



Following is exact verbatim fatwa (religious ruling) from Al-Azhar University in Egypt in English & Arabic language. However if reader has any doubt, he/she is suggested to get her/his own hard copy from publishing department of Al-Azhar university.

First we give here exact verbatim Arabic text of the Fatwa, and at the end of Arabic text, you will find exact English translation of this Fatwa. **As a truthful Muslim, it is incumbent for you to tell your all Muslim friends to read this fatwa. If you will not do so, then its mean you are hiding a truth, and to hide the truth is a crime.**



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Let I declare along with you that Muhammad (S) is the last/Final Prophet of Allah Azza Wa Jal and any one who claims to be any kind of Prophet or Nabi after Muhammad (S) is the biggest liar of this world.

Fatwa starts from here:

APPENDIX 4

ARABIC TEXT & DISCUSSION OF MAHMUD SHALTUT'S LETTER

رفع عيسى

ورد إلى مشيخة الأزهر الجلية من حضرة عبد الكريم
خان بالقيادة العامة لجيوش الشرق الأوسط سؤال جاء فيه :

هل (عيسى) حى أو ميت فى نظر القرآن الكريم
والسنة للطهرة ؟ وما حكم السلم الذى ينكر أنه حى ؟ وما حكم
من لا يؤمن به إذا فرض أنه عاد إلى الدنيا مرة أخرى ؟ .

وقد حول هذا السؤال إلينا فأجبنا بالفتوى التالية التى
نشرتها مجلة الرسالة فى سننها العاشرة بالعدد ٤٦٢ .

القرآن الكريم ونهاية عيسى :

أما بعد ، فإن القرآن الكريم قد عرض لعيسى عليه السلام فيما ينصل
بنهاية شأنه مع قومه في ثلاث سور :

١ - في سورة آل عمران قوله تعالى : « فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ
قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَلِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْخَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَأَشْهَدُ
بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ . رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ
الشَّاهِدِينَ . وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ ، إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ
يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ صَلِّ عَلَىٰ مَوْفِقِكِ . وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَىٰ وَمُطَوِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلِ
الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ، ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَرْجِعِكُمْ
فَأَحْكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ، (١) »

(١) الآية من ٥٥، ٥٦ من سورة آل عمران .

٢ - وفي سورة النساء قوله تعالى : « وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى
ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ، وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ
اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَبِئْسَ أَكْثَرُ عَشْرَةٍ ، مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ
يَقِينًا ، بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ، (١) »

٣ - وفي سورة المائدة قوله تعالى : « وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
أَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمَّيَّ إِلَهَيْنِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ قَالَ : سُبحَانَكَ ،
مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقِّ إِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ
تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ ، إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ .
مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ : أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ وَكُنْتُمْ
عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا ، مَا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ » (٢٢) .

هذه هي الآيات التي عرض القرآن فيها لنهاية شأن عيسى مع قومه .

والآية الأخيرة (آية المائدة) تذكر لنا شيئاً آخر وياً يتعلق بعبادة قومه
له ولأمه في الدنيا وقد سأله الله عنها . وهي تقرر على لسان عيسى عليه السلام
أنه لم يقل إلا ما أمره الله به : (اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ) وأنه كان شهيداً
عليهم مدة إقامته بينهم ، وأنه لا يعلم ما حدث منهم بعد أن (توفاه الله)

معنى الترفي :

وكلمة (توفى) قد وردت في القرآن كثيراً بمعنى الموت حتى صار هذا
المعنى هو الغالب عليها المتبادر منها ، ولم تستعمل في غير هذا المعنى إلا وبجانبها

ما يصرّض عن هنا المعنى المتبادر : « قُلْ يَتَوَفَّاكُم مَّلَكُ الْمَوْتِ الَّذِي ذُكِّرَ بِكُمْ » (١) ، « إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ » (٢) ، « وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْمَلَائِكَةُ » (٣) ، « تَوَفَّاهُ رُسُلُنَا » (٤) . « وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَتَوَفَّى » (٥) . « حَتَّى يَتَوَفَّاهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ » (٦) . « تَوَفَّى نَسِيلًا وَالْحَقْبَى بِالصَّالِحِينَ » (٧) .

