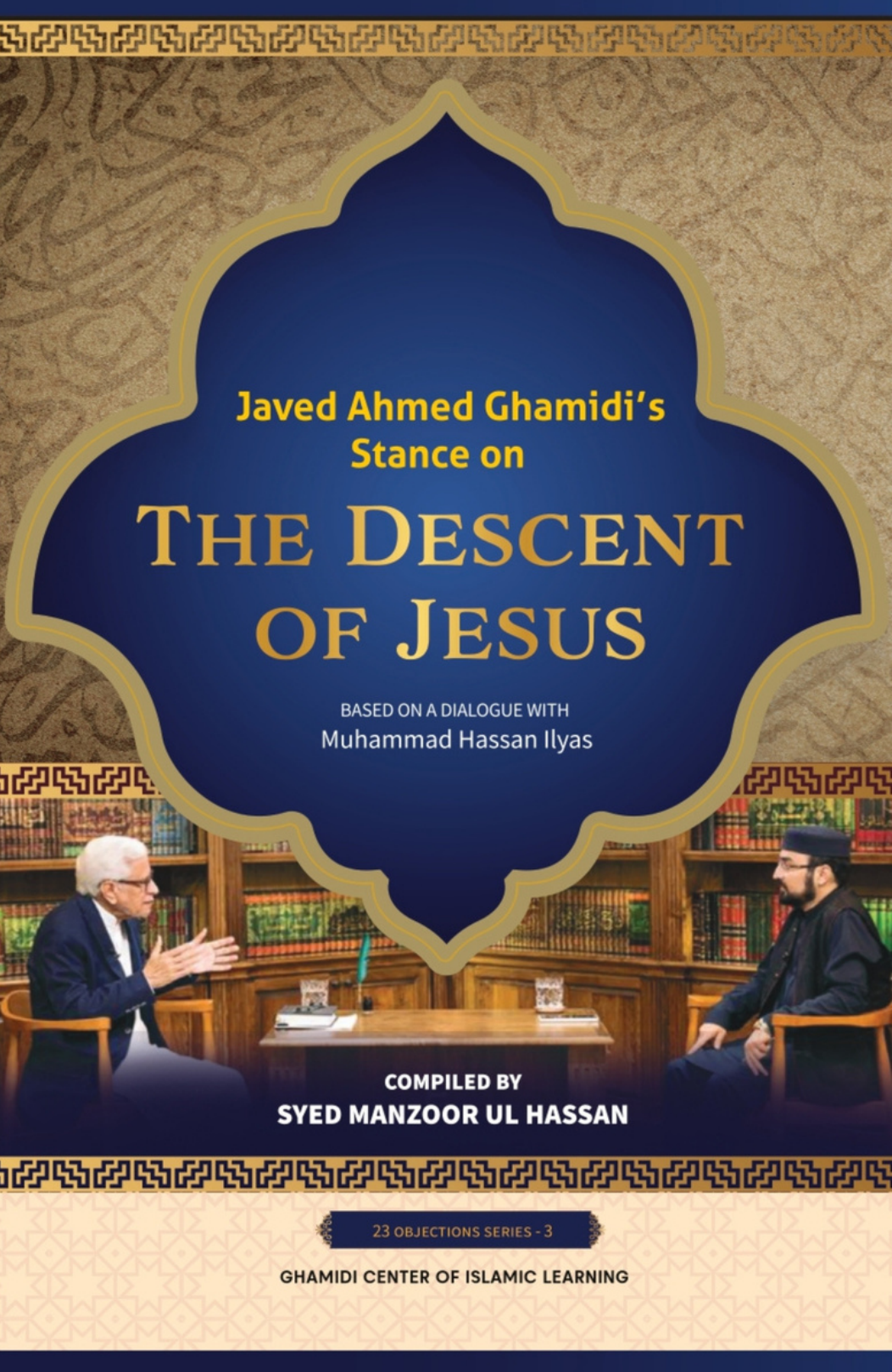




**Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's
Stance on**

THE DESCENT OF JESUS

BASED ON A DIALOGUE WITH
Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

COMPILED BY
SYED MANZOOR UL HASSAN

23 OBJECTIONS SERIES - 3

GHAMIDI CENTER OF ISLAMIC LEARNING

The Descent of Jesus

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Stance
on
The Descent of Jesus

Derived from a dialogue with Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

Compiled By
SYED MANZOOR-UL-HASSAN

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Our Approach to Translate Academic Works for A Global Audience

The translation of this book from Urdu to English is conducted by Al-Mawrid US Translations team, employing a state-of-the-art Artificial Intelligence (AI) to ensure initial accuracy and fluency in translation. Following the AI translation phase, each book undergoes a meticulous review process executed by our specialized review team. This team, composed of proficient speakers of both the original and translated languages, conducts a comprehensive proofreading, editing and validation of each sentence to ensure the translation meets the highest standards of accuracy and cultural sensitivity.

Our rigorous review process is designed to preserve the original text's nuances, ensuring that readers experience the author's intent, style, and voice in English as authentically as possible. The reviewers pay close attention to idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and the subtleties of language that AI might not fully capture, adjusting as necessary to convey the true essence and nature of the original work.

We take pride in our thorough approach, which combines the effect of modern technology with the discerning expertise of human reviewers. By including this section in our books, we aim to inform our readers about the meticulous care and effort invested in bringing these translations to life, ensuring transparency and fostering trust in the quality of our work.

Contributors and Book-Specific Notes

For this particular volume, the translation project was managed under the supervision of Mukaram Aziz, who was responsible for the technical automation of the AI-driven translation process, overall layout design and textual presentation, and the final editorial review. Abid Mehmood conducted the initial review and was responsible for

validating the accuracy of Arabic language content throughout the book. Azeem Ayub oversaw the final formatting to ensure consistency and readability in the published edition. The cover design is created by Crayonz Media.

The original Arabic text is included only for Qur’anic and hadith references. The English translation of Qur’anic verses is derived from Dr. Shehzad Saleem’s translation of *Al-Bayān*. The hadith texts were translated from Urdu as they appeared in the original manuscript of this book.

To make the text more accessible to English-speaking readers, terms and phrases in other languages—particularly Arabic, Urdu and Persian—have been transliterated when they appear in the text. We followed the IJMES transliteration style as a reference but adopted a simplified subset of characters (primarily ā, ī, ū ‘) to reflect Arabic pronunciation while maintaining readability. In keeping with convention and out of reverence, the following abbreviations are used: PBUH (Peace be upon him) for all prophets, RA (Radi Allāhu anhu/anhā) for the Companions of the Prophet, and AS (alayhi/alayhā al-salām) for other noble personalities.

This work, while rigorous, remains a human endeavor and may still contain occasional errors or oversights. We welcome feedback and suggestions for improvement at translations@almawridus.org.





*In the name of God,
the Most Gracious, the Ever Merciful*

Preface

This book under the title ‘The Descent of Jesus’ represents the stance of my esteemed teacher and mentor, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, on the subject of the second coming of Jesus (PBUH). This expository monograph has been derived from episodes 27 to 33 of the video series ‘Response to 23 Questions on Religious Opinions of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi.’ This series of discussions addresses the objections commonly raised against Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s opinions from the perspective of traditional approaches to the study and interpretation of Islam and presents his unique stances in contrast to the consensus views of traditional scholarship. These views, often presented as the consensus views of the Muslim *ummah*, are actually prevalent interpretations of various debates around individual matters about the Qur’an, the Sunnah, Hadith and *Seerah*. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has partially or entirely dismissed these purportedly unanimous views. He found them to be in conflict with the facts found within the Qur’an’s texts and the practices known as the Sunnah, as well as with the acknowledged facts in the fields of Hadith and *Seerah*.

The discussions follow the method of question-and-answer and interactive dialogue. Muhammad Hassan Ilyas participated in the conversation as Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s interlocutor. He has comprehensively organized all the issues that have been presented as controversial views of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi and has faithfully and eloquently presented them before him. In response, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has elucidated the traditional viewpoints further, analyzed the arguments of traditional scholars, and presented his own stance, thoroughly substantiated with full clarity.

I have taken up the responsibility to compile and present the series of discussions in the form of monographs. To meet the needs of professional writing, I have divided the detailed and long discussions into sections, explained the allusions, and explicated the terse

statements which might sound ambiguous to some readers. Where appropriate, relevant excerpts from Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's writings have been quoted. These writings enrich the discussion through further explication of, elaboration upon, support to, and emphasis upon significant points borrowed from the works of erudite scholars of great repute and stature. The purpose of this exercise is to present the audio-visual records of the highly useful and instructive discussions in writing so that students and researchers have ready access to this source and benefit from it. Shahid Mahmood has provided support in compilation and research, executing this responsibility with utmost diligence.

These articles are essentially my understanding of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's thoughts and views. However, fortunately, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has been kind enough to read and revise them. As a result, my prominent mistakes in understanding his views are corrected on the one hand and the style of presentation is reformed on the other.

It is an honor for me to infer the scholarly discussions on religious themes from my mentor's verbal discussions and it is a great privilege to have his principal guidance in this onerous task. This is a boundless favor from God Almighty, which definitely surpasses the measures of my ability and capability. All praise is due to Allah.

The video series and articles based on those discussions are being organized and arranged by Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, Al-Mawrid US. May Allah accept this collective effort by the organization and all the individuals involved. Amen.



Introduction

The concept of ‘The Descent of Jesus’ is an amalgamation of four ideas, one of which is the Ascension of Jesus (PBUH). Jesus’s ascension refers to the belief that when the Israelites decided to crucify Jesus (PBUH), God took him into His protection and lifted him up to the heavens. The common belief is that the concept originates from the Holy Qur’an. The basis for this argument is the words from Surah Aale Imran (3:55), *innī mutawaffika wa rāfi’uka ilayya*, meaning “Indeed, I will take you and raise you to Myself.” The exponents of this view hold that the words *rāfi’uka ilayya* imply that God lifted up Jesus (PBUH) alive. The first expression in the verse, namely *mutawaffika* is not interpreted to mean ‘give death.’ Instead, scholars interpret it to mean ‘to take up wholly.’

The second concept is that of the life of Jesus after ascension into heaven. This means that since his ascension, Jesus (PBUH) is still securely alive in heaven. To establish this concept, the exponents of this view argue on the basis of the above-mentioned verse from Surah Aale Imran and verses 157-159 of Surah An-Nisa. The Qur’anic expression used in Surah An-Nisa reads: *Wa mā qatalū hu yaqānan, bal rafa’u hu Allāhu ilayhi* (they did not kill him at all, but Allah had taken him towards Him). The words *Wa mā qatalū hu yaqānan, bal rafa’u hu Allāhu ilayhi*, are cited to corroborate the meaning given to the verse from Surah Aale Imran. This combination of the two verses is used to argue the continuous life of Jesus (PBUH). Some scholars deduce from the part-verse 159 reading, *Wa in min ahli al-kitābi illā layu’minanna bihi qabla mawtihi* (and there will be no one among the people of the Book who will not believe in him before his death), that Jesus (PBUH) has not died. Rather, he is alive in the company of God. These scholars take the two instances of the object pronoun ‘*hi*’, that is, ‘his/him’ in the expressions *layu’minanna bi hi* and *qabla mawti hi* as referring to Jesus (PBUH). It is as if the intended meaning

of these expressions is implying that every person from the People of the Book will surely believe in Jesus before Jesus's death.

The third concept is the 'Second Coming of Jesus,' which is based on the Hadiths. This idea can be summarized as follows. Jesus (PBUH) will descend directly from the heavens to earth near the Day of Judgment. He will descend with the company of angels on a minaret of a mosque in Damascus. At that time, *Dajjal* will have spread *fitnah* (tribulation) in the world, and a Muslim army will be ready to finish him off. Jesus (PBUH) will lead the Muslim army and kill *Dajjal* and the Jewish soldiers under his command. After that, Gog and Magog will emerge. Due to Jesus's supplication to God, they too will also be destroyed. The world will become a cradle of peace and security, and no religion other than Islam will survive.

The fourth concept is the 'Death of Jesus.' According to this concept, Jesus (PBUH) will die approximately forty years after his second coming to earth. Muslims will bury his blessed body, and soon afterward, the Day of Judgment will commence, and the world will come to an end. This concept of the Death of Jesus is also derived from the hadiths.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi acknowledges the Ascension of Jesus. However, he rejects the notion of Jesus being raised alive to the heavens as the idea goes against the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. According to him, the words *innī mutawaffika* clearly and unambiguously mean giving death to Jesus. The expression cannot be interpreted in any other sense at this occasion. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi interprets the words *rāfi'uka ilayya* to mean that Jesus's body will be lifted to God. According to him, the objective of 'the lifting up' of the body was to protect it from being desecrated by the Jews. Hence, in his view, God caused Jesus to die and then raised his body towards Himself. As far as the concept of the second coming of Jesus is concerned, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi declares it as subject to critical investigation. He argues that the hadiths about the second coming of Jesus invite questions when they are put against the yardstick of the Qur'an. Moreover, certain questions arise as we critically analyze all the

narratives on the subject according to the principles of understanding the Hadith. These questions and difficulties force us not to believe in the second coming of Jesus. This monograph is a statement of this position of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi.

The monograph has five chapters. The first chapter, titled ‘Statements from the Qur’an and Hadith,’ serves as a prelude, listing the Qur’anic verses and Hadiths from which the traditional scholars derive the concepts of Jesus’s ascension into the heavens, second coming, continuous life, and death. The objective is to lay the foundation for the discussion. The second chapter presents the views of the traditional scholars to highlight the context in which Javed Ahmed Ghamidi presented his position. The third chapter describes the intellectual and textual objections, identified by Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, that hinder us from accepting the general belief in the second coming of Jesus. These questions and problems relate to the traditional interpretation of both the Qur’an and the Hadiths. The fourth chapter is essentially a statement of the position of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi. It details his perspective on the texts in question and explains his reasoning. The fifth chapter is a comparative study which examines the arguments of the traditional scholars and explains the weakness of their stances in comparison to the position of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi.

The final section consists of an appendix, which cites the views of scholars who share the same viewpoint and do not believe in the Second Coming of Jesus. The purpose is to provide necessary guidance for readers seeking further research or comparative study.



Chapter 1

Statements from the Qur'an and Hadith

Jesus (PBUH) was the last Messenger sent to the Israelites. He was commissioned approximately five hundred years before the last prophet, Muhammad (PBUH). Allah Almighty sent him not only as the Prophet (*nabī*) but also as the Messenger (*rasūl*). The purpose of his prophetic mission was to complete God's argument (*itmām-e-hujjat*) against the Israelites. For this completion of the argument, God made him a living and observable sign. The manner in which he came into the world, the way he lived here, and the way he departed, are a combination of miraculous and extremely rare events. The Qur'an thus refers to him as *Kalimatullah* (the Word of God) and *Rūhullah* (the Spirit of Allah) and declares him to be a sign for all the world, stating:

...وَجَعَلْنَاهَا آيَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ.

... and made her [Mary] and her son [Jesus] a sign for the people of the world. (21:91)

Certain concepts about the ascent, the second coming of Jesus, and his life and death are prevalent among the Muslims. They hold that when the Israelites intended to crucify Jesus, God took him into His protection and raised him towards the heavens. He is alive and well in the heavens. Near the Day of Judgment, he will descend directly from the heavens to Earth, perform certain predetermined tasks, and then die a natural death. The Qur'anic verses and hadiths used to support these notions are presented in the following pages.



Arguments from the Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an contains various references and explanations about Jesus (PBUH). These statements are specifically directed toward the primary audience of the Qur'an—the people of the Arabian Peninsula. The purpose of these references was to refute their false claims and unfounded theories. Among these claims is the assertion regarding Jesus's death and ascension to God, which is addressed in three places in the Qur'an.

1. Surah Aale Imran, Verses 54-55

The first point of reference is found in verses 54-55 of Surah Aale Imran. The main discussion begins in verse 33, where it is stated that Allah chose Adam (PBUH) and Noah (PBUH) as individuals, and the descendants of Abraham, the Israelites and the Ishmaelites, as collective groups for the roles of Prophethood (*nabūwwah*) and Messengership (*risālah*), as well as to serve as divine representatives bearing witness against mankind. The relevant verse states:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ. ذُرِّيَّتَهُ بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ.

[These People of the Book want to argue with you.] No doubt, God, whilst giving preference to Adam and Noah, Abraham's family and Imran's family over all the nations chose them [to guide these nations]. They are the progeny of one another and [whatever they have been saying and doing, God is aware of it because] God hears all and knows all. (3:33-34)

Here, the Qur'an mentions Aale Imran, that is, the progeny of Imran as a prelude to the discourse to follow regarding their shining light, Jesus (PBUH). This prelude is followed by the story of Jesus's mother, Mary (PBUH). The Almighty describes how Mary's mother dedicated her child to Allah's service, how Mary (PBUH) devoted herself to worship from an early age, and how Allah chose her over all women of the world so that one of Allah's great signs manifested through her.

The verses explain how Allah gave Mary (PBUH) the glad tidings of Jesus revealing to her that he would declare his prophethood while still in the cradle. The book narrates how Jesus started his prophetic mission to the Israelites, informing them of the signs bestowed upon him by Allah - healing the blind, the leper, and bringing the dead to life. He explained that he performed these miraculous acts by the permission of God. Later, when the Israelites rejected his call, he called out *man ansārī ila Allāhi* (who is my helper on the path of God?). The verses tell us how his disciples responded *nahnu ansār Allāhi* (we are the helpers of Allah).

This is the context and background in which the verses 54-55 appear. These verses make it clear that the Israelites started plotting against Jesus (PBUH) to have him crucified under false charges of any crime.¹ Allah says that compared to His plan, their plots are insignificant. Consequently, Allah informed Jesus of His plan, stating:

وَمَكَرُوا وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكِرِينَ . إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ لِيَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ
وَرَأَيْكَ إِلَىٰ وَمُطَهِّرَكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ.

