

Zabīdī. *Tāj*.

Zahawī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Dānī b. Munīr. *Silsilat al-āthār al-ṣaḥīḥa: aw, al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-musnad min aqwāl al-Ṣaḥāba wal-Ṭabī‘in*. Ed. ‘Abd Allāh b. Ṣāliḥ al-‘Ubaylān. 2 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Fārūq, 1424-1427/2003-2006.

Zajjāj. *I‘rāb*.

Zamakhsharī. *Asās*.

———. *Kashshāf*.

**See also:** ‘ĀD; AĤMAD, UPON HIM PEACE; ALLAH MOST HIGH; APOSTASY; BELIEF; BELIEVERS; CALLING UNTO ALLAH; CHILDREN OF ISRĀ‘ĪL; CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY; COMMANDING GOOD AND FORBIDDING WRONG; COMPANION; CONTENTMENT; CONVEYING THE MESSAGE; DAY OF RESURRECTION; DISBELIEF; DISBELIEVERS; DISOBEDIENCE; DIVINE CUSTOM; DIVINE DECREE; FIR‘AWN; HĀMĀN; HEREAFTER; HYPOCRISY AND HYPOCRITES; IBRĀHĪM, UPON HIM PEACE; ‘ĪSĀ, UPON HIM PEACE; LEGAL LIABILITY; LŪTĪ, UPON HIM PEACE; MĀDYAN; MESSENGERSHIP; MIRACLES; MUḤAMMAD, UPON HIM BLESSINGS AND PEACE; MŪSĀ, UPON HIM PEACE; NŪḤ, UPON HIM PEACE; PAST NATIONS; PEOPLE OF AYKA; PEOPLE OF AL-RASS; POETS AND POETRY; POLYTHEISM AND POLYTHEISTS; PROMISES AND THREATS; PROPHETHOOD; QĀRŪN; QUR‘ĀN; SĀBĀ‘; SĀTĀN; SHU‘AYB, UPON HIM PEACE; SIGNS OF ALLAH; TAWḤĪD; THAMŪD; TRUTH; TUBBĀ‘; WEALTH AND PROSPERITY; WILL, WANT AND VOLITION; YAḤYĀ, UPON HIM PEACE; YŪSUF, UPON HIM PEACE; ZAKARIYYĀ, UPON HIM PEACE.

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## BIRTH

### WILĀDA

This article comprises the following sections: i. Definitions and Usage; ii. Themes, Context, and Meanings; iii. Condemnation of the Attribution of Birth to Allah Most High; iv. Special Births; v. The Decree, Resurrection, and Embryogenesis; vi. Stillbirth and Abortion; vii. Bibliography.

### Definitions and Usage

Birth, the act of bringing forth offspring or of being brought forth, is mentioned in the Qur‘ān with cognates of the two verbs *waḍa‘a* and *walada* (nine times each), both in the literal sense—as in the verses *when she gave birth to her* (fa-lammā waḍa‘at-hā) (Q 3:36) and *peace be upon him the day he was born* (wulida) (Q 19:15)—and as a key trope of other themes such as the suddenness of Resurrection (Q 22:1-2); the Divine knowledge of minutiae (Q 35:11; 41:47); the

miraculous working of Divine power in the births of Ishāq (*q.v.*; Q 11:72-73; 51:28-30), ‘Īsā (*q.v.*; Q 3:47; 19:24-34), Yaḥyā (*q.v.*; Q 3:38-41; 19:3-10), and Maryam (Q 3:36-37), upon them be peace; and the gravity of the Divine purpose in the creation of mankind (Q 90:1-4). Furthermore, all of these constitute Divine signs and lessons for humanity, and illustrate the exemplary reliance of Prophets and other Believers (*q.v.*) on Allah Most High and their supplication to Him. Birth is also mentioned in connection with legal rulings (*aḥkām*) such as the financial support due pregnant divorcees (Q 65:4 and 6) and the condemnation of the *ḡihār* oath of divorce (Q 58:2; see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE).

The trilateral transitive verb *waḍa‘a* (aorist *waḍa‘u*, infinitive noun *wad‘*, active participle *wāḍi‘*, passive participles *mawḍū‘* and *wāḍi‘*) means “laying something down” (*khafḍ*, *ḥaṭṭ*) such as a physical object or burden, including birthing and disrobing; humiliation; decrease; grazing; and marching fast (Saraqustī, *Af‘āl* 4:242 and 219; Ibn Fāris, *sub w-d-‘*), while the intransitive trilateral verb *walada* (aorist *yalidu*, infinitive nouns *wild* and *wilād(a)*, active participle *wālid*, passive participles *mawlūd*, *w/taḷīd*, *walad* and *wuld*) means “to give birth” or “to produce profit” (*Af‘āl* 4:230; Farāhīdī; Jawharī; Ibn Durayd, all *sub w-l-d*).

### Themes, Context, and Meanings

The Qur‘ān mentions birth invariably in the sense of begetting, but to denote a variety of themes. Child delivery at the conclusion of strain and labor commands respect for mothers: *His mother carried him with hardship and gave birth to him* (waḍa‘at-hu) *with hardship* (Q 46:15). This event inaugurates a biographical narrative of weakness followed by strength followed by weakness and old age (Q 30:54). Those verses use the theme of birth as a sign of human beings’ feebleness and dependency, while sudden birth or miscarriage is mentioned as a sign of the suddenness and terror of the Day of Resurrection (*q.v.*) reflecting its gravity: *Truly the earthquake of the Hour is a tremendous thing. On the day when you behold it, every nursing mother will forget her nursing and every pregnant one will be delivered of her burden* (wa-taḍa‘u kullu dhāti ḥamlin ḥamlahā)... (Q 22:1-2). This is glossed as follows by the Prophet himself, upon him blessings and peace (Bukhārī, *wa-tarā al-nāsa sukārā*) and the exegetes:

“The nursing woman will be stupefied and distracted from her child before its weaning and the pregnant woman will lay down her fetus before its completion” (Ṭabarī, Zamakhsharī,