ومن حق كلمة « توفيتني » في الآية أن تجعل هنا المعنى المتبادر وهو الإمامة العادية التي يعرفها الناس ويدركها من اللفظ والسياق الناطقون بالضاد . وإذن فالآية لو لم ينصل بها غيرها في تقرير نهاية عيسى مع قومه لما كان هناك مبرر لقول بأن عيسى حي لم يموت .

ولا سبيل إلى القول بأن الوفاة هنا مراد بها وفاة عيسى بعد نزوله من السماء بناء على زعم من يرى أنه حي في السماء ، وأنه سيظل منها آخر الزمان ، لأن الآية ظاهرة في تحديد علاقته بقومه هو لا بالقوم الذين يكونون آخر الزمان

وم قوم محمد باتفاق لا قوم عيسى .

معنى « رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ » : وهل هو إلى السماء ؟

أما آية النساء فإنها تقول « بل رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ » وقد فسرها بعض
المفسرين بل جمهورهم يرفع إلى السماء ، ويقولون : إن الله ألقى شبهه على غيره ،
ورفعه بجسده إلى السماء ، فهو حي فيها وسينزل منها آخر الزمان ، فيقتل
أكثر من ويكسر الصليب ، ويمتدون في ذلك :

أولاً : على روايات تفيد نزول عيسى بعد الدجال ، وهي روايات مضطربة
مختلفة في ألفاظها ومعانيها اختلافاً لا مجال معه للجمع بينها ، وقد نص على ذلك

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- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (١) الآية ١١ من سورة السجدة . | (٢) الآية ٩٧ من سورة النساء . |
| (٣) الآية ٥٠ من سورة الأفعال . | (٤) الآية ٦١ من سورة الأنعام . |
| (٥) الآية ٥ من سورة الحج . | (٦) الآية ١٥ من سورة النساء . |
| (٧) الآية ١٠١ من سورة يوسف . | |

علماء الحديث . وهي فوق ذلك من رواية ذهب بن منبه وكعب الأخبار وها
من أهل الكتاب الذين اعتنقوا الإسلام ، وقد عرفت درجتهما في الحديث
عند علماء الجرح والتعديل .

ثانياً : على حديث مروى عن أبي هريرة اقتصر فيه على الإخبار بتزول
عيسى ، وإذا صح هذا الحديث فهو حديث آحاد . وقد أجمع العلماء على أن
أحاديث الآحاد لا تفيد عقيدة ولا يصح الاعتماد عليها في شأن المنبيات .

ثالثاً : على ما جاء في حديث المراج من أن محمداً - صلى الله عليه وسلم -
حينما صعد إلى السماء ، وأخذ يستفتحها واحدة بعد واحدة ففتح له ويدخل ،

رأى عيسى عليه السلام هو وابن خالته يحيى في السماء الثانية . ويكفينا
في نوهين هنا المستند ما قرره كثير من شراح الحديث في شأن المراج وفي شأن
اجتماع محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم بالأنبياء ، وأنه كان اجتماعاً روحياً لا جثمانياً
« انظر فتح البلى وزاد الماد وغيرهما » .

ومن الطرف أنهم يستدلون على أن معنى الرفع في الآية هو رفع عيسى
بجسده إلى السماء بحديث المراج ، بينما ترى فريقاً منهم يستدل على أن اجتماع
محمد بعيسى في المراج كان اجتماعاً جدياً بقوله تعالى : « بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللهُ إِلَيْهِ »
وهكذا يتحذرون الآية دليلاً على ما يفهمونه من الحديث حين يكونون في تفسير
الحديث ، ويتخذون الحديث دليلاً على ما يفهمونه من الآية حين يكونون
في تفسير الآية .

الرفع في آية آل عمران :

ومن إذا رجنا إلى قوله تعالى : « إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ »
في آية آل عمران مع قوله « بَلَى رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ » في آيات النساء وجدنا

الثانية إخباراً عن تحقيق الوعد الذي تضمنته الأولى ، وقد كان هذا الوعد
بالتوفية والرفع والتطهير من الذين كفروا ، فإذا كانت الآية الثانية قد جاءت
خالية من التوفية والتطهير ، واقترنت على ذكر الرفع إلى الله فإنه يجب أن
يلاحظ فيها ما ذكر في الأولى جمعاً بين الآيتين .