[This is what happened] and the Israelites started to devise covert schemes [against him] and [in response] God also devised a hidden scheme and in such scheming God is the best. At that time when God said: 'Jesus, I have decided to give you death and lift you up to Myself and I shall purify you from these who have disbelieved in you and shall grant your followers supremacy over these disbelievers until the Day of Judgement. Then to Me finally you shall all have to return. So, at that time, I shall give verdict on what you have been differing in.' (3:54-55)

¹ It is clear from verse 157 of Surah An-Nisa, that the Israelites wanted to kill Jesus through crucifixion. However, by Allah's command they could not achieve their evil designs

2. Surah An-Nisa, Verses 157-158

The second place where a reference to Jesus's status appears consists of Surah An-Nisa, verses 157-158. These verses form the concluding parts of Surah An-Nisa. The discourse in the group of verses begins with verse 153. Addressing Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the verse says: 'These People of the Book ask you to bring down directly to them a book from the heavens [instead of this Qur'ān]' (4:153). It is clarified to the Prophet that such demands by the People of the Book are not surprising as they have made such demands in the past. Indeed, they had put even greater demand before the Prophet Moses (PBUH): to let them see Allah directly, to which Allah responded by seizing them with a thunderbolt. The discourse continues by listing the severe crimes of the Israelites and then mentions that due to these crimes, Allah has prepared a painful punishment for them. These crimes include slandering Mary (PBUH) and attempting to kill her son, Jesus (PBUH). What is more, they even falsely claimed success in this heinous act. The truth is that they failed in their conspiracy, and Allah took Jesus (PBUH) up to Himself, having made the conspirators fall into confusion. It is stated:

يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىٰ كَبِيرَ
مِّنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرَنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصُّعْقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ^٤ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ^٥ وَأَتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا .
وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ بِمِيثَاقِهِمْ وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا
تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِّيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا . فَبِمَا نَقْضِهِمْ مِّيثَاقَهُمْ وَكُفْرِهِمْ
بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بَغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ^٦ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا . وَبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا
عَظِيمًا . وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ^٧ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا
صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ^٨ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ^٩ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ
عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ^{١٠} وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا^{١١} . بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ^{١٢} وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا
حَكِيمًا .

These People of the Book ask you to bring down directly to them a book from the heavens [instead of this Qur'an]. So, this is no matter of wonder. Of Moses they made an even greater demand. They had asked him: 'Show us God face to face.' Then, because of this rebelliousness, a thunderbolt struck them. After that, they deified the calf even when obvious signs had come to them; yet We still forgave this and had given Moses clear dominance [on them]. And We had lifted Tūr over them with a covenant with them and had directed them: 'Enter the gates [of the city] bowing your heads,' and had said to them: 'Do not be disobedient in the matter of the Sabbath,' and [on all these things] We had taken from them a firm covenant.

Then because they broke their covenant [We laid a curse on them] and because they denied the revelations of God and because they killed the prophets unjustly and because they said: 'Our hearts have a covering on them.' – no, in fact, it is God who has sealed their hearts because of their disbelief; so, [now] they will seldom embrace faith and because of their disbelief and because of their vicious accusation against Mary and because of their claim: 'We have killed the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of God.' – even though neither did they kill him nor did they crucify him; in fact, the matter was muddled up for them. Those who are disagreeing in this are inflicted with doubts about it; they have no knowledge about it; they are only following conjectures. They certainly did not slay him; in fact, God had lifted him up to Him. And God is Mighty, very Wise. (4:153-158)

3. Surah Al-Maidah, Verses 116-117

The third relevant passage consists of verses 116-117 of Surah Al-Maidah. This passage presents a conversation between Allah and Jesus to be held on the occasion of the Day of Judgment. It is thus an event that will occur in the future, which Allah has already described.

These verses explain that on the Day of Judgment, Allah will ask Jesus (PBUH) in front of his followers - the Christians - whether he had

told them to take him and his mother as deities other than Allah. Jesus will respond by saying: ‘How can I allow myself to make a statement that I am not allowed to make? If I had said such a thing, You would surely have known it. I told them nothing but what You commanded me to tell. While among them, I was a witness to their actions, but after You caused me to die, I was no longer watching over them. From my death to the Day of Judgment, it was You who was overseeing them. Hence, You are more aware of what they did.’

The verses mention *falam mā tawaffaytanī kunta anta ar-raqība ‘alayhim*. (Then when You gave death to me, after that You have remained the Watcher over them), clarifying that Allah caused Jesus to die (and raised him up to Himself), he had no knowledge of his followers’ affairs until the Day of Judgment. The verses cited are as follows:

وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يُعِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ءَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمَّيَ إِلَهَيْنِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ سُبْحَنكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقٍّ ۚ إِن كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ ۖ تَعَلَّمَ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ . مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ ۖ وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ ۚ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ .

[Those who have concealed the evidence of God should keep in mind the day when this conversation takes place] and this also that when [after reminding people of it] God will ask: “Jesus son of Mary! Did you tell people: ‘Regard me and my mother as gods besides God?’” He will reply: “Glory be to You! How was it befitting for me to say something which I have no right to say? If I had said this, it would have been in Your knowledge [because] You know what is in my heart and I do not know what is in Your heart. Only You are aware of all hidden things. I only said to them what You commanded me: ‘Worship God, Who is my Lord and your Lord too.’ I watched over them as long as I remained among them. Then when You gave death to me, after

that You have remained the Watcher over them and You are a witness to all things. (5:116-117)

These verses from the Qur'an detail the death of Jesus (PBUH) and his being raised to Allah. Of these, the verses from Surah Aale Imran mention both his death and ascension. In Surah An-Nisa, only the ascension is detailed while in Surah Al-Maidah, only the death is referenced. These verses indicate that Allah caused Jesus to die first and then raised him to Himself.



Hadiths on the Ascension and Descent of Jesus

There are nearly forty narratives on the subject of the second coming of Jesus, which are narrated in the six canonical Hadith works and almost all the collections made before and after these six works. These include narratives of all three grades: *Sahih*, *Hasan* and *Daif*. The details of the issues under study, as gleaned from all these reports, can be presented in the form of the following points:

War Between Muslims and Christians in Syria

- A battle will occur in the land of Syria before the Day of Judgment.
- The Muslim government in Syria will capture some Christians. In response, a Christian army will march towards Syria and advance to the location of *Amaq* or *Dabiq*.
- When the Muslim government in Madinah learns of this attack, it will dispatch an army to assist the people in Syria. This army will consist of exceedingly righteous Muslims.
- When this army confronts the Christian forces, the latter will ask them not to intervene in their affair and remain neutral.
- The Muslim army from Madinah will refuse to retreat and will declare that they cannot leave their brethren alone

against the enemy.

- The battle will then commence.
- At the start of the battle, a third of the Muslim army will flee. It will be a grave sin which Allah will not forgive.
- A third of the Muslim army will be martyred and will be considered the best of martyrs in the sight of Allah.
- The remaining third of the Muslim army will achieve victory over the Christians.

The Conquest of Constantinople

- The victorious Muslim army, instead of returning to Madinah, will march towards the Christian stronghold of Constantinople.
- Upon arrival, a battle will ensue and Constantinople will be conquered and fall under Muslim control.
- After the victory, the spoils of war will be distributed.
- The Muslim soldiers will feel secure and, being free of any fear, hang their swords on olive trees.

The Emergence of *Dajjal*

- Meanwhile, Satan will announce that the *Dajjal* has reached the families of the Muslims in Syria.
- Hearing this, the Muslim army will return from Constantinople.

Characteristics of *Dajjal*

- The *Dajjal* will be a young man with wheatish complexion and curly hair.
- He will be blind in one eye, with thick flesh over both eyes.
- The word *kafir* (disbeliever) will be written between his eyes.

- He will resemble Abd al-Uzza b. Qattan,² a man from the era of *ignorance* (pre-Islamic times).
- He will move at the speed of wind.

Feats of *Dajjal*

- He will command the sky to rain, and it will rain.
- He will command the earth to grow vegetation, and it will obey.
- He will order the earth to reveal its treasures, and it will comply.
- His livestock will return from pasture with humps high, flanks plump, and udders full of milk.
- He will kill a man, splitting him into two, then call him back to life, and the man will come forward laughing.
- People will follow him after witnessing his acts.
- Women and slaves will follow him first.
- He will also claim to be God.
- He will attempt to enter Madinah but will be unable to do so.

The Stay of *Dajjal* on Earth

- He will spread tribulations on earth and will stay for forty days, forty months, or forty years.

The Descent of Jesus (PBUH)

- When the Muslim army returns to Syria from Constantinople and lines up for the Fajr prayer, Jesus (PBUH), will descend.
- He will descend directly from the sky and land near a white minaret in the eastern part of Damascus or, according to

² ‘Abd al-Uzzā b. Qaṭṭan b. Amr al-Khuzāī. He was the son of Hālah daughter of Khuwaylid, maternal cousin of Khadijah, may Allah be pleased with her. He died before the advent of Islam.

some traditions, near a place called Rawhā near Madinah.

- As he descends, he will be resting his hands on the wings of two angels.

Characteristics of Jesus (PBUH)

- Jesus (PBUH) will be of medium stature with a fair complexion.
- His hair will appear wet and dripping with water, even when dry. When he lowers his head, droplets will fall, and when he raises it, grains of white silver will scatter.
- He will resemble Urwa b. Masūd³ in appearance.
- He will be wearing yellow clothing.

Leading the Prayer

- The Muslim leader will request Jesus (PBUH) to lead them in the prayer.
- Jesus will say that the *Imam* of the Muslims should lead the prayer, and so it will be.
- According to some narratives, Jesus (PBUH) will lead the prayer.

Jesus's (PBUH) Battle with *Dajjal*

- Then Jesus (PBUH) will set out to fight *Dajjal*.
- As soon as *Dajjal* sees Jesus (PBUH), he will begin to dissolve as salt dissolves in water. It will seem as if Jesus (PBUH) leaves him alone, he will dissolve away.
- However, Jesus (PBUH) upon God's command, will decide

³ Urwah b. Masūd Thaqafī. He is a famous Companion of the Prophet, peace be upon him. He was a respected man among the Quraysh. He was immensely beautiful and graceful.

to kill *Dajjal* himself.

- For this purpose, he will take *Dajjal* to the eastern gate of *Ludd*⁴ and kill him near the valley of *Afāq*⁵ with a spear.
- After the killing, Jesus (PBUH) will show people his spear covered with *Dajjal's* blood.

The End of *Dajjal's* Jewish Soldiers

- *Dajjal's* army will consist of seventy thousand Jews.
- After *Dajjal's* death, the Jews will seek to hide, but they will find no refuge.
- They will try to hide behind trees and stones, but the trees and stones will speak and call out to Jesus (PBUH): 'O Spirit of God, the Jews are here'.
- Any Jew that Jesus's (PBUH) breath reaches - and it will reach as far as his eyes can see - will not survive.
- Thus, all the soldiers of the army will be annihilated.

Jesus's (PBUH) Actions After the Victory

- After defeating *Dajjal*, Jesus (PBUH) will break the cross.
- He will kill the swine and end wars and the *jizya* tax.

The Emergence and End of Gog and Magog

- Shortly after the demise of *Dajjal*, God will command Jesus (PBUH) to gather the Muslims near Mount Ṭūr.
- In the meantime, Gog and Magog will emerge and swarm

⁴ Lydd, (Arabic: Ludd), is a city located near Tel Aviv, the capital of Israel,

⁵ Afīq is a Syrian city, located near the Israeli border. Lake Tiberias, the source of River Jordan, is located near this city. Towards the Southeast of this city, there is a low passage going through the mountains. This part is called the Valley of Afīq.

from every high place.

- They will pass by the Sea of Galilee⁶ and drink all its water.
- They will reach the mountain near Jerusalem and shoot arrows towards the sky to kill the beings of heaven. God will return these arrows covered with blood.
- Then they will besiege Jesus (PBUH) and his companions.
- Jesus (PBUH) will pray to God for protection from them.
- God will create worms in their necks, which will kill them all at once.
- The entire region will be filled with their corpses.
- Jesus (PBUH) will pray for their removal, and God will send birds like camels, which will carry the corpses away to caves.
- Their arrows and quivers will be so numerous that Muslims will be able to finish them only after burning them for seven years.

The Earth's Blessings Will Appear

- Due to the blessings of Jesus (PBUH), the earth will produce such large pomegranates that one will suffice for a group of people, and they will use its skin as a shelter.
- The milk of a single camel will suffice for a large group of people, a cow's milk will be enough for a large tribe, and a goat's milk will suffice for a small tribe.

The End of All Religions Except Islam

- All religions other than Islam will come to an end. The earth will be filled with Muslims as a vessel is filled with water. According to some narrations, the earth will be as full of

⁶ The biggest source of sweet water in Israel, this lake spans over 166 square kilometers.

Islam as a well is filled with water.

- The 'word' of people will become one, and none will be worshiped except Allah.

Establishment of Peace and Security on Earth

- The earth will become a cradle of peace. There will be an era of safety.
- Hatred and enmity will be lifted from the earth.
- Hostile people will reconcile, and enmities will end. Even swords will become unnecessary and will be turned into sickles.

Change in Nature of Predatory Animals

- Predatory animals will no longer be harmful. A small child will play with a snake, and it will not harm him.
- Animals will become peaceful towards each other. Predators, like lions, leopards, wolves, and livestock, including camels, cows and goats will graze together.
- The lion will be among camels like their male, and the wolf will be among sheep like their dog.

Abundance of Wealth

- There will be an abundance of wealth.
- The heavens will pour down sustenance, and the earth will yield its blessings.
- Poverty will be eradicated, and the needs of the needy will be fulfilled. People will want to distribute wealth, but there will be no one to accept it.

The Excellence of Worship

- Worship will become the most important aspect of life.
- People will regard one prostration before God as better than the world and all that is in it.

Jesus's (PBUH) Reign

- Jesus (PBUH) will rule over the Muslims as a just *Imam* and fair ruler.
- He will remain on earth for forty years.

The Death of Jesus (PBUH)

- Forty years after his descent, Jesus (PBUH) will pass away.
- Muslims will perform his funeral prayer and bury him.

The following are representative narrations encompassing these points:

1. عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: والذي نفسي بيده ليوشكن ان ينزل فيكم ابن مريم حكماً عدلاً فيكسر الصليب ويقتل الخنزير ويضع الجزية ويفيض المال حتى لا يقبله احد حتى تكون السجدة الواحدة خيراً من الدنيا وما فيها .

1. Narrated by Abu Huraira (RA) the Messenger of Allah said: '(O Muslims), I swear by the being who holds my life in His hands, Jesus, son of Mary, will shortly descend among you as a just ruler. Then he will break the cross, kill the swine⁷, and

⁷ Syed Abul A'la Maududi, while explaining the breaking of the cross and the killing of the swine, writes:

The meaning is that Christianity, as a separate religion, will cease to exist. The entire structure of the Christian faith is built upon the belief that God gave His only son (i.e., Jesus, peace be upon him) a 'cursed' death on the cross, thereby making him an atonement for humanity's

abolish⁸ the Jizya⁹ (tax on non-Muslims under Islamic rule). And such abundance of wealth will come that no one will accept it, and a single prostration (in prayer) will be better than the world and everything in it.' (Sahih Bukhari No. 3448)¹⁰

2. عن أبي هريرة رضى الله: عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: لا تقوم الساعة حتى ينزل فيكم ابن مريم حكماً مقسطاً فيكسر الصليب ويقتل الخنزير ويضع الجزية ويفيض المال حتى لا يقبله أحد .

2. Narrated by Abu Huraira (RA), 'The Day of Judgment will not occur until Jesus, son of Mary, descends among you. He will break the cross, destroy the pig, and abolish the Jizya tax. There will be such an abundance of wealth that no one will be left to accept it.' (Sahih Bukhari No. 2476)¹¹

3. عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : كيف أنتم إذا

sins. Among the distinctive features of the Christian community compared to other prophetic communities is their complete rejection of divine law (Shariah), basing their faith solely on doctrine—even to the extent of declaring swine permissible, which has been prohibited in the laws of all prophets. Thus, when Jesus (peace be upon him) himself declares upon his return that he is neither the son of God nor did he die on the cross, nor was he an atonement for anyone's sins, the Christian faith will be left without any foundation. Similarly, when he explains that he neither made swine permissible for his followers nor exempted them from adhering to divine law, the second distinctive feature of Christianity will also be abolished. (Tafheem al-Qur'an, Volume 4, Page 155)

⁸ In another narration, the word *harb* (war) is mentioned instead of *jizya*, meaning that war will come to an end.

⁹ That is, the differences between nations will cease, and everyone will become Muslim. As a result, there will be no wars, nor will there be any need to impose *jizya*.

¹⁰ This hadith is categorized as *Sahih*

¹¹ This hadith is categorized as *Sahih*

نزل ابن مريم فيكم واماكم منكم !

3. Narrated by Abu Huraira (RA) the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: 'What will be your situation when the son of Mary (Jesus) descends amongst you and at that time your Imam will be from amongst you!'¹² (Sahih Muslim No. 155)¹³

4. عن أبي هريرة أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: لا تقوم الساعة حتى ينزل الروم بالأعماق أو بدابق، فيخرج إليهم جيش من المدينة، من خيار أهل الأرض يومئذ.

فإذا تصافوا، قالت الروم: خلوا بيننا وبين الذين سبوا منا نقاتلهم، فيقول المسلمون: لا، والله، لا نخلى بينكم وبين إخواننا. فيقاتلونهم، فينهزم ثلث لا يتوب الله عليهم أبداً، ويقتل ثلثهم، أفضل الشهداء عند الله ويفتتح الثلث، لا يفتنون أبداً.

