon him, the first human being Allah created.
6. Allah gave Prophet Jesus the power to perform miracles, like healing the blind. This is like the miracles given to Prophet Musa, one of which was his ability to turn a stick into a snake.
7. People of some other religions also believe in Prophet Jesus, most notably Christians.
8. Christians celebrate Christmas, which they believe is when Prophet Jesus was born.
9. Some Christians believe that Prophet Jesus is the son of God. Muslims do not believe this. Allah is so powerful and self-sufficient that He does not need a son or any kind of partner.
10. Prophet Jesus did not die. Rather, God saved him as his enemies were confused about what happened to him. Jesus was taken up by God to Heaven.
11. Jesus will return before the end of the world.

 As Muslims, we must respect the beliefs of other people who differ with us about Prophet Jesus, peace be upon him, even while we disagree with them.