والمنى أن الله توفى عبدي ورفعه إليه وطهره من الذين كفروا .

وقد فسر الأوسى قوله تعالى « إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ » بوجوه منها — وهو
أظهرها — إني متوفى أجلك ويميتك حنف أنفك لا أسلط عليك من
يقنك ، وهو كتابة عن عصمته من الأعداء وما هم بصده من القنك به عليه
السلام ، لأنه يلزم من استيفاء الله أجله وموته حنف أنه ذلك .

وظاهر أن الرفع — الذي يكون بعد التوفية — هو رفع المكاة لارتفاع
الجد ، خصوصاً وقد جاء بجانبه قوله : « وَطَهَّرْكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا »

مما يدل على أن الأمر أمر تشریف وتكريم .

وقد جاء الرفع في القرآن كثيراً بهذا المعنى : « فِي بُيُوتِ أَذْنِ اللَّهِ
أَنْ تُرْفَعَ » . « تُرْفَعُ دَرَجَاتٍ مَنْ نَشَاءُ » . « وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ » .
« وَرَفَعْنَا مَكَانًا عَلِيًّا » . « يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا » . . . إلخ
، وإذن فالعبر بقوله « وَرَأَيْكَ إِلَى » وقوله « بل رفعه الله إليه »
كالتعبير في قولهم لحق فلان برفيق الأعلى وفي « إن الله معنا » وفي « عند
ملك مقدر » وكلها لا يفهم منها سوى معنى الرعاية والحفظ والدخول
في الكنف المحمي . فمن أين تؤخذ كلمة السماء من كلمة « إليه » اللهم
إن هذا لظلم لتعبير القرآني الواضح خضوعاً لتقصير روايت لم يتم على الظن
بها — فضلاً عن اليقين — برهان ولاشب برهان !

الفهم التبادر من الآيات :

وبعد . فما عيسى إلا رسول قد خلت من قبله الرسل ، لاصبه قومه العدا ،
وظهرت على وجوههم بوادر الشر بالنسبة إليه ، فالتجأ إلى الله — شأن الأنبياء
والمرسلين — فأثمنه الله بعزته وحكمته وخيب مكر أعدائه . وهذا هو ما تضمنته

الآيات « فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عَيْبِي مِنْهُمْ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ »
إلى آخرها ، بين الله فيها قوة مكره بالنسبة إلى مكرم ، وأن مكرم في اغتيال
عبي قد ضاع أمام مكر الله في حفظه وعصمته إذ قال « يَا عَيْبِي إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّكَ
وَرَأَيْتُكَ إِلَىٰ وَمُطَهَّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا » فهو يبشره بإنجائه من مكرم
ورد كيدم في محورم ، وأنه سيبستوفى أجله حتى يموت حتف أنفه من غير قتل
ولا صلب ، ثم يرفعه الله إليه .

وهذا هو ما يفهمه القارىء للآيات الواردة في شأن نهاية عيسى مع قومه
متى وقف على سنة الله مع أنبيائه حين يتألب عليهم خصومهم ، ومتى خلا
ذمته من تلك الروايات التي لا ينبغي أن تجزم في القرآن ، ولست أدري
كيف يكون إقناذ عيسى بطريق انزاعه من بينهم ، ورفعه بجسده إلى السماء
مكرأ ؟ وكيف يوصف بأنه خير من مكرم مع أنه شيء ليس في استطاعتهم
أن يقاوموه ، شيء ليس في قدرة البشر ؟

ألا إنه لا يتحقق مكر في مقابلة مكر إلا إذا كان جاريا على أسلوبه
غير خارج عن مقتضى العادة فيه . وقد جاء مثل هذا في شأن محمد صلى الله
عليه وسلم « وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ
أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ »

رفع عيسى ليس عقيدة يكفر منكرها :

والخلاصة من هذا البحث :

١ - أنه ليس في القرآن الكريم ، ولا في السنة المطهرة مستند يصلح لتكوين عقيدة يطمئن إليها القلب بأن عيسى رفع بجسده إلى السماء وأنه حي إلى الآن فيها وأنه سينزل منها آخر الزمان إلى الأرض .

٢ - أن كل ما تنفيده الآيات الواردة في هذا الشأن هو وعد الله عيسى بأنه متوفيه أجله ورافعه إليه وعاصمه من الذين كفروا ، وأن هذا الوعد قد تحقق فلم يقتله أعداؤه ولم يصلبوه ، ولكن وفاه الله أحله ورفعه إليه .