فيفتتحون قسطنطينية، فبينما هم يقتسمون الغنائم، قد علقوا سيوفهم بالزيتون، إذ صاح فيهم الشيطان: إن المسيح قد خلفكم في أهليكم، فيخرجون، وذلك باطل.

فإذا جاءوا الشام خرج، فبينما هم يعدون للقتال، يسوون الصفوف، إذ أقيمت الصلاة، فينزل عيسى ابن مريم صلى الله عليه وسلم، فأمهم فإذا رآه عدو الله، ذاب كما يذوب الملح في الماء، فلو تركه لانداب حتى يهلك، ولكن يقتله الله بيده، فيريهم دمه في حربته .

4. Narrated by Abu Huraira, the Prophet (PBUH) said: 'The Day of Judgment will not be established until the army of the Romans descends into al-A'māq or Dabiq. An army consisting of the best of the people of the earth at that time will come from Madinah to counteract them. When they arrange themselves in

¹² That is, Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will not lead the prayer (imamat).

¹³ This hadith is categorized as *Sahih*

ranks, the Romans will say: 'Do not stand between us and those who took prisoners from among us. Let us fight them.' The Muslims will say: 'No, by Allah, we will not stand aside and let you fight our brothers.' Then they will fight. One third of the Muslims will run away, and Allah will never forgive them. One third will be killed, they will be the best martyrs in the sight of Allah. The remaining third will win the battle. They will never be subjected to trials or tribulations.

Then they will conquer Constantinople. While they are dividing the spoils of war, after hanging their swords on olive trees, Satan will cry: 'The false Messiah has reached your families.' Hearing this, they will then leave [for their homes]. But the news will be false.

When they reach Syria, he (the false Messiah) will come out. While they are preparing for battle and lining up in ranks for the prayer, Jesus, son of Mary, will descend and lead them. When the enemy of Allah (the false Messiah) sees him, he will melt as salt dissolves in water. If Jesus were to leave him, he would dissolve completely, but Allah will have him killed at the hand of Jesus and show them Dajjal's blood on Jesus's spear.' (Sahih Muslim No. 7460)¹⁴

5. عن النّوّاس بن سّمعان قال: ذكر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الدّجال ذات غدّاء، فخفض فيه ورفع، حتّى ظنّناه في طائفة النّخل. فلما رحنا إليه عرف ذلك فينا، فقال: ما شأنكم؟ قلنا: يا رسول الله ذكرت الدّجال غدّاء، فخفضت فيه ورفعت حتّى ظنّناه في طائفة النّخل. فقال: غير الدّجال أخوفني عليكم، إن يخرج وأنا فيكم، فأنا حجيجه دونكم، وإن يخرج ولست فيكم فامرؤ حجيج نفسه والله خليفتي على كل مسلم.

¹⁴ This hadith is categorized as *Sahih*

إنه شاب ققط عينه طافئة، كأني أشبهه بعبد العزى بن قطن، فمن أدركه منكم، فليقرأ عليه فواتح سورة الكهف .

إنه خارج خلة بين الشام والعراق فعاث يمينًا وعاث شمالاً، ياعباد الله فاثبتوا.

قلنا: يا رسول الله وما لبثه في الأرض؟ قال: أربعون يومًا. يوم كسنة، ويوم كشهر، ويوم كجمعة، وسائر أيامه كأيامكم.

قلنا: يا رسول الله فذلك اليوم الذي كسنة، أتكفيينا فيه صلاة يوم؟ قال: لا، اقدروا له قدره.

قلنا: يا رسول الله وما إسرعه في الأرض؟ قال: كالغيث استدبرته الريح. فيأتي على القوم فيدعوهم، فيؤمنون به ويستجيبون له، فيأمر السماء فتمطر والأرض فتنبت فتروح عليهم سارحتهم، أطول ما كانت ذرًا، وأسبغه ضروعًا، وأمدّه خواصر، ثم يأتي القوم، فيدعوهم فيردون عليه قوله فينصرف عنهم، فيصبحون محللين ليس بأيديهم شيء من أموالهم، ويمر بالخربة، فيقول لها: أخرجي كنوزك، فتنبعه كنوزها كيغاسيب النحل .

ثم يدعو رجلاً ممتلئًا شبابًا، فيضربه بالسيف فيقطعه جزلتين رمية الغرض، ثم يدعو فيقبل ويتهلل وجهه، يضحك .

فبينما هو كذلك إذ بعث الله المسيح ابن مريم، فينزل عند المنارة البيضاء شرق دمشق بين مهرودين واضعًا كفيه على أجنحة ملكين، إذا طأ رأسه قطر، وإذا رفعه تحدر منه جمان كاللؤلؤ.

فلا يحل لكافر يجد ريح نفسه إلا مات، ونفسه ينتهي حيث ينتهي طرفه، فيطلبه حتى يدركه بباب لد، فيقتله.

ثم يأتي عيسى ابن مريم قوم قد عصمهم الله منه، فيمسح عن وجوههم ويحدثهم بدرجاتهم في الجنة .

فبينما هو كذلك إذ أوحى الله إلى عيسى: إني قد أخرجت عبادًا لي، لا يدان لأحد بقتالهم، فحرز عبادي إلى الطور .

ويبعث الله يأجوج ومأجوج، وهم من كل حدب ينسلون، فيمر أواثلهم على بحيرة طبرية فيشربون ما فيها، ويمر آخرهم فيقولون: لقد كان بهذه مرة ماء!

— ثم يسبرون حتى ينتهوا إلى جبل الخمر، وهو جبل بيت المقدس، فيقولون: لقد قتلنا من في الأرض هلم، فلنقتل من في السماء، فيرمون بنشابهم إلى السماء، فيرد الله عليهم نشابهم مخضوبة دماً .

ويحصر نبي الله عيسى وأصحابه حتى يكون رأس الثور لأحدهم خيرًا من مائة دينار لأحدكم اليوم. فيرغب نبي الله عيسى وأصحابه فيرسل الله عليهم النغف في رقابهم، فيصبحون فرسى كموت نفس واحدة.

ثم يهبط نبي الله عيسى وأصحابه إلى الأرض، فلا يجدون في الأرض موضع شبر إلا ملأه زهمهم ونتنهم.

فيرغب نبي الله عيسى وأصحابه إلى الله، فيرسل الله طيرًا كأعناق البخت فتحملهم فتطرحهم حيث شاء الله.

ثم يرسل الله مطرًا لا يكن منه بيت مدر ولا وبر، فيغسل الأرض حتى يتركها كالزلفة .

ثم يقال للأرض: أنبت ثمرتك، وردى بركتك فيومئذ تأكل العصابة من الرمانة، ويستظلون بقحفها ويبارك في الرسل، حتى أن اللقحة من الإبل لتكفي الفئام من الناس، واللقحة من البقر لتكفي القبيلة من الناس واللقحة من الغنم لتكفي الفخذ من الناس .

فبينما هم كذلك إذ بعث الله ريحاً طيبة، فتأخذهم تحت آباطهم، فتقبض روح كل مؤمن وكل مسلم، ويبقى شرار الناس، يتهارجون فيها تهارج

الحر، فعليهم تقوم الساعة.

5. Narrated by Al-Nawwās b. Sam'an (RA) that one morning the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) mentioned the Dajjal. During this time, the Prophet lowered and raised his voice. We thought that he was nearby in the palm grove.

Later in the evening, we went to the Prophet, peace be upon him. Seeing the fear on our faces, he asked, 'What is wrong with you?' We said, 'O Messenger of Allah, when you mentioned the Dajjal and lowered and raised your voice, we thought he was nearby in the palm grove.'

Upon hearing this, the Prophet said, 'I fear for you from something greater than the Dajjal. If the Dajjal appears during my lifetime, I will offer a conclusive argument against him. But if he appears after I am gone, every Muslim will make a conclusive argument against him. Allah will protect every Muslim.'

[The Prophet further said] The Dajjal will be a young man with curly hair. One of his eyes will be blind. He will resemble Abd Al-Uzzā b. Qaṭan. Whoever sees him should recite the opening verses of Surah al-Kahf.

He will emerge from between Syria and Iraq, spreading corruption left and right. O servants of Allah, remain steadfast [in your struggle against him].

We asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, how long will he stay on earth?' The Prophet replied, 'Forty days. But one day will be like a year, one day will be like a month, and one day will be like a Friday (i.e., seven days). The remaining (37) days will be like normal days.'

We asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, will the prayers of one day suffice for the day that will be like a year?' The Prophet replied, 'No, but estimate the times for the prayers.'

Then we asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, how fast will the Dajjal

move on earth?' The Prophet replied, 'Like a cloud driven by the wind'.

He will go to some people and invite them to his cause. They will accept his invitation and affirm his claim. He will command the sky to rain, and it will rain, and the earth to produce crops, and it will do so. In the evening, their livestock will return to their grazing grounds with their humps high, their udders full, and their flanks stretched.

Then he will go to other people and present his invitation. They will reject and deny him. When he leaves, their wealth will go with him. By morning, the people will be completely impoverished. Then he will pass by a wasteland and say to it, 'Bring forth your treasures,' and its treasures will follow him like a swarm of bees.

Then he will call a young man and strike him with a sword, splitting him in two. Then he will call him again, and the young man will come to him laughing and smiling.

During this time, Allah Almighty will send Jesus, son of Mary. He will descend near the white minaret in the eastern part of Damascus. He will be wearing yellow garments and leaning on the wings of two angels. When he lowers his head, it will seem as if drops are falling from it, and when he raises his head, drops will fall from it like pearls.

The breath of Jesus will reach as far as he can see, and no disbeliever who smells it will survive. Then Jesus will pursue the Dajjal and catch him at the gate of Ludd, where he will kill him.

Afterwards, Jesus will go to those whom Allah has protected from the Dajjal. He will wipe their faces and inform them of their ranks in Paradise.

Then Allah Almighty will reveal to Jesus, 'I have released such creatures, against whom no one has the power to fight. Take my servants to the mountain of Ṭūr for protection.'

Then Allah Almighty will send Gog and Magog, who will descend from every high place. The first of them will pass by the lake of Tiberias and drink all its water. The last of them will pass by it and say, 'There used to be water here!'

Then they will advance and reach the mountain where there is abundance of trees, that is, the mountain of the Sacred House. They will say, 'We have killed those on earth. Let us now kill those in the sky.' So they will shoot their arrows towards the sky. Allah will return their arrows covered in blood.¹⁵

Jesus and his companions will be in great difficulty. The head of an ox will be as valuable to them as a hundred dinars.

Then Jesus and his companions will pray to Allah, who will send insects that will bite the necks of Gog and Magog, and by morning they will all be dead.

Then Jesus and his companions will descend from the mountain and they will not find a single spot on earth that is free from their putrefaction and stench.

Then Jesus and his companions will again supplicate Allah, who will send birds as big as the necks of camels. They will carry the bodies of Gog and Magog and throw them wherever Allah wills.

Then Allah will send rain which will not leave any house of mud or hair, and it will wash the earth until it becomes like a mirror.

Then the earth will be told to bring forth its fruits and restore its blessing. As a result, there will be a pomegranate that will be enough for a group of people to eat, and they will seek shade under its skin. Milk will be so blessed that the milk of a camel will suffice a big group of men. The milk of a cow will suffice a tribe and that of a goat suffice a family.

¹⁵ This part is not included in this narration; it has been taken from the next narration, No. 7561.

Then Allah will send a pure wind which will take the soul of every believer and every Muslim. Only the wicked will remain, who will commit adultery like asses, and on them the Last Hour will come. (Sahih Muslim No. 7560)

6. عن جابر بن عبد الله، يقول: سمعت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: لا تزال طائفة من أمتي يقاتلون على الحق ظاهرين إلى يوم القيامة، قال: فينزل عيسى ابن مريم صلى الله عليه وسلم، فيقول أميرهم: تعال صل لنا، فيقول: لا، إن بعضكم على بعض أمراء تكرمه الله هذه الأمة .

6. Narrated by Jābir b. 'Abd Allah (RA). He said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) saying: 'A group from my Ummah (community) will always fight for the truth. They will prevail until the Day of Judgment. Then, Jesus, son of Mary (PBUH) will descend. The leader of the Muslims will say to him, 'Come and lead us in prayer.' He will say, 'No, you are leaders for each other.' This will be due to the honor that Allah has bestowed upon this Ummah.¹⁶ (Sahih Muslim No. 412)¹⁷

7. عن يعقوب بن عاصم بن عروة بن مسعود الثقفي، يقول: سمعت عبد الله بن عمرو، وجاءه رجل، فقال: ما هذا الحديث الذي تحدث به؟ تقول: إن الساعة تقوم إلى كذا وكذا، فقال: سبحان الله أو لا إله إلا الله، أو كلمة نحوهما لقد هممت أن لا أحدث أحدًا شيئًا أبدًا إنما، قلت: إنكم سترون بعد قليل امرًا عظيمًا يحرق البيت ويكون ويكون.

ثم قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: يخرج الدجال في امتي، فيمكث أربعين لا أدرى أربعين يومًا، أو أربعين شهرًا أو أربعين عامًا، فيبعث الله عيسى ابن مريم كأنه عروة بن مسعود فيطلبه فيهلكه، ثم يمكث الناس

¹⁶ The meaning is that instead of leading the prayer himself, he will ask the same person to lead it.

¹⁷ This hadith is categorized as *Sahih*

سبع سنين ليس بين اثنين عداوة، ثم يرسل الله ريحًا باردة من قبل الشام، فلا يبقى على وجه الارض احد في قلبه مثقال ذرة من خير او إيمان، إلا قبضته حتى لو ان احدكم دخل في كبد جبل لدخلته عليه حتى تقبضه. قال: سمعتها من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: فيبقى شرار الناس في خفة الطير واحلام السباع، لا يعرفون معروفًا، ولا ينكرون منكراً. فيتمثل لهم الشيطان، فيقول: الا تستجيبيون، فيقولون: فما تامرنا فيامرهم بعبادة الاوثان، وهم في ذلك دار رزقهم حسن عيشهم. ثم ينفخ في الصور، فلا يسمعه احد إلا اصغى ليئًا ورفع ليئًا، قال واول من يسمعه: رجل يلوط حوض إبله، قال: فيصعق ويصعق الناس، ثم يرسل الله، او قال ينزل الله مطرًا كأنه الطل او الظل نعمان الشاك، فتنبت منه اجساد الناس. ثم ينفخ فيه اخرى، فإذا هم قيام ينظرون. ثم يقال: يا ايها الناس هلم إلى ربكم، وَقُفُّوْهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ مَسْئُؤُلُونَ قال: ثم يقال اخرجوا بعث النار فيقال: من كم، فيقال: من كل الف تسع مائة وتسعة وتسعين .

قال: فذاك يَوْمًا يُجْعَلُ الْوِلْدَانُ شِيبًا — وذلك — يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَنْ سَاقٍ

7. Narrated by Ya'qūb b. 'Āsim b. 'Urwah al-Thaqafi: He said, I heard from 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr (RA) that a person came to him and started asking: What is that Hadith that you narrate about the time of the Day of Judgment? He expressed surprise and uttered SubhanAllah (Glory be to Allah) or Lā ilāha illa Allāh (There is no deity but Allah) or a similar phrase. Then he said: I intend not to narrate any Hadith to anyone now, because people talk and defame me. I had said that you will see a big disaster after a few days, which will burn the houses, and it will happen, it will definitely happen.

Then he said that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had said: The Dajjal will appear among my Ummah and will stay for

forty, I do not know whether he said forty days, forty months, or forty years. Then Allah Almighty will send Jesus, son of Mary (PBUH) who will look like 'Urwah b. Mas'ūd. He will search for the Dajjal and kill him. Then for seven years, people will live in such a way that there will be no enmity between two individuals. Then Allah Almighty will send a cool breeze from the direction of Syria. After that, there will be no one left on earth who has a speck of faith or goodness in his heart, this breeze will take his life. Even if any of you hide in a mountain, this breeze will reach there and take his life.

Then Satan will appear in a form and say to them: Do not you feel ashamed! They will say: So what do you command us? Satan will say: Worship the idol. They will worship the idol and despite this, their sustenance will be plentiful. They will live life comfortably.

Then the trumpet will be blown. Whoever hears its sound will turn his neck once to one side and raise it from the other side, meaning he will fall unconscious. The first person to hear the trumpet will be the one who will be plastering with mud the tank meant for providing water to his camels. He will fall unconscious and so will the other people. Then Allah Almighty will send rain like sperm. From this, people's bodies will grow. Then the trumpet will be blown for the second time and all people will stand and start looking.

Then it will be announced: People, come to your Lord and (the command will be that) stand them up, they will be questioned.

The Prophet (PBUH) said: Then it will be said: Take out a troop for Hell from them: It will be asked how many people are in that troop? The command will be: Take out nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand¹⁸.

The Prophet (PBUH) said: This is the day that will 'turn

¹⁸ It means that out of every thousand, only one will enter Paradise.

*children into old men.*¹⁹ *And this is the day, 'when there will be a great turmoil'*²⁰. (Sahih Muslim No. 7568)

8. عن أبي هريرة أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: ليس بيني وبينه نبي يعنى عيسى وإنه نازل فإذا رأيتموه فاعرفوه رجل مربوع إلى الحمرة والبياض بين ممصرتين كأن رأسه يقطر وإن لم يصبه بلل فيقاتل الناس على الإسلام فيدق الصليب ويقتل الخنزير ويضع الجزية ويهلك الله في زمانه الملل كلها إلا الإسلام ويهلك المسيح الدجال فيمكث في الأرض أربعين سنة ثم يتوفى فيصلى عليه المسلمون .

*8. Narrated by Abu Huraira (RA) the Prophet peace be upon him said: There is no prophet between me and him (i.e., Jesus). And he is to descend. When you see him, recognize him. He will be a medium-statured man, his face will be red and white. He will be dressed in two yellow garments. His hair will be like it is dripping with water, even though it will not be wet. He will fight for the sake of Islam. He will shatter the cross, kill the swine, and abolish the Jizya. During his time, Allah will destroy all religions except Islam. He will kill the Dajjal. He will stay on earth for forty years. Then he will die, and the Muslims will pray his funeral prayer. (Abu Dawood No. 4324)*²¹

9. عن سفينة مولى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: خطبنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: ألا إنه لم يكن نبي قبلى إلا قد حذر الدجال أمته، هو أعور عينه اليسرى، بعينه اليمنى ظفرة غليظة مكتوب بين عينيه: كافر، يخرج معه واديان أحدهما جنة والآخر نار، فناره جنة، وجنته نار، معه ملكان من الملائكة يشبهان نبيين من الأنبياء لو شئت سميتهما بأسمائهما وأسماء آبائهما، واحد منهما عن يمينه، والآخر عن

¹⁹ Al-Muzammil 73:18

²⁰ Al-Qalam 68:42

²¹ This hadith is categorized as *Sahih*

شماله، وذلك فتنة، فيقول الدجال: ألسنت بربكم؟ ألسنت أحيي وأميت؟ فيقول له أحد الملكين: كذبت. ما يسمعه أحد من الناس إلا صاحبه، فيقول له: صدقت. فيسمعه الناس فيظنون أنما يصدق الدجال وذلك فتنة، ثم يسير حتى يأتي المدينة، فلا يؤذن له فيها؟ فيقول: هذه قرية ذاك الرجل. ثم يسير حتى يأتي الشام، فيهلكه الله عند عقبة أفيق .

9. Narrated by Safinah, the servant of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH): The Prophet (PBUH) addressed us: 'There has not been a prophet before me who has not warned his nation about the Dajjal. His left eye will be blind and there will be a thick layer on his right eye. The word 'kāfir' will be written between his two eyes. He will have two valleys of heaven and hell. His hell will be heaven and his heaven will be hell. He will also have two angels with him, who will resemble two prophets. If I want, I can also tell the names of those prophets and their fathers. One of them will be on his right side and the other on his left. This will be a test. Then the Dajjal will say, 'Am I not your Lord? Do I not give life and death?' One of the angels will say, 'You are lying.' No human will be able to hear this. His companion will say to him, 'You have spoken the truth.' People will hear his voice and think that he is confirming the Dajjal. This will also be a test. Then he will leave and reach Madinah, but he will not be allowed to enter. He will say, 'This is the city of that man.' Then he will go from there to Syria and Allah Almighty will destroy him near the valley of Aftiq.' (Musnad Ahmad No. 21929)²²

10. عن أبي هريرة رضى الله: عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال لا تقوم الساعة حتى ينزل فيكم ابن مريم حكماً مقسطاً فيكسر الصليب ويقتل الخنزير ويضع الجزية ويفيض المال حتى لا يقبله أحد .

10. Narrated by Abu Huraira (RA) that the Day of Judgment will not be established until Jesus, son of Mary, descends as a just

²² This hadith is categorized as Hasan

ruler among you. He will break the cross, kill the pig, and abolish the Jizya (tax on non-Muslims). There will be so much wealth that no one will be left to accept it. (Sahih Bukhari No. 2344)²³

11. عن أبي هريرة أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: كيف أنتم إذا نزل ابن مريم فيكم وأماكم منكم؟

11. *Narrated by Abu Huraira (RA), the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "What will be your condition when the son of Mary (Jesus) descends among you and your Imam will be from among you?"²⁴ (Sahih Muslim No. 155)²⁵*

12. عن حذيفة بن أسيد الغفاري، قال: أطلع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم علينا ونحن نتذاكر، فقال: ما تذاكرون؟ قالوا: نذكر الساعة، قال: إنها لن تقوم حتى ترون قبلها عشر آيات فذكر الدخان، والدجال، والدابة، وطلوع الشمس من مغربها، ونزول عيسى ابن مريم صلى الله عليه وسلم، ويأجوج مأجوج، وثلاثة خسوف: — خسف بالمشرق وخسف بالمغرب وخسف بجزيرة العرب — وآخر ذلك نار تخرج من اليمن، تطرد الناس إلى محشرهم.

12. *Hudhayfah b. Usayd Ghaffārī narrated: We were conversing among ourselves when Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) joined us. He asked, 'What are you discussing?' The people explained that they were talking about the Day of Judgment. He said: 'It will not be established until ten signs appear before it.' Then he mentioned these signs: Smoke, Dajjal, dābbah al-Ard (Beast of the Earth), the sun rising from the west, the descent of Jesus son of Mary, Gog and Magog, three sinkings of the earth - one in the east, one in the west, and one in the Arabian Peninsula - and finally, a great fire that will rise from Yemen and herd people towards the place of gathering. (Sahih Muslim No.*

²³ This hadith is categorized as *Sahih*

²⁴ It means that Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will not lead the prayer (*imamat*).

²⁵ This hadith is categorized as *Sahih*

7467)²⁶

13. عن أبي هريرة، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ينزل عيسى ابن مريم، فيقتل الخنزير، ويمحو الصليب، وتجمع له الصلاة، ويعطى المال حتى لا يقبل، ويضع الخراج، وينزل الروحاء فيحج منها أو يعتمر أو يجمعهما قال: وتلا أبوهريرة: وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ²⁷ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا،²⁷ فزعم حنظلة أن أبا هريرة، قال: يؤمن به قبل موته: عيسى. فلا أدري هذا كله حديث النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، أو شيء قاله أبو هريرة.

13. Narrated by Abu Huraira (RA) the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: Jesus, son of Mary, will descend. Then he will kill the pig and abolish the cross. A congregational prayer will be established for him. He will distribute so much wealth that no one will accept it. He will end the kharāj tax and descend at the station of Rawhā²⁸ and perform Hajj or Umrah from there, or combine both. The narrator says that Abu Huraira (RA) recited the verse: 'Everyone from among these People of the Book shall definitely believe in him before his death; and on the Day of Judgement it will bear witness to them.' Hanḏalah says that Abu Huraira (RA) said: 'He will have faith before his death, meaning before the death of Jesus, peace be upon him.' The narrator says that he does not know whether all this was said by the Prophet (PBUH) or this is the saying of Abu Huraira (RA). (Musnad Ahmad No. 7903)

14. عن ثوبان مولى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عن النبي صلى الله عليه قال: عصابتان من أمتي أحرزهما الله من النار عصابة تغزو الهند وعصابة تكون مع عيسى ابن مريم عليه السلام.

²⁶ This hadith is categorized as *Sahih*

²⁷ An-Nisa 4:159

²⁸ A location situated 35 miles from Madinah.

14. *Thawbān, the freed slave of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) narrates that the Prophet peace be upon him said: 'Allah has saved two groups of my Ummah (community) from the Hellfire. One group is those who will invade India. The other group is those who will be with Jesus, son of Mary, peace be upon him.'* (Musnad Ahmad No. 22396)²⁹

15. عن أبي هريرة قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ينزل عيسى ابن مريم إماماً عادلاً وحكماً مقسطاً فيكسر الصليب ويقتل الخنزير ويرجع السلم ويتخذ السيوف مناجل وتذهب حمة كل ذات حمة وتنزل السماء رزقها وتخرج الأرض بركتها حتى يلعب الصبي بالشعبان فلا يضره ويراعى الغنم الذئب فلا يضرها ويراعى الأسد البقر فلا يضرها.

15. *Abu Huraira (RA) narrated that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said that Jesus son of Mary will descend as a just leader and fair judge. He will break the cross and kill the swine. A time of peace will ensue, swords will be turned into sickles and every venomous creature will lose its venom. The heavens will shower down sustenance and the earth will bring forth its blessings. Even a small child will play with a snake and it will not harm him, and sheep will graze with wolves and they will not harm them, and a lion will guard the cows and it will not harm them.* (Musnad Ahmad No. 10261)



²⁹ This hadith is categorized as *Hasan*

Chapter 2

The Position of Traditional Scholars

In the previous chapter, we discussed the various texts regarding the ascension and descent of Jesus (PBUH) to Allah. Before clarifying the position of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, it is essential to outline the perspectives of scholars of the Muslim *ummah*. This will provide the background against which Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has presented his viewpoint.

In our scholarly tradition, the concept of the second coming of Jesus (PBUH) is discussed under the topic of “Descent of Jesus”. This concept is based on the belief that when the Israelites intended to crucify Jesus (PBUH) Allah took him into His protection and raised him to Himself. Since that time until now, he is alive in the heavens. Near the Day of Judgment, he will descend directly to Earth.

He will descend alongside angels at a minaret in Damascus and will lead the army of Muslims. He will then kill the *Dajjal* and his Jewish followers. Due to his supplication to God, Gog and Magog will also perish. The world will become a cradle of peace and tranquility, and Islam will be the only religion left on Earth.

Jesus (PBUH) will rule as a just leader over the Muslims for forty years, after which he will die. Muslims will perform his funeral prayer and bury him. Shortly after his death, the Day of Judgment will commence.

The position of the traditional scholars and their arguments on this matter are detailed under the following headings:

- Arguments for the Ascension of Jesus
- Arguments for the Descent of Jesus
- Related Aspects of the Concept of the Descent of Jesus



Arguments for the Ascension of Jesus

Scholars and exegetes seek to argue for the concept that Jesus (PBUH) was raised to the heavens and is alive there is based on the interpretation of certain verses of Holy Qur'an. They present certain verses of the Qur'an as definitive arguments for their stances. These arguments and the way they are employed are described as follows:

1. Verses 54-55 from Surah Aale Imran

It is evident from verses 54-55 of Surah Aale Imran that the Israelites began to secretly conspire against Jesus (PBUH) in an attempt to crucify him under some false pretense. However, by the command of Allah, they were unable to do so. On this occasion, Allah comforted Jesus by saying that their plots hold no significance in front of His power. Allah would devise a plan that would render all their plots futile. Allah informed Jesus of this plan, saying:

[This is what happened] and the Israelites started to devise covert schemes [against him] and [in response] God also devised a hidden scheme and, in such scheming, God is the best. At that time when God said: "Jesus, I have decided to give you death and lift you up to Myself and I shall purify you from these who have disbelieved in you and shall grant your followers supremacy over these disbelievers until the Day of Judgement. Then to Me finally you shall all have to return. So, at that time, I shall give verdict on what you have been differing in. (3:54-55)

Allah assured Jesus of his protection through the words *innī mutawaffika wa rāfi'uka ilayya*, that is, 'I have decided to give you death and lift you up to Myself'. Scholars interpret these words to mean the ascension of Jesus and his being alive in the heavens. The expression *rāfi'uka ilayya* is understood as Allah raising Jesus alive to Himself, meaning that he is currently in the heavens with his physical body, alive. As for the phrase *mutawaffika* preceding *rāfi'uka* it is interpreted not as death but as taking Jesus (PBUH) wholly and safely into custody. Hence, the phrase *mutawaffika* itself is an argument for the life of Jesus (PBUH) and using it to denote the death of Jesus is incorrect.³⁰

³⁰Here one may raise the following question: The term verb *tawaffā* in the expression *mutawaffika* is commonly used in the Qur'an to mean 'death'. It has been variously used in the Book of God in the sense of giving death. What then made the traditional scholars ignore its conventional and common meaning and instead interpret it differently. We believe that the likely reason for this deviation is to avoid a contradiction between the Qur'an and Hadith [that results from taking the word in its conventional meaning]. Hadiths explicitly mention the life of Jesus (PBUH) and his descent from heaven near the Day of Judgment. Interpreting *mutawaffika* as dying would lead to a contradiction between these Hadiths and the mentioned verse. Since it is established that there can be no contradiction between the words of God and the words of the Messenger, therefore, it is imperative to resolve this apparent contradiction. There were two possible approaches to resolve this contradiction: one was to maintain the meaning of death in the verse and dismiss the Hadiths about Jesus's life and descent as conflicting. The other was to derive the meaning of life from the verse and align the Hadiths with it to ensure harmony. The majority of scholars and exegetes chose the latter approach. A minority preferred the first approach. Consequently, it would be right to say, *prima facie*, that the majority of the traditional scholars took the Hadiths as primary source and reinterpreted the mentioned verse. In other words, they interpreted the Qur'an in the light of Hadith. This verse from Surah Aale Imran not only supports the Hadiths regarding the descent of Jesus but also uniquely serves as evidence for both his life and descent. In contrast, a minority of scholars regarded the verse as primary and interpreted the Hadiths in light of the Qur'an. Given the apparent conflict between the Hadiths and the Qur'anic verse, they rejected the authenticity of the Hadiths

The earliest and the later generations of scholars have offered similar arguments for their preference for not taking the words *innī mutawaffika* in the sense of giving death. Essentially, this is an argumentation originated from the early scholars, which has been adopted by those who came later. However, to explain this view, we have quoted the books of the modern scholars. The purpose is to adequately cover the material and to explain it in an uncomplicated manner.³¹

The traditional scholars' arguments are as follows:

i. The literal meaning of *tawaffā* is not death

The primary argument of the traditional scholars and exegetes is that the word *tawaffā* (تَوَفَّى) in the expression *innī mutawaffika* (إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ) should not be used unhesitatingly in the meaning of death. The reason is that the verb *tawaffā* is used metaphorically for death, and its literal meaning is 'to take something completely' (*akhḍha al-shaya wāfiyan*) or 'to take something in its entirety' (*akhḍha al-shaya bi tamāmihī*). The determination of whether a word is used in its literal or metaphorical meaning in a sentence depends on the sentence, textual context, and other indicators in the discourse. The context of the statement clearly indicates that this word has not been used in its metaphorical sense. Rather it has been used in its literal meaning. Therefore, the expression *innī mutawaffika* means 'I will take you completely,' implying that Allah will take the entirety of Jesus's being, both soul and body, into His custody. This interpretation aligns with evidence from Arabic linguistics, parallels in the Qur'an, and hadith narratives. Anwar Shah Kashmiri in his book *Hayāt-e Ibn-e Maryam*³² states:

as originating from the Prophet, peace be upon him.

³¹ Comprehensive in the sense that they reflect the general views of the early scholars, and uncomplicated in the sense that they are written with Urdu readers in mind.

³² This is the Urdu translation of Allama Anwar Shah Kashmiri's Arabic work *Aqidat al-Islam fi Hayat Isa 'alayhi al-salam* (The Islamic Belief in

Take the word tawaffā. All its derivatives are used to mean to receive something entirely and completely. This is why, in respect of important and esteemed personalities, instead of using 'mawt' (death), the word tawaffā is used to show reverence and respect. Yes, sometimes the word 'mawt' (death) is also used as needed.

In short, the word tawaffā in the verse is undoubtedly used in its literal and significant meaning, the usage has not deviated from the convention in the least. This is also not possible, as if this word became synonymous with death and meant exactly death, then the intention of the speaker, i.e., expression of protection and sanctity, would be lost. (122)

Syed Abul A'la Maududi also interpreted this word as 'receiving completely' rather than giving death. He explains the terms under study to mean recalling someone from duty. He writes:

In fact, the word mutaffika has been used. The literal meaning of the word tawaffi is to take and receive. To give death (Urdu: ruh qabz karna) is the figurative usage of the verb, not the literal significant meaning. Here, this word is used in the sense of the English word 'to recall', which means to call back an official from his position. Since the Israelites had been continuously disobedient for centuries, despite repeated warnings and admonishments, their national character was deteriorating. They had killed several prophets and were thirsty for the blood of any righteous person who invited them towards goodness and righteousness. Therefore, Allah decided to complete the argument against them and give them one final chance by simultaneously sending two noble prophets, Jesus and John, peace be upon them both, who were accompanied by such clear signs of their divine mission that only those could deny who were extremely hostile to the truth and whose audacity and boldness against the truth had reached its limit. However, the Israelites also lost this last

the Life of Jesus, peace be upon him). This translation was done by Maulana Abu Talha Muhammad Sagheer Pratapgarhi.

opportunity. They not only rejected the invitation of these two prophets but one of their chiefs publicly beheaded a noble person like John at the request of a dancer, and their scholars and jurists conspired to get Jesus sentenced to death by the Roman Empire. After that, it was utterly useless to spend more time and effort in admonishing the Israelites. Therefore, Allah called His prophet back and decreed a life of disgrace for the Israelites until the Day of Judgment. (Tafheem al-Qur'an 1/257)

Pir Karam Shah Azhari, citing Zubaydi's *Taj al-Urus* and Qurṭubī's *Al-Jāmi li Abkam al-Qur'an*, stated that the word *tawaffā* carries both literal and metaphorical meanings. Its literal meaning is to take something entirely, and its metaphorical meaning is death or sleep. The principle of language and expression is that if a word carrying both literal and metaphorical meanings is used in a sentence, it should first be interpreted in its literal sense. If the sentence does not accept it or if the context and textual indicators oppose it, only then should one turn to its metaphorical meaning. It is not correct to rush towards prioritizing the metaphorical meaning. In the cited verse, there is no indicator that serves an argument for that *tawaffā* should be taken in its metaphorical sense. On the contrary, there are two indicators for taking it in its literal sense: firstly, the occasion of revelation (*shān-e nuzul*) of the verses reveals that they address the Christians of Najrān who had come in a delegation to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Since they believed in the divinity of Jesus (PBUH) these verses refute this false belief. The second indicator is from the Hadiths about the descent of Jesus (PBUH), which clearly affirm the that he is alive. Therefore, these pieces of evidence demand that *tawaffā* be interpreted in its literal sense of taking something entirely. He writes:

The established rule of semantics dictates that when a word has both a literal and a metaphorical meaning, the literal meaning should be preferred over the metaphorical. When clear indicators make the literal meaning impossible, the metaphorical meaning should be used instead. Insisting on the metaphorical meaning in the presence of strong indicators supporting the literal meaning, however, is akin to challenging conventional norms. Now consider

the meaning of the word tawaffā. The author of the lexicon Taj al-Urus describes the word waffā (وَفَّى) as: tawaffā hu, meaning 'he took it entirely, leaving nothing of it'. Imam Abu Abd Allah al-Qurtubi writes in his, Al-Jāmi li Ahkām al-Qur'an: [They say]: tawaffāyту māli min fulān, meaning 'I took back all the possessions from him.' This is the literal meaning of tawaffā.