٣ - أن من أنكر أن عيسى قد رفع بجسده إلى السماء ، وأنه فيها حي إلى الآن ، وأنه سينزل منها آخر الزمان ، فإنه لا يكون بذلك منكرا لما ثبت بدليل قطعي ، فلا يخرج عن إسلامه وإيمانه ، ولا ينبغي أن يحكم عليه بالردة ، بل هو مسلم مؤمن ، إذا مات فهو من المؤمنين ، يصلى عليه كما يصلى على المؤمنين ، ويدفن في مقابر المؤمنين ، ولا شية في إيمانه عند الله ، والله بعباده خير بصير .

Islamic Fatwa from AL-AZHAR UNIVERSITY Egypt about the Ascend / Descend matter of Jesus (Eisa son of Mary) PBUH

Reputation of Al-Azhar University

Al-Azhar is considered by most Sunni Muslims to be **the most prestigious school of Islamic learning**, and its scholars are seen as some of the most reputable scholars in the Muslim world. Among its stated objectives is the propagation of Islamic religion and culture and the Arabic language (the language of the Qur'an.) To that end, it maintains a committee of ulema (Islamic scholars) to judge on individual Islamic questions, a printing establishment for printing the Qur'an, and training (government-appointed) preachers in Islamic missionary work. **(see more in wikipedia)**

EXALTATION OF JESUS

A letter was received by the Senate of the Great Al-Azhar University of Cairo from Abdul Karim, from the Middle East, which contained an inquiry: Is Jesus dead or alive according to the Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet? What do you think of a Muslim who does not believe that he is still alive and what about one who does not acknowledge him in case he comes to the world for the second time? This question was referred to the Senior Professor Shaikh Mahmud Shaltut, who later on

became Rector of the University. *The Fatwah is reproduced verbatim below.*

→FATWA STARTS FROM HERE:

". . . Now, the Qur'ân mentions Prophet Jesus in reference to his fate at the hands of his people in three chapters:

1. In the chapter The Family of 'Imrân it is stated: "But when Jesus perceived unbelief on their part, he said:

Who will be my helpers in Allâh's way? The disciples said: We are helpers in Allâh's way:We believe in Allâh and bear thou witness that we are submitting ones. Our Lord, we believe in that which Thou hast revealed and we follow the messenger, so write us down with those who bear witness. And they (the Jews) planned and Allâh (also) planned. And Allâh is the best of planners. When Allâh said: O Jesus, I will cause thee to die and exalt thee in My presence and clear thee of those who disbelieve and make those who follow thee above those who disbelieve to the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me is your return, so I shall decide between you concerning that wherein you differ."2

2. In the chapter The Women Allah says:

"And for their saying: We have killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allâh, and they killed him not, nor did they cause his death on the cross, but was made to appear to them as such. And certainly those who differ therein are in doubt about it. They have no

knowledge about it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for certain: Nay, Allāh exalted him in His presence. And Allāh is ever Mighty, Wise".³

3. And in the chapter The Food says Allāh:

"And when Allāh will say: O Jesus, son of Mary, didst you say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allāh? He will say: Glory be to Thee! it was not for me to say what I had no right to (say). If I had said it, Thou wouldst indeed have known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. Surely Thou art the great Knower of the unseen. I said to them naught save as thou didst command me: Serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord; and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die Thou wert the watcher over them, and Thou art Witness of all things.¹

These are the verses of the Holy Qur'an wherein all that Jesus experienced at the hands of his people is related.

In the last verse (from the chapter The Food) there is mention of an incident of the Hereafter when Allāh will ask Jesus concerning he and his mother being worshipped in the world. And Jesus in reply would say that he did not say aught to them except what God commanded him viz., Worship Allāh Who is your God and my God; and he kept a watch over them, during the period of his stay among them and that he did not know what they did after "Allāh caused him to die."