Yes, it is also used in the sense of death, but that is its metaphorical meaning, as stated in Taj al-Urus: 'Its figurative meanings including: adrakat hu al-wafāt, meaning death (wafāt/maniyyah) caught him.' They say: 'tuwaffiyā fulān, to mean: he died. Tawaffā hu Allāhu, God took his life.' Now you can judge how unjust it is to ignore the literal meaning of a word and insist on its metaphorical meaning without any textual indicators. Moreover, not only is there no indicator for the metaphorical meaning in this case, but there are strong indications for its literal meaning. You might ask which are those indicators; in this regard, one thing is that the context of this verse is a strong indicator of this conclusion. For instance, the context of these verses shows they were addressed to the Christians of Najrān, who believed in the divinity of Jesus. The objective of the statement is to affirm the unity of God and refute the divinity of Christ. If Jesus had died, it would have been straightforward to tell the Christians that the one they consider God is dead, so how can someone who has passed away be God? However, the Qur'an's choice of not adopting this approach but rather using this style is clear evidence that this verse does not discuss the death of Jesus (PBUH).

Second clear indication is the following saying of the Prophet Muhammad: Hasan (RA) said that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) told the Jews that Jesus had not died, and he would return to them before the Day of Judgment.'

In the presence of such explicit statements, the literal meaning cannot be overlooked in favor of the figurative one. Therefore, the majority of exegetes, keeping the literal meaning in view, write:

متوفيك اى مستوفى اجلك ومؤخرک الى اجلك المسمى عاصمًا اياک عن قتلهم
*Allah will keep you alive until your appointed time and save you
 from being killed. (Baydāwī)*

متوفيك اى مستوفى اجلك معناه انى عاصمک من ان يقتلك الکفار.
*Mutawaffika, that is, I will complete your appointed term. It
 means: 'I will protect you from being killed by the disbelievers'
 (Al-Kashshāf)*

Imam Ibn Jarīr writes:

واولى الاقوال بالصحة عندنا قول من قال معنى ذلك انى قابضک من الارض
 ورافعک الى لتواتر الاخبار من رسول الله صلى الله تعالى عليه وآله وسلم –
*In my opinion, the most accurate view of those who say:, 'O Jesus,
 I will take you in custody from the Earth and raise you to Myself,'
 because the mutawatir narratives from Prophet Muhammad
 (PBUH) confirm that Jesus (PBUH) was raised alive to the
 heavens. (Diya al-Qur'an 1/235-236)*

ii. The Expression *rāfi'uka ilayya* Prevents from Taking the Metaphorical Meaning of *tawaffā* as Death

It is true that the verb *tawaffā* is also used in a figurative sense for death, but here it cannot be used in that sense. The reason is that the sentence does not end with *innī mutawaffika* (I will take you entirely). It is followed by *rāfi'uka ilayya*. These words prevent us from interpreting *tawaffā* as death.

In this context, Syed Abul A'la Maududi argues that these verses from Surah Aale Imran were revealed to refute the false belief of the Christians who attributed divinity to Jesus. The context of the verses demands that if Jesus had indeed died, then a style definitively and clearly implying his death and dissolution into dust would have been used. Instead, the Qur'an uses the phrase *rāfi'uka ilayya*. These words are not only inexplicit in the sense of death but also contain the full possibility of life. In the context of refuting the belief in divinity of

Jesus, this style indicates that Allah had raised Jesus to Himself without letting him die. He writes:

It should be understood that this entire discussion in the Qur'an is actually to refute and correct the Christian belief in the divinity of Christ. There were three main reasons for this belief among Christians:

- 1. The miraculous birth of Jesus.*
- 2. His apparent miracles.*
- 3. His being raised to the heavens, which is clearly mentioned in their books.*

The Qur'an confirms the first point and says that Jesus's (PBUH) fatherless birth was just a miracle of Allah's power. Allah creates whom He wills in whatever manner He desires. This unusual manner of birth is by no means an indication that Jesus (PBUH) was divine or had any share in divinity.

The Qur'an also confirms the second point and lists the miracles of Jesus (PBUH) one by one, but it clarifies that he had accomplished all these miraculous acts with the permission of Allah, not by his own power. Therefore, there is nothing in these acts that could lead you to conclude rightly that Jesus (PBUH) had any share in divinity.

Now, regarding the third point, if the Christian tradition had been entirely wrong, then it would have been necessary for refuting their belief in the divinity of Jesus (PBUH) to clearly state that the one they were making a God and the son of God, had died and turned to dust. [It would be said: 'if you want to confirm and satisfy yourselves, go to such and such place and see his grave. But instead of saying this, the Qur'an not only avoids explicitly stating that Jesus (PBUH) had died, and not only uses words that at least hold the possibility of being raised alive, but also reverses and tells the Christians that Jesus was never crucified in the first place. That is, the one who said 'Eli, Eli,

*lama sabaqtani*³³ at the last moment and whose image you carry, depicting him as crucified, was not Jesus (PBUH). God had taken up Jesus (PBUH) before that.

After this, those who try to extract the meaning of Jesus's death from the verses of the Qur'an actually prove that God is incapable of expressing His intent in clear and straightforward language. God forbid such a thing. (Tafheem al-Qur'an 1/257-258)

Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri argues that the original meaning of *tawaffā* is to take something completely. The use of this word for death is metaphorical. It is a recognized linguistic principle that even when a word is used metaphorically, it still encompasses its literal meaning and does not detach or differ from it. Therefore, when *tawaffā* is used in the metaphorical sense of death, it includes the literal meanings of bringing something to culmination and completion. In this case, it implies eternal death, which is a complete and permanent state, devoid of life. There is no interruption in this state of death till the Day of Judgment that would imply or necessitate life. In other words, the word *tawaffā* becomes suitable for death and used in this meaning because death is neither incomplete nor divided; it is whole and complete.

In the mentioned verse of Surah Aale Imran, the phrase *rāfi'uka ilayya* implies life. Therefore, interpreting *innī mutawaffika* as death makes the additional phrase irrelevant and unrelated. These words (that is, *rāfi'uka ilayya*) can only correspond to *innī mutawaffika* if *tawaffā* is interpreted in its literal sense of receiving in entirety. Then alone, the entire phrase *rāfi'uka ilayya* becomes relevant and meaningful. He writes:

If the word mutawaffika in the divine words innī mutawaffika

³³ This is a verse from the Psalms, which means: 'My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?' (Psalms 22:1). According to the Gospel, when Jesus (PBUH) was crucified, he repeatedly cried out these words in that state (Matthew 27:46).

meant 'I will cause your death', then the words 'innī rāfuka ilayya' would be unnecessary. Tawaffā is commonly used for death as a metaphor, however death is not its literal meaning for which the word has been coined. ... Therefore, my research concludes that according to the principles of rhetoric, the significant meaning is the true meaning of a word. ... Thus, the meaning of the verse is: I will grant you the full term destined for you, your enemies will not have the power to kill you, rather I will give you a natural death.

Tawaffā encompasses the entire lifespan from beginning to end. Raf lies in between. Since tawaffā covers both ends of the lifespan (hence mentioned first) and raf is in the middle (thus mentioned later). It signifies the completion of the lifespan. ... In conclusion, the discussion of tawaffā regarding Jesus can only apply when he completes his entire lifespan, which will be after his descent. This is mentioned in Surah Al-Maidah. It is not that there are two instances of tawaffā, one before the raising and another after the descent, nor it is sound to say: the words mutawaffika and rāfi'uka ilayya have been reversed in order of presentation, prepositioning the one and post-positioning the other. (Hayāt Ibn Maryam, 127-128)

iii. The Expression *rāfi'uka* Means 'Taking Up Jesus Fully, Both With Body and Soul'

This is an extension of the previous argument. The rationale is that as a human, Jesus (PBUH) is a combination of both soul and body. Therefore, when addressing Jesus (PBUH) with *innī rāfi'uka ilayya* ('I am going to lift you up to Myself'), it means that Allah will raise the human entity that Jesus (PBUH) represents, which is a combination of both soul and body. If only the soul or only the body were to be raised, then it would have been specifically stated thus: 'I am going to lift your body or your soul up to Myself'. Without this clarification and differentiation, if it is said that Jesus is to be raised, it means that his entire being, comprising both body and soul, is intended. Writes Mufti Muhammad Shafi Usmani, in his work

Maāriful Qur'an:

Wa rāfi'uka ilayya - It obviously means that Jesus (PBUH) has been addressed and told: I am going to lift you up to Myself. Everyone knows that the name Jesus is not just of the soul but of the soul along with the body. Therefore, it is entirely wrong to take the expression lifting him up to mean only spiritual lifting, excluding the body. (2/76)

Highlighting the stress obtained by the preposition *ilā*, he adds:

Here, the use of the particle ilā along with the word raf, completely negates the possibility of a metaphorical meaning. In this verse, the Almighty says 'rāfi'uka ilayya' (I am going to lift you up to Myself). In Surah An-Nisa, where the belief of the Jews is refuted, it has been said: 'Wa mā qatalū hu yaqānan bal rafaa hu Allāhu ilayhi' (they did not kill him at all, but Allah had taken him towards him). That is, the Jews have certainly not killed Jesus. Rather, Allah lifted him up to Himself. To lift someone up to oneself implies nothing but raising of the living being, both soul and body. (2/76)

iv. The Context Demands Consolation, While Death is Contrary to Consolation

Another argument for the traditional interpretation is that here, Jesus (PBUH) is being reassured that he would be saved from his enemies. He is informed that all the conspiracies of the enemies will fail, and Allah will keep him safe in every way. How can a disconcerting news of the end of life be given at this moment of reassurance? In the case of death, the whole purpose of consolation and reassurance is lost. Maulana Idris Kandhlawi, explaining this argument, writes:

The majority of the Companions and their Successors as well as the generality of the righteous elders say that in this verse, tawaffā does not mean death. Rather, here its significant and literal meaning, i.e., to take something completely, is intended. The reason is the news of tawaffā is being given to Jesus—who at

that time was fully besieged and cornered by the enemies—in order to reassure and console him. He is told: O Jesus, do not be afraid of the onslaught by the siege of enemies. I will snatch you completely, both soul and body, from these villains. Your existence among them was an expression of My great blessing for them. Their conduct has proved that they are not worthy of keeping this blessing. Their ingratitude and disrespect deserve that this blessing be completely taken back from them...

In short, in the verse the word tawaffā means to take completely. The meaning of death is not intended, nor is it appropriate for this context, because when bloodthirsty and lethal enemies are all around, giving news of death at that time for consolation and comfort is not appropriate. The enemies' aim is to take life. At that time, it is appropriate to say that you should not worry, we will extract you completely and intact from your enemies' siege so that even your shadow cannot be reached by the enemies. So, if in the verse tawaffā is meant as death, then it would not be a consolation for Jesus but for the Jews, and the meaning would be: O Jews, do not worry and do not think of killing the Messiah, I myself will give him death. And I myself will fulfill your desire and wish; you will not have any hardship. This is not a consolation for Jesus, but for the Jews. (Maāriful Qur'an 1/629-630)

v. The Phrase *mutawaffika* can be Interpreted as Referring to Death if it is Occurring After *rāfi'uka*

Some scholars believe that *tawaffā* in the verse is used in the sense of death, but in order of occurrence in time, it is after the event of 'raising'. That is, the sequence in the expression of the words of the verse: *innī mutawaffika wa rāfi'uka ilayya* is not chronological. In this expression, *tawaffā bi hi* meaning death, although mentioned first, is subsequent in occurrence. And *rafa'a bi hi*, meaning he raised him, though mentioned later, is prior in occurrence. The prepositioning (*taqdim*) of *tawaffā* alludes to the great event mentioned in the hadiths, which will start with the descent of Jesus and be completed upon his death. He will be saved from being killed and

crucified, and will be given a natural death with full honor and respect. Moreover, this pre-positioning refutes the false notion of the divinity of Jesus (PBUH) held by Christians and clarifies that Jesus (PBUH) belongs to humanity and will experience death like all humans.

If someone objects to this interpretation and says that the word *rāfi'uka* is conjugated with *mutawaffika* and, therefore, the order of presentation requires that the event of death must come before the event of ascension, he should be informed that the *wāw* (the Arabic particle meaning 'and') does not imply order in the things conjugated using this particle. The Qur'an provides examples where events occurring later are narrated first.

Mufti Muhammad Usmani writes:

This narrative from Ibn Abbas has been mentioned in Tafsir al-Durr al-Manthbur, in these words: Narrating from Jawohar on the authority of al-Dabbak, 'Ishaq b. Bishr and Ibn Asakir have reported the following interpretation by Ibn Abbas regarding the verse innī mutawaffika wa rāfi'uka ilayya ('I will take you and raise you to Myself'): I will raise you to Myself, then in the end times, I will give you a natural death.' (2/36) To sum up, this interpretation means that tawaffā implies death. However, the words in the expression have been pre-positioned and post-positioned. The act implied in rāfi'uka will chronologically be realized first and then mutawaffika will happen. The reason for and wisdom in pre-positioning the term mutawaffika is to indicate the whole event that is to occur later: I am not calling you back to Myself permanently. It will be temporary. You will come to this world again, achieve victory over the enemies, and later die a natural death. Thus, Jesus's death after descending from the heavens and achieving victory in the world was a miracle, and a culmination of the honor and respect for him. It also refutes the Christian belief in Jesus's divinity because otherwise his ascension into the heavens alive would have strengthened their belief that he is ever living and self-subsisting like Allah.

Hence, God mentioned lifting Jesus to Himself only after mentioning mutawaffika, and thus falsified all such beliefs ...

Nothing but these miracles had become the reason for the ignorant Christians to fall into the belief of deifying him, though each of these miracles, if their details are considered carefully, prove to be the evidence for him being a human being with human characteristics and an obedient servant of God. Hence, at every such occasion in the Qur'an [where Jesus's miracles are recounted], points to the refutation of the belief in Jesus's divinity. The event of being raised to the heavens would have strongly reinforced this misconception, so by mentioning mutawaffika first, this doubt is completely dispelled. This shows that the verse not only refutes the Jews who claim Jesus was crucified, telling us that Allah ruined the plans of the Jews who were intent on killing and crucifying Jesus. By employing this pre-positioning and post-positioning of the terms, the verse also refutes the Christians by indicating that Jesus is not a God, immune from death. A time will come when he too will die. (Maāriful Qur'an 2/74-76)

2. Verses 156-159 of Surah An-Nisa

These verses belong to the concluding parts of Surah An-Nisa. The relevant section of the Surah states that the Jews slandered Maryam and then attempted to kill her son Jesus (PBUH), falsely claiming success in this heinous act. In reality, they failed in this conspiracy. Allah put them into doubt and took Jesus (PBUH) to Himself. The verse states:

وَبِكْفَرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا عَظِيمًا. وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَىٰ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ۚ بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا. وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ ۚ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا.

*... and because of their disbelief and because of their vicious accusation against Mary and because of their claim: 'We have killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of God.' – even though neither did they kill him nor did they crucify him; in fact, the matter was muddled up for them. Those who are disagreeing in this are inflicted with doubts about it; they have no knowledge about it; they are only following conjectures. They certainly did not slay him; in fact, God had lifted him up to Him. And God is Mighty, very Wise. Everyone from among these People of the Book shall definitely believe in before his death; and on the Day of Judgement, it will bear witness to them.*³⁴ (4:156-159)

This verse is used to argue for the continuity of life of Jesus (PBUH). This argument by the scholars is based on two points:

i. The Words *wa mā qatalū hu* (But they did not kill him) Prevents from Implying the Meaning as Death

In verse 157 of Surah An-Nisa, the phrase *wa mā qatalū hu wa mā salabū hu*, that is, “they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him” also refutes the death of Jesus. It means that the Israelites could not bring about his death. They neither could kill him nor crucify him. This negation of being killed or crucified is, in essence, a negation of death. The verse ends with *wa mā qatalū hu yaqānan* that is, ‘they certainly did not slay him’ which strongly refutes the occurrence of death. After such a strong refutation, it is not correct to interpret the word *tawaffā* in Surah Aale Imran (3:55) - which is not explicit in meaning death - as death.

Qazi Sanaullah writes in *Tafsir al-Mazhari*:³⁵

³⁴ Translation from *Tafheem-ul-Qur'an*

³⁵ This argument can be understood with an example: If the ruler of a country declares that he will not allow the conspiracy of exiling a national benefactor to succeed, and that the enemies will neither be able to abduct him nor expel him from the country. Then, if in the very next sentence, the

ان المراد بالتوفى هو الرفع الى السماء بلا موت يشهد به الوجدان بعد
ملاحظة قوله تعالى — وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ — ولولا نفي الموت
عنه لما كان من نفي القتل فائدة إذ الغرض من القتل الموت

The tawaffā refers to being raised to the heavens without death, because after considering the statement of the Lord of the Worlds: wa mā qatalū hu wa mā salabū hu, that is, they certainly did not slay him, nor did they crucify him”, the intuitive consciousness (wijdān) testifies to this, because if the negation of death is not accepted, then the negation of killing is of no benefit, as the purpose of killing is nothing other than death. (2/56)

ii. People of the Book Having Faith in Jesus Before His Death

Verse 159 states: *Wa in min abli al-kitābi illā layu'minanna bihī qabla mawtibī, wa yawma al-qi'yāmati yakūnu 'alayhim shahīdan* (everyone from among these People of the Book shall definitely believe him [that is, Jesus] before his [that is, Jesus's] death. And on the Day of Judgement he [that is, Jesus] will bear witness to them). Scholars identify the antecedent of the two objective pronouns (*damīr mafūlī*) [hi, his] in the phrase *la yuminanna bi hī qabla mawti hī,* as referring to Jesus. It means: 'Every person among the People of the Book will necessarily believe in Jesus before his, that is, Jesus's death.'

This interpretation of the verse affirms that Jesus is alive. The argument is that according to the verse, the death of Jesus (PBUH) and the belief of the People of the Book in him are mutually binding. That is, Jesus's death will occur only after these deniers will have faith

ruler says that he himself will 'take him out,' the meaning of 'taking him out' can only imply rescuing him from the enemies' grasp, not expelling him from the country. This is because interpreting it as expelling him from the country would mean that the conspiracy effectively succeeded, as the ruler himself would be doing exactly what the enemies intended.

in him. If his death were to occur at the time of being raised to Allah, then it was necessary that the Jews who conspired to kill him would have believed in him before that. Similarly, it also entailed that every Jew living since his ascension to Allah must have believed in him. It follows that the world would have been devoid of Jews for the past two thousand years. History testifies that neither of these events has occurred. If this has not happened, and certainly it has not, then it clearly means that Jesus (PBUH) is alive and has not yet died.

Some other scholars take the objective pronoun (*damīr mafūli*) [hi, his] in the phrase *la yuminanna bi hī*, to refer to Jesus and the objective pronoun *hi* in *qabla mawti hī* to refer to each individual from among the People of the Book. It means: 'Every person among the People of the Book will necessarily believe in Jesus before his own death.'

This interpretation is understood to materialize such that every Jew, upon facing imminent death, will realize the truth of Jesus's prophethood and will believe in him moments before dying.

Based on this interpretation, scholars argue that this verse corroborates and strengthens the Hadiths about the second coming of Jesus (PBUH). Combining the themes of the verse and the Hadiths confirms the veracity of the concept of Jesus (PBUH) being alive and descending near the Day of Judgment. This position is further strengthened by a statement of Abu Huraira, who presented this verse of Surah An-Nisa in support of the Hadiths about the second coming of Jesus. Mufti Muhammad Shafi Usmani, representing this position, writes:

The pronoun 'hī' in mawti hī, ('his death') refers to Jesus. The verse means that these People of the Book, although currently not believing in Jesus - the Jews outrightly deny his prophethood and label him, God forbid, as a liar and imposter, and the Christians claim to believe in him but some, in their ignorance, have gone so far as to believe, like the Jews, in his crucifixion, while others among them have exaggerated their belief to the extent of deeming him as God and the son of God. This verse of

the Qur'an tells us that these people, though currently not having the sound belief in Jesus's prophethood, will all come to believe in him correctly when he descends to this earth again near the Day of Judgment. Christians will all become Muslims with the correct belief, and those Jews who oppose him will be killed, and the rest will become Muslims. At that time, disbelief in all its forms will be eradicated from the world, and only Islam will reign supreme.

Abu Huraira (RA) narrates: The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: 'Jesus, the son of Maryam, will indeed descend as a just ruler. He will kill Dajjal and the pig, break the cross, and at that time, worship will be only for the Lord of the Worlds.' After this, Abu Huraira said: 'If you wish, read this verse of the Qur'an, which mentions this reality that 'There will be no one among the People of the Book but will believe in him before his death.' He said: 'Before the death of Isa.' And he repeated these words three times.

This interpretation by Abu Huraira (RA), a distinguished Companion, is established through authentic Hadith, in which qabla mawti hi, ('before his death') has been explained as the death of Jesus, clearly determining that the verse talks about the descent of Jesus near the Day of Judgment.

Thus, based on this interpretation, the verse conclusively establishes that Jesus has not yet died, but will die on this earth after the wisdoms associated with his descent near the Day of Judgment are realized...

In summary, when the words qabla mawti hī in the mentioned verse is read together with the authentic Hadith of Abu Huraira, it clearly establishes that Jesus is alive and will eventually dominate over the Jews after descending near the Day of Judgment. (Maāriful Qur'an 2/603-605)

The second interpretation invites the question: How can every individual of the People of the Book have the opportunity to

appreciate the prophethood of Jesus (PBUH) and believe in him in the case of sudden death? In response to this question, statements of Abdullah b. Abbas (RA) are presented. In the referred sayings of Ibn Abbas, it is stated that every Jew will necessarily acknowledge Jesus's prophethood moments before their death. Imam Jalal al-Din Suyuti mentions these statements of Ibn Abbas (RA) in his exegesis entitled *Durr-e Munthūr*:

قيل لابن عباس: أُرأيت إن خر من فوق بيت قال: يتكلم به في الهواء فقيل:
أُرأيت إن ضرب عنق أحدهم قال: يتلجلج بها لسانه وأخرج ابن جرير عن
ابن عباس قال: لو ضربت عنقه لم تخرج نفسه حتى يؤمن بعيسى.

Ibn Abbas (RA) was asked: What do you say if a Jew were to fall from a house? He replied: [Before hitting the ground], he will verbally express his belief in this matter while still in the air. It was asked: What if one of them (Jews) is beheaded? He said: He will quickly utter his belief with his tongue. Ibn Jarir [al-Tabari] has attributed to Ibn Abbas that if the neck of a Jew is severed, his soul does not leave his body until he believes in Jesus. (2/733)



Arguments for the Descent of Jesus

The concept of Jesus descending from heaven to earth is argued from hadiths. Traditional scholars and interpreters of the Qur'an present these hadiths collectively as definitive evidence supporting this idea. As for the Qur'an, there is no explicit text directly indicating the second coming of Jesus (PBUH). However, these scholars believe that certain verses of the Qur'an contain indications supporting the descent of Jesus (PBUH). Among these, the primary source is the above-mentioned verses concerning the ascension of Jesus (PBUH) and referring to that he is alive. Additionally, Surah Al-Zukhruf (43:61), referring to Jesus as a sign of the Day of Judgment, also supports the idea of his second coming.

Therefore, when the verses affirming the ascension and establishing that he is alive, and the hadiths about his descent and subsequent death are interpreted in the light of each other, Allah's complete plan becomes clear. If you study the verses, you learn that they establish Jesus's (PBUH) ascension and his ongoing life and hint at his descent. Hadiths also confirm his descent and subsequent death. This affirmation of Jesus's (PBUH) second coming and subsequent death necessarily implies his [prior] ascension and ongoing life.³⁶ Therefore, these Hadiths prove to be the supportive and corroborative of the mentioned verses.

Following this introduction, let's examine the details of the arguments for the descent of Jesus:

1. Basis of the Concept of the Descent of Jesus: Hadiths

According to scholars, the concept of the descent of Jesus is based on hadiths. These hadith narratives, with *sahih* (authentic) and *hasan* (good) chains of transmission, are found in most books of hadith. They mention that Jesus (PBUH) will descend from heaven to earth close to the Day of Judgment. He will land on a minaret of a mosque in Damascus and lead the army of Muslims. He will then kill the *Dajjal* and his Jewish soldiers. Due to his supplication to God, Gog and Magog will also perish. The world will become a cradle of peace and harmony, and no religion other than Islam will remain on Earth.

Syed Abul A'la Maududi mentions the representative hadith texts on the subject of the Descent of Jesus in his exegesis, *Tafheem-al-Qur'an*:

These are 21 narratives by 14 Companions, authentically reported in the most reliable books of hadith. ... All these hadiths clearly and explicitly inform about the descent of the same Jesus who was born without a father from Mary two thousand years ago. ... If a person believes in hadith, he must believe that the returning Jesus will be the same Jesus, son of Mary. And if

³⁶ The meaning is that descent is only possible if ascension has already occurred. Similarly, death can only take place if life is still present

someone does not believe in hadith, then he cannot believe in the arrival of any returning one, because the belief in the arrival is not based on anything other than hadiths. (4/162)

2. Concurrent Transmission [*Tawatur*] of the Hadiths About the Second Coming of Jesus

Scholars maintain that the hadiths about the descent of Jesus are numerous as well as *mutawatir* (concurrent). These are not like common individual to solitary reports (*akhbar-e-ahad*) which are reported by a few. These hadith are narrated by multiple Companions, transmitted by many narrators, and recorded by most hadith compilers.

Imam Ibn Kathīr states that the hadiths about the descent of Jesus have reached the level of *tawatur*. These narratives tell us that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said that before the Day of Judgment, Jesus would descend again. At that time, he will come as a just ruler. In the exegesis of Ibn Kathīr, it is mentioned:

وقد تواترت الأحاديث عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه أخبر بنزول عيسى عليه السلام قبل يوم القيامة إماماً عادلاً وحكماً مقسطاً.

The narratives ascribed to the Messenger of Allah on the subject are mutawatir, and these reports tell us that the Prophet informed about the descent of Jesus before the Day of Judgment as a just leader and a fair judge. (4/169)

Imam Shawkānī also considers the hadith narratives about the descent of Jesus among the *mutawatir* reports. He includes the narratives about the emergence of the *Dajjal* in the same category. In *Awn al-Mabūd*, the commentary on Sunan of Abu Dawud, his position is quoted as follows:

وقال الشوكاني وجميع ما سقناه بالغ حد التواتر ... الأحاديث الواردة في المهدي المنتظر متواترة والأحاديث الواردة في الدجال متواترة والأحاديث الواردة في نزول عيسى عليه السلام متواترة .

Imam Shawkānī said that all the narratives we have mentioned have reached the level of tawatur ... Therefore, hadiths about the awaited Mahdī, the Dajjal, and the descent of Jesus are all mutawatir. (11/308)

3. Verse 61 of Surah Al-Zukhruf

Surah Al-Zukhruf (43:61) declares Jesus (PBUH) to be a sign of the Day of Judgment. It reads: *Wa innahu la'ilmun lissā'ati* (Certainly, he is a great proof of the Day of Judgement). When something is termed as a sign of the Day of Judgment, it is obviously related to the time close to the Day of Judgment. Various signs of the Day of Judgment are mentioned in hadith works, among which the second coming of Jesus is counted as a sign of the Hereafter. Therefore, scholars argue that this verse declares Jesus as a sign of the Day of Judgment in that he will descend from the heavens [near the Hour]. Therefore, this verse supports and corroborates the descent of Jesus as mentioned in the hadiths. The verse, and its textual context is as follows:

وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ . وَقَالُوا ءَالِهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ مَا ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًا بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ . إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مَثَلًا لِّبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ . وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ مَلَائِكَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ يَخْلُفُونَ . وَإِنَّهُ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ فَلَا تَمْتَرُنَّ بِهَا وَاتَّبِعُون ۚ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ . وَلَا يَصُدَّنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ .

No sooner the example of the son of Mary was mentioned than, lo and behold, your people raised a clamor and said: "Who is better, our deities or he?" They said so only out of contentiousness. They are a disputatious people. He was no more than a servant (of Ours), one upon whom We bestowed Our favors and whom We made an example (of Our infinite power) for the Israelites. If We had so willed, We could have made some of you into angels to become your successors on earth. Verily he [i.e., Jesus] is a portent of the Hour. So be in no doubt concerning it and follow

Me. This is the Straight Way. Let not Satan hinder you (from believing in the Hour), for surely he is your open enemy. (43:57-62)³⁷

Most commentators(exegetes) also hold this view. In the exegesis of Ibn Kathīr, it is stated:

That is, Jesus is a sign of the Day of Judgment as it is he who is being discussed in the preceding verses. It should be clear that the reference here is to Jesus's descent before the Day of Judgment, as Allah Almighty has said: 'Wa in min abli al-kitābi illā layu'minanna bihī qabla mawtibī' meaning 'every person of the Book will believe in him before his death' that is, the death of Jesus. Then on the Day of Judgment, he will bear witness over them. This meaning is fully clarified by the other reading of this verse, which reads as follows: is 'انه لعلم للساعة' 'Innahu la'ilmun lis-sā'ah,' meaning the Spirit (ruh) of God, [Jesus] is a sign and mark of the coming of the Day of Judgment. Mujahid (may Allah have mercy on him) says: Jesus is a sign of the Day of Judgment, meaning, his second coming before the Day of Judgment is a sign. This is the interpretation reported from Abu Huraira and Ibn Abbas, as well as from Abu Al-Aaliyah, Abu Malik, Ikrimah, Hasan, Qatadah, Dabbak, and others. And the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has informed in mutawatir hadiths that Jesus will descend before the Day of Judgment as a just leader and a fair judge. So, be certain of the occurrence of the Day of Judgment and do not fall in any doubt about it. (Tafsir Ibn Kathīr 4 / 631, Translation: Maulana Muhammad Junagadhi)

Maulana Muhammad Malik Kandhlawi writes:

The majority of commentators hold that the pronoun 'hi' in 'wa innahu' refers to Jesus, meaning that Jesus, son of Mary, is indeed a sign for the Day of Judgment. This refers to his descent from heaven and his coming to the earth, making his arrival one

³⁷ Translation from Tafheem-ul-Qur'an

of the significant signs of the Day of Judgment.³⁸ (*Maāriful Qur'an* 7/307)



Related Aspects of the Concept of the Descent of Jesus

The above outlines all the arguments for the concept of the second coming of Jesus. The notion that Jesus was raised to heaven, where he remains alive, and then will descend to Earth close to the Day of Judgment, perform certain tasks, and then die, is established on these sources. Scholars of the Muslim *ummah*, base themselves on the aforementioned texts of the Qur'an and hadith and declare this concept to be true and refute its denial. Allama Zahid Al-Kawthari³⁹, presents argument for the second coming of Jesus in his book *Nazarah 'Aabirah fi Maza'im Man Yankir 'Isa 'Alayhi al-Salam Qabl al-Akhirah*, and concludes:

فظهر مما سبق ان نصوص القرآن الكريم وحدها تحتم القول برفع عيسى عليه السلام حيًا وبنزوله في آخر الزمان. حيث لا اعتداد باحتمالات خيالية لم تنشأ من دليل. كيف، والاحاديث قد تواترت في ذلك، واستمرت الامة خلقًا عن سلف على الاخذ بها وتدوين موجبها في كتب الاعتقاد من قديم العصور الى اليوم.

It is clear from the foregoing arguments that the Qur'anic statements alone conclusively affirm the ascension of Jesus alive and his descent in the last era. However, speculative possibilities that have not arisen from any evidence should not be considered.

³⁸ This is an excerpt from Maulana Idris Kandhlavi's commentary *Maāriful Qur'an*. He passed away after completing the fifth volume. Therefore, the remaining parts were completed by his son, Maulana Malik Kandhlavi.

³⁹ A renowned scholar and author from the late Ottoman period (1879–1952)

How can they, when the hadiths have reached the level of tawatur? The Muslim ummah has continued, generation after generation, from earlier times to this day, to follow these hadiths and to record their necessary meaning in the creedal works. (106)

This excerpt is a summary of the general stance of scholars. It clarifies that when the texts concerning the descent of Jesus are discussed, certain associated implications and outcomes are also brought under consideration. These are supplementary and additional discussions presented to reinforce the stance and address objections regarding it. However, within the broader perspective of religion, they hold particular significance. Therefore, mentioning them is also essential. Three prominent discussions in this regard are as follows.

1. Inclusion of the Descent of Jesus in Beliefs

The concept of the descent of Jesus (PBUH) is included in the category of beliefs. Just like the beliefs in monotheism, prophethood, and the afterlife, the descent of Jesus (PBUH) is considered a belief that must be held. The intention is that Muslims should believe that Jesus will descend from heaven and kill the *Dajjal*. This is one of the signs of the Day of Judgment, to occur in the future. Since this concept is based on *Sahih* and *mutawatir* hadiths, believing in it is a requirement of faith, and its denial is equivalent to disbelief.

In *Aqeedat al-Tahawiyyah*,⁴⁰ a book representing the beliefs of the Hanafi legal school, it is written:

ونؤمن بأشراط الساعة منها: خروج الدجال ونزول عيسى ابن مريم عليه السلام من السماء.

We believe in the signs of the Hour, including the emergence of the Dajjal and the descent of Jesus, son of Mary, from heaven. (1/59)

In *Al-Fiqh Al-Akbar*, attributed to Imam Abu Hanifa, it is stated:

⁴⁰ This is a work authored by Imam Abu Ja'far al-Tahawi.

خروج الدجال ويأجوج ومأجوج وطلوع الشمس من مغربها ونزول عيسى عليه السلام من السماء وسائر علامات يوم القيامة على ما وردت به الأخبار الصحيحة حق كائن.

The emergence of the Dajjal, and Gog and Magog, the sun rising from the west, the descent of Jesus from heaven, and all other signs of the Day of Judgment mentioned in the authentic reports are true and will occur. (72)

Imam Nawawi in his commentary on Sahih Muslim writes:

قال قاضى رحمه الله: نزول عيسى عليه السلام وقتله الدجال حق وصحيح عند أهل السنة، للأحاديث الصحيحة فى ذلك. وليس فى العقل ولا فى الشرع ما يبطله فوجب إثباته.