The word tawaffā is used in so many places of the Qur'an in the sense of death that it has become its foremost meaning. This word is used in a different sense only when there is a clear indication as to the other meaning: "Say: The angel of death, who is given charge of you, shall cause you to die;"² "(As for) those whom the angels caused to die while they are unjust to

themselves;”³ “And if thou couldst see when the angels will cause to die those who disbelieve,”⁴ “Our messengers cause him to die”;⁵ “And of you is he who is caused to die;”⁶ “Until death takes them away;”⁷ “Make me die in submission and join me with the righteous.”⁸

The word tawaffaytani in this particular verse primarily means natural death which is known to everybody. The Arabic-speaking people understand this and only this meaning of the word with reference to the context. Therefore, had there been nothing else to indicate the end of Jesus in this verse even then it would have been

improper and wrong to say that Prophet Jesus was alive, and not dead. There is no room for the view that the word wafât here means the death of Jesus after his descent from the heavens—a view held by some who think that Jesus is still alive in the heavens and would come down from there in the latter days. For, this verse clearly denotes the relation of Jesus with his own people and not with any other people of the latter days. The people of the latter age would admittedly be the followers of Muhammad and not of Jesus.

However, in the chapter The Women the words: “Nay: Allâh exalted him (Jesus) in His presence” have been interpreted by some, nay most of the commentators, as “raising him up to the heavens.” They observe that Allâh cast his likeness on someone else and Jesus himself was lifted up to the heavens with his body. He is alive there and will descend therefrom in the latter ages. Thereafter he would kill the swine and break the Cross. And they base their story:

Firstly, on those reports in which the descent of Jesus is mentioned after the (appearance of) Anti-Christ. But these reports are at variance with and contradictory to one another in their words and meanings. The difference is so great that there is no room for any reconciliation among them. The scholars of Hadith have plainly stated this fact. **Moreover they are reported by Wahâb bin Munnabba and Ka‘b Akbar**, who were converts from the People of the Book. **And their status is well known to critics of Traditions.**

Secondly, on a report by Abu Huraira that mentions the descent of Jesus. If this report is proved to be true, even then it is only an isolated report. And there is a consensus of opinion of the scholars of Hadith that such isolated reports can neither be made the basis of a doctrinal belief, nor can they be trusted with regard to things unseen.

Thirdly, on the report about **Mir'āj** (i.e., the Ascension of the Prophet to the heavens) which narrates that when the Prophet went up and began to have the gates of the heavens opened one after another and entered them as they were opened, he saw Jesus and his cousin John on the second heaven. For us, it is enough to prove the weakness of this evidence, that many interpreters of the Tradition have taken this contact of the Prophet with other prophets to be a spiritual phenomenon and not a physical one (vide Fata al-Bāri, Zād al-Ma'ad, etc.)

Strangely enough they interpret the word rafa' in this verse in the light of the report concerning the Mi'rāj, and deduce therefrom that Jesus was also bodily raised up. And there are others who regard the meeting of the Prophet with Jesus to be a physical one on the basis of this verse, (i.e., Nay! Allāh exalted him in His presence).

Thus when these people interpret the Hadith they quote this verse to support their **imaginary meaning of the Hadith**; and while interpreting the verse they cite this Hadith to support their imaginary explanation of the verse. When we turn to the revealed words of God: "I will **cause you to die and exalt you in My presence**," in the chapter The Family of 'Imrān along with the words: "Nay! Allāh exalted him in His presence," in the chapter The Women, we find that the latter verse fulfills the promise that was made in the former one. This promise was about the death and exaltation of Jesus Christ, and his exoneration from the false charges of the disbelievers. Thus even if the latter verse had mentioned just his rafa' towards God and had no reference to his death and exoneration from the false charges even then it should have been our duty to take note of all those matters that are referred to in the former verse; so that both the verses might be reconciled.

The actual meaning of the verse therefore is that Allah caused Jesus to die and exalted him and sanctified him against the charges of his enemies. Allāma Alwāsi has interpreted verse (inni mutawaffi ka) in many ways. The clearest of these interpretations is that “I will complete the lease of your life and will cause you to die and will not let those people dominate you who try to kill you.” For, completing the period of his life and causing him to die a natural death indicates that Jesus was saved from being slain and from the mischief of his enemies. Obviously rafa‘ after death cannot mean any physical ascension, but only exaltation in rank, especially when the words “I will clear you of those who disbelieve” are present along with it. This shows that it is a question of spiritual honour and exaltation.

The word rafa‘ has occurred many a time in the Qur’an conveying this sense: e.g., “In houses which Allah has permitted to be exalted (turfa‘a);”¹ “We exalt in dignity (narfa‘u) whom We please;”² “And We exalted (rafa‘na) for you your mention;”³ “And We raised him (rafanāhu) to an elevated state;”⁴ “Allah will exalt those of you who believe...;”⁵ etc. Thus the expressions “I will exalt you in my presence” and “Nay! Allah exalted him in His presence” would yield a sense similar to the one when we say “So and so met the Companion on High,” or “God is with us,” or “With the Powerful King.” All these expressions signify only shelter, protection and coming under His care. **So one fails to understand how the word heaven is deduced from the word towards Him (ilaih). By God! it is an outrage on the plain exposition of the Quran. And such an offense is committed simply on account of belief in such stories and narratives which are devoid of accuracy, not to speak of their established unauthenticity.**

Moreover, Jesus was merely an apostle and apostles before him had passed away. When the people of Jesus became hostile to him, he like other prophets, turned towards God and He saved him by His power and wisdom, and frustrated the plans of his enemies. The same point has been elaborated in the following verse: “When Jesus perceived unbelief on their part, he said: Who will be my helpers in Allāh’s way...” i.e., in this verse God says that His plans were more subtle and effective than the plans of the disbelievers. As

against the measures of protection and security from God, the attempts of these people against the life of Jesus were frustrated.

In the verse: “When Allāh said: O Jesus! I will cause thee to die and exalt thee in My presence and clear thee of those who disbelieve,” Allāh gives the glad tidings that He will save Jesus from the machinations of his enemies and that ultimately their plottings will end in futility and that He will complete the period of his life till he dies a natural death neither being slain nor yet crucified and then He will exalt him in His presence.

These verses which relate to the fate of Jesus at the hands of his people will invariably yield this meaning to their reader provided he knows the practice of Allah to which He resorts for the protection of His prophets at the time of the aggression of enemies, and provided his mind is free from all those fictitious reports that can in no case be placed as an authority over the Holy Quran. Now, I cannot understand how the snatching of Jesus from the hands of his enemies and lifting him up to the heavens can be called a subtle plan and a better one when neither was it in their power nor in the power of anybody else to counter it. In fact, there can be one “plan” (makr) as against another plan when it is contrived in a parallel manner not deviating from the natural course of Allah in such matters. We have a parallel instance in what is said by the Quran with respect of the Holy Prophet: “And when those who disbelieved devised plans against you that they might confine you or slay you or drive you away; and they devised plans and Allāh too had arranged a plan; and Allāh is the best of planners.”¹

To sum up:

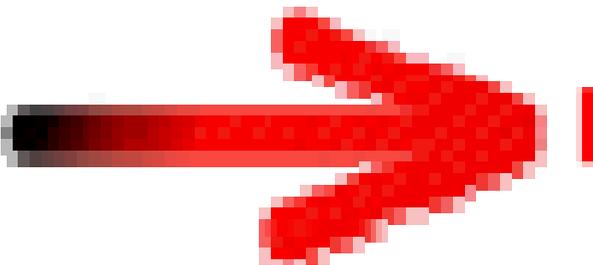
1. There is nothing in the Holy Quran, nor in the sacred Traditions of the Prophet, which endorses the correctness of the belief to the contentment of heart that Jesus was taken up to heaven with his body and is alive there even now, and would descend therefrom in the latter days.

2. The Quranic verses about Jesus show that God had promised to cause him to die a natural death, then to exalt him and save him from the mischief of the disbelievers and this promise had certainly been fulfilled. His enemies could neither kill him nor crucify him, but God completed the span of his life and then caused him to die.

3. Any person who denies his bodily ascent and his continuance in physical existence in the heavens and his descent in the latter ages, does not deny a fact that can be established by clear conclusive arguments. Thus he is not outside the faith of Islam and it is absolutely wrong to consider him an apostate. He is perfectly a Muslim. If he dies he dies the death of a believer and like believers his funeral prayer must be said and he must be buried in the Muslim cemetery. His faith is decidedly faultless in the eyes of God. And God knows the conditions of His servants. And as to the other part of the question (that is supposing Jesus returns to the world, how should a disbeliever in him be regarded) after the above statement of ours—this question does not arise at all. And God is the Best Knower.

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THIS IS END OF FATWA