Qadi Iyad (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The descent of Jesus and his killing of the Dajjal at his hand are true and correct according to Ahl al-Sunnah, due to the authentic hadiths on these matters. There is nothing in reason or Shari'ah that invalidates these beliefs, so its affirmation is obligatory. (Sharh al-Nawawi 'ala Muslim 7/599)

Imam Jalaluddin Suyuti, while arguing for the status of Jesus (PBUH) and refuting a counterclaim tells his interlocutor that the latter's claims entails:

إما نفى نزول عيسى، أو نفى النبوة عنه وكلاهما كفر؟

Denying either the descent of Jesus (PBUH) or his prophethood constitutes disbelief (kufr). (Al-Hawi lil-Fatawi 2/201)

2. Consensus of the *Ummah* on the Concept of the Descent of Jesus

Scholars agree on the concept of the descent of Jesus. Thus, it is one of those concepts on which there is consensus (*ijma*) in the *Ummah*:

Imam Ibn Jarir Tabari in his *Jami' al-Bayan* wrote:

والاجماع على انه حى فى السماء وينزل ويقتل الدجال ويؤيد الدين.

The consensus is that Jesus is alive in the heavens and will descend and kill the Dajjal and support the religion. (2/52)

Imam Ibn Atiyah in Al-Bahr al-Muhit states:

وأجمعت الأمة على ما تضمنه الحديث المتواتر من: أن عيسى فى السماء حى، وأنه ينزل فى آخر الزمان، فيقتل الخنزير.

The entire Ummah agrees, based on the mutawatir hadiths, that Jesus is alive in the heavens and will descend in the last era and kill the pig. (2/360)

Imam Ash'ari writes:

وأجمعت الأمة على أن الله سبحانه رفع عيسى صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى السماء.

The Ummah has consensus that Allah Almighty raised Jesus to the heavens. (Al-Ibanah 'an Usul al-Diyanah 1/115)

In *Al-Talkhis al-Khabir*, it is stated:

فاتفق أصحاب الأخبار والتفسير على أنه رفع ببذنه حيا.

The historians and interpreters agree that Jesus was raised to heaven with his body alive. (3/462)

Imam Shams al-Din Saffarini⁴¹, a renowned scholar of the Hanbali school, writes:

واما الاجماع فقد اجتمعت الامة على نزوله ولم يخالف فيه احد من اهل الشريعة وانما انكر ذلك الفلاسفة والملاحدة مما لا يعتد بخلافه وقد انعقد اجماع الامة على انه ينزل ويحكم بهذه الشريعة المحمدية.

As for consensus, the Ummah is united on his [Jesus's] descent, and no one among the people of the Shariah has opposed it. Only

⁴¹ A scholar and author from the Palestinian region of Safarin (1701–1774).

philosophers and atheists have denied it, whose opposition is not considered significant in religious matters. The consensus of the Ummah has been established that he [Jesus] will descend and rule according to this Muhammadan Shariah. (Sharh Aqidah Saffarini 2/90)

3. The Descent of Jesus and the Finality of Prophethood

The second coming of Jesus (PBUH) will occur after the departure of the last Prophet, Muhammad (PBUH), from this world. Therefore, the concept of the descent of Jesus seemingly contradicts the notion of the finality of prophethood. Naturally, the question arises: how do we reconcile this with the explicit texts of the Qur'an and hadith, such as *Mā kāna Muḥammadun abā abādin min rijālukum wa lākin rasūlallāhi wa khātam an-nabiyyīn*. (Muhammad is the father of no male among you; in fact, he is the Messenger of God and the seal of the prophets)⁴² and *Wa anā khātam an-nabiyyīn, wa innahu la nabiya ba'dī* (I am the seal of the prophets, and there will be no prophet after me)⁴³?

Scholars explain that after his descent, Jesus (PBUH) will not receive new revelation nor will he follow his previous Mosaic law. He will descend as a follower of Muhammad (PBUH) and his *shariah*. Jesus's (PBUH) arrival will be for specific tasks, and after completing them, he will die. Since he will not have the two fundamental attributes of prophethood—revelation and establishing a new law—his coming will not alter the reality of the finality of prophethood [of Muhammad (PBUH)].

Al-Allamah Taftazani⁴⁴ in *Sharh Al-Aqa'id Al-Nasafiyya* writes:

ثبت انه آخر الانبياء ... فان قيل قد روى في الحديث نزول عيسى عليه السلام بعده قلنا نعم لكنه يتابع محمد عليه السلام لان شريعة قد نسخت

⁴² Surah Al-Ahzab 33:40

⁴³ Tirmidhi No. 2219

⁴⁴ Sa'd al-Din al-Taftazani (1322 CE – 1390 CE)

لا يكون اليه وحى ولا نصب احكام بل يكون خليفة رسول الله عليه السلام.

It is established that Muhammad is the last of the prophets... If it is said that the hadith mentions the descent of Jesus after him, we say yes, but he will follow Muhammad, for his (Jesus's) Shariah has been abrogated, so there will be no revelation or new laws for him, but he will be a deputy of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). (135)

Allama Al-Alusi⁴⁵ writes in his commentary *Ruh al-Ma'ani* that when Jesus (PBUH) descends, his prophethood will not be separated from him. However, he will adhere to the principles and detailed laws of the *shariah* of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

ثم انه عليه السلام حين ينزل باق على نبوته السابقة لم يعزل عنها بحال لكنه لا يتعبد بها لنسخها في حقه وحق غيره وتكليفه باحكام هذا الشريعة اصلاً وفرعاً فلا يكون اليه عليه السلام وحى ولا نصب احكام بل يكون خليفة لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وحاكماً من حكام ملته بين امته.

Moreover, when Jesus (PBUH) descends, he will retain his previous prophethood; he will not be excluded from it in any way. However, he will not follow the previous Shariah, as that law has been abrogated for him and for others. Therefore, he will be obliged to adhere to the principles and branches of this [Muhammadan] Shariah. Hence, there will be no new revelation for him, nor will he have the authority to legislate new laws. Instead, he will work as a deputy of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and as one of the rulers from among the leaders of the Muslim Ummah. (22/290)

Imam Razi states that the era of Prophethood concluded with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). Therefore, Jesus (PBUH) will be a

⁴⁵ Sayyid Mahmood ibn Abdullah al-Alusi al-Baghdadi (1802 CE – 1854 CE)

prophet following the last Prophet's *shariah*. This is mentioned in the *Tafsir Kabir*:

انتهاء الانبياء الى مبعث محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم فعند مبعثه انتهت
تلك المدة، فلا يعد ان يصير (اي عيسى ابن مريم) بعد نزوله تبعاً
لمحمد عليه الصلاة والسلام.

The era of prophethood extends to the advent of Muhammad (PBUH). With his prophetic mission, ends the Prophetic era. Therefore, it is not implausible that Jesus (son of Mary), after his descent, will be a follower of Muhammad (PBUH). (11/83)

Syed Abul A'la Maududi has reproduced this view of the esteemed scholars in his work *Tafheem-ul-Qur'an*:

Jesus, son of Mary will not come again as a newly appointed prophet. He will not bring any new revelation or laws, nor will he add or deduct anything from the Islamic Shariah. He will not come to renew the religion or invite people to believe in him, nor will he form a separate Ummah of his followers.

He will come for a specific purpose: to eliminate the fitnah of Dajjal. His descent will be in such a manner that Muslims witnessing it will have no doubt that he is indeed Jesus, son of Mary, who has descended at the proper time just as prophesied by Muhammad (PBUH). He will join the Muslim community, pray behind whoever is their Imam at the time, and recognize the authority of their leader, making it clear that he has not returned in his former capacity as a prophet. Clearly, if a prophet of God is present in a community, then no one else can be the imam or the head of that community. So, when Jesus joins the Muslim community merely as a member, it will inherently declare that he has not returned in the capacity of a prophet. Therefore, his return will not at all raise the question of breaking the seal of prophethood.

Though no exact comparison is intended here, his coming will be as if a former leader of a nation comes during the tenure of the

current leader to serve under him. ... His arrival will not create a new issue of having faith or rejecting him among Muslims. Denying his previous prophethood today constitutes disbelief, as Muhammad (PBUH) believed in his prophethood and his Ummah believes in it since the inception of Islam. This belief will remain the same at his second coming. Muslims will not believe in a new prophethood but continue to believe in his previous one, as they do today. This neither contradicts the finality of prophethood today nor will it when Jesus will arrive.
(4/163-164)



Chapter 3

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Objections

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi considers the concept of the second coming of Jesus (PBUH) as one that requires contemplation and further investigation. This is due to certain questions of reason (*aqal*) and transmission (*naqal*) that hinder the acceptance of the concept. Among these questions, prominent are those that arise from contemplating the hadiths of the second coming of Jesus in light of the Qur'an. Besides these, there are also significant questions that arise from the established principles of the science of authenticating hadith reports and their textual criticism and create obstacles in accepting the commonly acknowledged interpretations of these narratives. The former type of concerns has been expressed by the esteemed scholar in his book *Meezan*. While discussing the belief in the Day of Judgment under the title 'Signs of the Day of Judgment,' he mentions the emergence of Gog and Magog and the *Dajjal*. At this point he expresses his reservations about the descent of Jesus. He writes:

...As far as the narratives which record the advent of Jesus (PBUH) are concerned, though the hadith scholars have generally accepted them; however, if they are analyzed in the light of the Qur'an, they too become dubious.

Firstly, the personality of Jesus (PBUH) has been discussed in the Qur'an from various aspects. The Qur'an has commented on his da'wah mission and his personality at a lot of places. The cataclysm that will take place on the Day of Judgement is also a very frequently discussed topic of the Qur'an. The advent of a celebrated prophet of God from the heavens is no small an

incident. In spite of the fact that there were many instances in which this incident could have been mentioned, we find that there is not a single place in which it is mentioned in the Qur'an. Can human knowledge and intellect be satisfied with this silence? One does find this hard to digest.

Secondly, the Qur'an has recorded a dialogue of God with Jesus (PBUH) which will take place on the Day of Judgement. During the course of this conversation, the Almighty will ask him about the real sphere in which the Christians had gone astray: the divinity of Jesus (PBUH) and Mary. He will ask Jesus (PBUH) if it was as per His instructions that he had told people to deify himself and his mother whilst leaving aside God. In response to this question, among other things, Jesus (PBUH) will say that he instructed his people in the very manner he was asked by God and that as long as he remained among them he watched over what they were doing, and that after his own demise he was not aware of what good or evil they did, and that after his death it was God who watched over them. In this dialogue, one can clearly feel that the last sentence is very inappropriate if Jesus (PBUH) had also come in this world a second time. In such a case, he should have responded by saying that he knew what happened with them and that a little earlier he had gone to warn them of their grievous faults...

Thirdly, in one verse of the Qur'an, the Almighty has disclosed what will happen to Jesus (PBUH) and his followers till the Day of Judgement. Sense and reason demand that here He should also have disclosed his second coming before the advent of this Day; however, we find no such mention. If Jesus (PBUH) had to come, why was silence maintained at this instance? One is unable to comprehend any reason for it. (Meezan, 182-183)

These are the objections of the esteemed scholar which arise from investigating the hadith narratives in the light of the Qur'an. As for the questions arising from the application of the principles of hadith that lead to doubts about the concept of the second coming of Jesus,

these have been addressed by the scholar in the video series 'Response to 23 Questions on Religious Opinions of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi,' under the title 'The Second Coming of Jesus.' Details of both types of criticisms are provided here.



The Qur'an and the Second Coming of Jesus - Objections of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi

The Qur'an frequently mentions Prophet Jesus (PBUH). In 13 different Surahs, his reference appears at several places. These references discuss various aspects of his personality and different events of his life. They talk about his family, introduce his venerable mother Mary, describe events before his birth, detail his miraculous birth, summarize his entire life from birth to ascension, narrate his mission and the response of his audience, mention his great miracles, mention his death, describe the conduct of Jews and Christians after his death, and even include the conversation that he will have with Allah on the Day of Judgment, where he speaks about his role in the world. All these matters are clearly mentioned in the Qur'an, but the most significant event of his life and human history – that he will descend directly from the heavens centuries after his death and ascension – is not mentioned in the Qur'an. Some passages in the Qur'an, by their context and style, demand that if he is to descend, it should definitely be mentioned there. However, there is not even a slight hint. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi considers this silence of the Qur'an as a cause for concern and highlights the lack of conviction in the concept of the descent of Jesus.

First Objection: The Absence of Mention of the Second Coming of Jesus in the Qur'an Despite the Opportunities for Its Mention

The Qur'an mentions all significant events related to Prophet Jesus. These include events before his birth, during his birth, after his birth,

at the time of his death, after his death, and events on the Day of Judgment. It is curious that these events are mentioned, but a very important event related to them is not. For understanding, a few representative passages are as follows:

i. In Surah Aale Imran (3:45-47), the most important aspects before the birth of Jesus are described. They indicate:

- Allah gave Mary the good news of Jesus's birth before her pregnancy.
- Allah referred to him as His word and named him Jesus.
- Allah foretold that Jesus would speak about his prophethood while in the cradle.
- He would be counted among the righteous when he grows up.

The verses are as follows:

إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلِكَةُ يَمْرُؤُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْشِّرُك بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ ۖ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ . وَيَكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ . قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ ۖ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۖ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ .

Remind them when the angels said: 'O Mary! God gives you glad tidings of a word from Him. His name will be Messiah, Jesus son of Mary. He shall be noble and among the favored ones both in this world and in that to come. He shall speak [in the capacity of a prophet] in his cradle and in elderly age too and shall be counted among the righteous.' She said: 'Lord! How can I bear a child when no man has even touched me?' He replied: 'In this manner, God creates what He wants.' When He decrees a matter, He need only say to it: 'Be,' and it is. (3:45-47)

In the above discourse, there is ample scope for Allah to have mentioned the second coming of Jesus, if He had desired. This is an account of the circumstances before Jesus's birth. It includes his

miraculous birth and his success in this world and the hereafter.

ii. Verse 59 of Surah Aale Imran also states that the example of Jesus is like that of Adam. That is, just as Adam was created by Allah's command 'Be', similarly, Jesus was born⁴⁶. The purpose here is to clarify that if Adam, created from dust by Allah's command, did not become an object of worship, then how can Jesus, born by His command, be worthy of worship! The verse states:

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ ۖ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

In the sight of God, Jesus is like Adam. God created him from clay; then commanded it: 'Be,' so it becomes. (3:59)

This verse essentially highlights the unique exception that two figures in human history, Adam and Jesus (peace be upon them), were granted. Both were created directly by Allah's command. Adam (PBUH) came into existence through Allah's word 'Kun' (Be), and Jesus (PBUH) was born through the same word being cast upon Mary (PBUH). Now, if Allah has mentioned this exceptional event, what is the reason for not mentioning another exceptional event of the same magnitude, according to which Jesus will descend directly from the heavens as a unique exception among all humanity?

iii. Verses 48-51 of Surah Aale Imran describes Jesus's mission and Messengership prior to his birth. This section also mentions the miracles granted to him. It is stated:

- Allah will teach him the law and wisdom, i.e., the teachings of Torah and Gospel.
- He will be sent as a messenger to the Israelites.
- He will create from clay a shape like a bird, and as he blows into it, it will become a living bird [by Allah's permission].
- He will heal those born blind and lepers.
- He will resurrect the dead.

⁴⁶ Addressed with clarity in Surah Aale-Imran (3:48).

- He will confirm the Torah.
- He will declare lawful some of what was forbidden.

The verses are as follows:

وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ . وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدْخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ . وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَلَأُحِلَّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا . إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ .

[Consequently, it will happen thus] and God will instruct him in law and in wisdom i.e. teach him the Torah and the Gospel, and send him forth as a Messenger to the Israelites. [Consequently, this is what happened and he called upon the Israelites saying:] “I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: from clay I make for you the likeness of a bird, then I breathe into it; then by God’s directive it actually becomes a bird. And I heal the born-blind and the leper, and by God’s directive raise the dead to life. And I can tell you what you eat and what you stock in your houses. Surely in it is a great sign for you, if you are ones who believe. And I have come to confirm the Torah which preceded me and have come to make lawful for you some of the things forbidden to you and [look] I bring for you a sign from your Lord: therefore, fear God and obey me. Surely, God alone is my Lord and yours also; hence, serve Him only. This alone is the straight path. (3:48-51)

Here, all the matters that Jesus (PBUH) is to accomplish by the command of Allah are mentioned. These represent the duties assigned to him by Allah and the components of his worldly role. The event of the descent of Jesus is also a divine occurrence and a manifestation of

certain significant decisions of Allah before the Day of Judgment. Its absence from this list raises a point of contention.

iv. The birth of Jesus (PBUH) from Mary without a father is a miraculous event. It occurred directly by the command of Allah. For this reason, Allah declared both Mary and her son, Jesus, as signs. This is stated in the Qur'an in Surah Al-Mu'minun:

وَجَعَلْنَا ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ آيَةً

And We similarly made the son of Mary and his mother also a great sign... (23:50)

In Surah Al-Anbiya, these two personalities (Mary and Jesus) are described as 'a sign for the worlds' (a miracle for all people). The verse states:

وَالَّتِي أَحْصَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَجَعَلْنَاهَا آيَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ

And on that woman also who had kept herself chaste. So, We blew into her Our Spirit and made her and her son [Jesus] a sign for the people of the world. (21:91)

Therefore, it is clearly mentioned in Surah Maryam that the fatherless birth of Jesus was a miraculous event, which Allah presented as His sign. For this purpose, Allah deviated from the normal law of creation and directly commanded with His word 'Be', establishing the fetus in the womb, and breathed His spirit into it. This sign will remain prominent evidence for [God's power] to create man [for the first time] and reenact the same act until the end of time. The verse says:

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ اتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْفِيًّا . فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا ۗ فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا . قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا . قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا . قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا . قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّئٌ ۚ وَلِنَجْعَلَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَقْضِيًّا .

Mention [now] in this Book the name of Mary, when she had

left her family and had stationed herself in isolation on the eastern side [of the Temple], and had kept herself in seclusion from them. Then We sent to her Our angel and he appeared before her in the form of a full-grown man. [When] Mary [saw him,] she said: 'I seek refuge from you with the Merciful God, if you fear him.' He said: 'I have been sent only by your Lord and have been sent that I grant you a noble son.' Mary said: 'How can a boy be born to me; neither has a man touched me nor have I ever been of loose character?' He said: 'This is what will happen. Your Lord says: 'This is very easy for Me. We shall do this so that he be Our messenger and so that We make him a sign for people and a mercy from Us. And this has been decreed.' (19:16-21)

The above passage clarifies that Jesus (PBUH) was a sign among the signs of Allah. His personality and qualities were made a symbol for people by Allah. The question arises: if the Qur'an has described all aspects of his being a divine sign, why did it not mention the extraordinary aspect of his second coming? In one way, this is a greater sign than his birth. His miraculous birth could be and has been denied due to slander, but the descent of an ancient person directly from the heavens, witnessed by people two thousand years later, is an event that cannot be denied.

Therefore, reason demands that the greatest evidence of Jesus (PBUH) being a sign from Allah should be mentioned along with the other evidence. If this is not mentioned, then it is also a rational requirement to question its occurrence.

v. Verses 32-33 of Surah Maryam details the birth of Jesus and his speaking from the cradle, both being highly unusual and unique events in human history. Surah Maryam narrates that by Allah's command, Mary conceived and subsequently she left her community. When the time of childbirth came, Allah's angel visited to comfort her and caused a spring to flow for her. She was instructed to return to her people with the newborn. If they questioned or objected, she was to indicate that she had vowed silence. Therefore, she returned to her community. On returning, when people questioned her chastity

seeing the baby, she pointed to him. People wondered how they could speak to a newborn. Then, the baby began to speak. He told them that:

- He is a servant of Allah.
- Allah bestowed upon him the book and prophethood.
- He was made a source of blessing and righteousness.
- God made him obedient to his mother.
- God did not make him insolent or an unfortunate personality.
- He was guided to:
 1. Pray throughout his life.
 2. Give charity (*zakah*) throughout his life.
- Allah gave him tidings of peace on three phases of his life:
 1. The day he was born.
 2. The day he would die.
 3. The day he would be raised alive on the Day of Judgment.

The Qur'an states:

فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَدَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا . فَأَجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ ۖ
 قَالَتْ يَلَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا مَّسِيًّا . فَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَا تَحْزَنِي
 قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا . وَهَزَيْتِ الْيَكِيكِي جِذْعَ النَّخْلَةِ تُسْقِطُ عَلَيْكَ رَطْبًا
 جَنِيًّا . فَكُلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا ۖ فَمَا تَرَيْنَ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا ۖ فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ
 لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا . فَأَتَتْ بِهِ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِيلُهُ ۖ قَالُوا يَمْرِئٌ
 لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا . يَأْخُذُ هُرُونَ مَا كَانَ مِنْ آبُوكَ أَمْرًا سَوًّا وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكَ
 بَعِيًّا . فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ ۖ قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا . قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ
 اللَّهِ ۖ أُتِنِيَ الْكِتَابُ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا . وَجَعَلَنِي مُبْرَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ ۖ وَأَوْصَانِي
 بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا . وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي ۖ وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا .

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى يَوْمٍ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمٍ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمٍ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا .

So, Mary became pregnant with that child and [leaving the Temple] went away from everyone with what she bore to a distant place. Then [the time also arrived when] labor pains made her come to the trunk of the date-palm. [At that time, in utter helplessness] she said: 'Alas! Would that I had died before this and had been totally forgotten.' At this, an angel from below Mary called her and said: 'Grieve not! Your Lord has made a stream to flow from below you. And shake the trunk of the date-palm towards yourself; fresh dates will drop on you. So, eat and drink and soothe your eyes [when you see the child]. Then if you see some person [who wants to ask you something], gesture to him: I have vowed to fast for the Merciful God; so, today I shall not converse with any human being.' After that, she came over to her people with the child in her lap. [When they saw her,] they remarked: 'Mary! You have done a very grave thing. O Sister of Aaron! Neither was your father an evil person nor was your mother a harlot.' In reply, she gestured towards the child [that he will respond to them]. People said: 'What should we say to him who is a mere child in the lap?' The child spoke: 'I am a servant of God. He has bestowed the Book on me and made me a prophet and made me a fountainhead of blessings wherever I be. He has directed me to be diligent in the prayer and in zakah as long as I am alive, and made me obedient to my mother; not someone who is rebellious and wretched. And [glad tidings of] peace are on me the day I was born and the day I shall die and the day I shall be raised to life.' (19:22-33)

In these verses of Surah Maryam, the final part of Jesus's speech as an infant is highly significant for our discussion. The Qur'an makes it clear that every individual of Adam's progeny, i.e., all of humanity, will undergo three stages: birth, death, and resurrection on the Day of Judgment. An exception to this, mentioned in the Qur'an, is the incident of Jesus reviving the dead. However, the details of this event are not elaborated in the Qur'an. If the narratives of Jesus's second

coming are correctly attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, Jesus holds a unique exception among all humanity. Instead of the usual three stages, he experiences five:

1. Birth
2. Death and ascension (being taken to heaven after death)
3. End of death and descent to Earth (return to Earth after the state of death)
4. Death
5. Resurrection on the Day of Judgment.

It is perplexing that if such a notable exception in human history is indeed true, it is conveyed through narratives of lesser certainty instead of being stated definitively.

Additionally, when Jesus spoke from the cradle and described all phases of his life up to the Day of Judgment, it is curious why he did not mention his return to Earth. Given the context and the nature of his speech, it would logically follow that such an event would be clearly stated if it were indeed to occur.

vi. In the verses 154-155 of Surah An-Nisa, Allah enumerates the crimes of the Israelites that rendered them deserving of His curse. The foremost among these was that they broke their covenant with Allah. Their second crime was to reject His signs. The third crime was unjust killing of His prophets, and the fourth crime was their disobedience and disbelief. The fifth crime was their slander against Mary, and the sixth was their false claim of having killed Jesus. The Qur'an specifically takes up the sixth crime and refutes it. Regarding this claim, Allah Almighty clarifies:

- The Israelites could neither kill nor crucify Jesus.
- Allah took him up to Himself.
- The matter was made ambiguous to them.

The verse reads:

...وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ۚ بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا.

... and because of their claim: 'We have killed the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of God.' – even though neither did they kill him nor did they crucify him; in fact, the matter was muddled up for them. Those who are disagreeing in this are inflicted with doubts about it; they have no knowledge about it; they are only following conjectures. They certainly did not slay him; in fact, God had lifted him up to Him. And God is Mighty, very Wise. (4:157-158)

Here, the intent is to refute the claim made by the Jews that they succeeded in killing Prophet Jesus (PBUH). To counter this claim, if the ascension of Prophet Jesus (PBUH) was mentioned, then it would have been appropriate to also mention his second coming. That is, it would have been in line with the context of the discourse to state that their claim is false—namely, that they did not succeed in killing Prophet Jesus (PBUH). Instead, Allah raised him up, and before the Day of Judgment, He will send him back down. Upon his return, he will eradicate every one of them, purging the earth of their presence.

Second Objection: Conversation between Allah and Prophet Jesus on the Day of Judgment

The verses 116-119 of Surah Al-Maidah narrate a future conversation between Allah Almighty and Prophet Jesus (PBUH), which is to occur on the Day of Judgment. This future event has been described by Allah Almighty beforehand. It is stated:

- Allah Almighty will ask Jesus in front of his people if he had told his people to worship him and his mother besides Allah.
- Jesus will respond by saying that it is not permissible for him to say something he has no right to.
- He will further state that if he had said such a thing or had such

a thought in his heart, Allah would have surely known. Jesus will state that he only said what Allah had commanded him to say.

- As per Allah's instructions, he had told his people to worship Allah, who is his Lord and their Lord.
- Then he will say that:
 1. As long as I was present among them, I continued to watch over them.
 2. Then You gave me death, and I was no longer responsible for their oversight.
 3. From the time of my death until today, on the Day of Judgment, You alone have been watching over them.
 4. Now it is Your decision whether to punish them for their sins or forgive them.
- After this clarification from Jesus, Allah Almighty will declare:
 1. Today is the day when the truth will prevail. For those who stood firm on truth in the world, today there are the blessings of Paradise.
 2. Their great success is that Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Allah.

The verses are as follows:

وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يُعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ءَأَنْتَ قُلْتُ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأَهْلِي الْهَيْئَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقِّ ۖ إِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ ۖ تَعَلَّمَ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ . مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ ۖ وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مِمَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ . إِنْ تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ ۖ وَإِنْ تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ . قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمُ يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ ۖ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي

مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خُلِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ الْقَوْرُ الْعَظِيمُ .

[Those who have concealed the evidence of God should keep in mind the day when this conversation takes place] and this also that when [after reminding people of it] God will ask: "Jesus son of Mary! Did you tell people: Regard me and my mother as gods besides God?" He will reply: 'Glory be to You! How was it befitting for me to say something which I have no right to say? If I had said this, it would have been in Your knowledge [because] You know what is in my heart and I do not know what is in Your heart. Only You are aware of all hidden things. I only said to them what You commanded me: 'Worship God, who is my Lord and your Lord too.' I watched over them as long as I remained among them. Then when You gave death to me, after that You have remained the Watcher over them and You are a witness to all things. If You now punish them, they are your servants, and if You forgive them, You only are Mighty, very Wise.' God will say: 'This is the day when the truthfulness of the truthful will be of benefit to them.' For them shall be orchards below which streams are flowing; they shall dwell therein forever. God is pleased with them and they are pleased with God. This alone is great success. (5:116-119).

The following statement from these verses of Surah Al-Maidah is of utmost importance with respect to the subject under discussion:

وَ كُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ

I watched over them as long as I remained among them. Then when You gave death to me, after that You have remained the Watcher over them.

The intended meaning and implication of these statements point towards a negation of the concept of the descent of Jesus (PBUH). From them, two points become evident:

Firstly, the three phases of the life and death of Jesus are mentioned

here:

- i. The period from birth until death. This period is specified by the words *Ma Dumtu Fehim* (as long as I remained among them).
- ii. The period from death until the Day of Resurrection. This period is specified by the words *Falammā Tawaffaytanī* (Then when You gave death to me) and the words *Hādhā yawmu yanfa'us-sādiqīna sidqubum* (This is the day when the truthfulness of the truthful will be of benefit to them) determine the time between the day of death and the Day of Resurrection.
- iii. The period from Day of Resurrection until eternity. This period is specified by the words *Haadha Yawmu Yanfa'us-Saadiqīna Sidqubum Lahum jannātun tajrī min tahtihā al-anhāru khālīdīna fihā abadan* (This is the day when the truthfulness of the truthful will be of benefit to them. For them shall be orchards below which streams are flowing; they shall dwell therein forever).

From the above-mentioned verses, it is clear that there is a complete and perfect continuity between the three mentioned phases. The sequence of the narrative in the text testifies to this continuity. This means that there are only these three phases concerning the life and death of Prophet Jesus. If there were a fourth phase, it would either have been mentioned here, or there would not be continuity between these three phases, [rather these phases would be mentioned independently]. This argument can be understood from another place in the Holy Qur'an. In Surah Al-Kahf, it has been stated:

أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ^١ كَانُوا مِنْ آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا . إِذْ أَوَى الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا . فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا . ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَيُّ الْحِزْبَيْنِ أَحْصَى لِمَا لَبِئُوا أَمَدًا .

Do you think that the people of the cave and raqīm were among a very strange sign from among Our signs. At the time when those youth took refuge in the cave; then prayed [to their Lord:] 'Our Lord! Bless us with mercy specially from Yourself and in

this matter of Ours provide us with guidance.' At this, We lulled them to sleep for many years in the cave. Then We woke them up to see which of the two groups has correctly counted the period of their stay. (18:9-12)

These verses define three distinct phases in the life of the Companions of the Cave. The first phase is when they had not yet sought refuge in the cave, the second phase is when they took shelter in the cave and Allah put them to sleep, and the third phase is when they woke up from their sleep and came out of the cave. The text is very clear in that no fourth phase can be introduced. In other words, if someone claims that the Companions of the Cave did not wake up and come out of the cave just once, but twice, then it would be a deviation from the text, which would lack meaning.

Secondly, the words *Falammā tawaffaytanī kunta anta ar-raqība 'alayhim* (Then when You gave death to me, after that You have remained the Watcher over them) clearly indicate that Prophet Jesus, upon his death (and being raised to Allah), had no knowledge of his followers' matters until the Day of Judgment. This means that he clarified in the presence of the Almighty that, while he had been a watcher over them before his death, he no longer held that role after his death; instead, Allah became watcher over them. Hence, he is not aware of any transgressions they might have committed after that. Only Allah knows those transgressions. If the descent of Jesus (peace be upon him) were to occur, this statement would no longer hold true. In such a scenario, Jesus (peace be upon him) would have to state that when You sent me back to the world, I became fully aware of all their deviations.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ It should be noted that the concept of Jesus' divinity gradually developed among his followers, a long time after his death. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, this concept was officially recognized as part of the creed in the year 325 CE. Prior to that, his followers considered him to be human, a servant of God, and a messenger. The same applies to the concept of the divinity of Mary.

Third Objection: Announcement of the Complete Divine Plan for Prophet Jesus Without the Mention of His Descent

Surah Aale Imran, verse 55, delineates the divine plan for Jesus (PBUH) and his followers, spanning from the beginning until the Day of Judgment. The following points are mentioned:

- Allah will cause Jesus to die.
- Then Allah will raise Jesus to Himself and thus will purify him from those who disbelieve.
- Allah will make the followers of Jesus (Christians) dominant over the deniers (Jews) until the Day of Judgment.
- Then, on the Day of Judgment, Jews, Christians, and all other people will return to Allah.
- At that time, Allah the Almighty will decide on their differences.

The verse says:

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يُعِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ خُذْ هَذَا الصَّلَافَ الَّذِي كَفَرُوا
وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَرْجِعِكُمْ
فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ

At that time when God said: Jesus, I have decided to give you death and lift you up to Myself and I shall purify you from these who have disbelieved in you and shall grant your followers supremacy over these disbelievers until the Day of Judgement. Then to Me finally you shall all have to return. So, at that time, I shall give verdict on what you have been differing in. (3:55)

If Prophet Jesus (PBUH) is to play a role again in the world after being raised to Allah, then the absence of mention of this in the plan of action is a subject to critical analysis. In this case, the sequence of the plan of action could possibly have been as follows:

- Allah will cause Jesus (PBUH) to die.

- Then Allah will raise him towards Himself.
- Then, after a period, Allah will send him down from the heavens.
- Prophet Jesus will then kill the Dajjal and establish the dominance of Islam all over the world.
- After that, Allah will grant Prophet Jesus death.
- Then, on the Day of Judgment, Jesus, the Jews, the Christians, and all other nations will return to Allah.
- On this occasion, Allah will decide upon the differences (between them).



Hadiths and the Descent of Jesus - Objections of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi

Before reviewing the hadiths of the Second Coming of Christ in the collection of hadiths, it is essential to understand the nature of the event of the Second Coming.

The first point in this regard is that it is a very specific, tangible, and observable event. In terms of its manifestation and impact, it is a bigger event than the staff turning into a snake, twelve springs gushing forth, a path being made in the sea, being born without a father, speaking from the cradle, waking up after sleeping for three hundred years, and the splitting of the moon⁴⁸. This is because incomprehensible interpretations could be presented to create confusion about the aforementioned miraculous signs and people with limited insight could be persuaded to deny them⁴⁹, but this event is so visible, solid,

⁴⁸ These are the extraordinary signs of Allah mentioned in the Qur'an. Some of them were manifested directly by Allah, while others were shown through His prophets.

⁴⁹ For example, regarding the splitting of the moon, it is often asked why this event was not observed worldwide or why scientific knowledge does not

and enduring that not even a weak re-interpretation could be produced for its denial.

The second point is that the event is exceedingly supernatural and utterly bewildering. The phenomenon of a personality remaining hidden from the world for two thousand years and then descending publicly from the sky is a spectacle that has never happened before in human history, nor will it ever happen again.

The third point is that this is not the descent of an ordinary human, but the descent of a Prophet of Allah. This means that it is not related to the usual affairs of Allah's power and will, but to the special matter of prophethood and messengership.

The fourth point is that this event is the greatest sign among the signs of the Day of Judgment. The hadiths mention several signs of the approach of the Day of Judgment. These include the appearance of smoke, the sinking of lands in the east and the west, the emergence of a beast from the earth, a fire that will herd people, the sun rising from the West, the appearance of the Dajjal, the emergence of Gog and Magog, and other such signs. A glance at this list makes it clear that the sign of the Second Coming of Christ is the most prominent among them.

The fifth point is that apparently, this event also brings into question the conclusiveness and finality of the decree of the end of prophethood mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and hadiths. This raises the question of how to interpret the idea that a prophet, who came before Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), returns again after the departure of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in light of the explicit texts of the Qur'an.⁵⁰

These five points establish the extraordinary importance of the event of the Second Coming of Christ and raise the question of why the definitive means of the Holy Qur'an was not chosen to communicate

provide evidence for it.

⁵⁰ Thus, this question has continued to arise before scholars, and they have provided answers to it based on their understanding.

this news, and why it was left to people's discretion to either transmit it or not and to adopt any style they please in its narration?

However, setting aside this question, if we look only in the context of the hadiths, the above points necessarily demand the following evidence:

1. This event should have been widely known among the Companions and their followers.
2. The majority of the esteemed Companions should have narrated it.
3. It should be mentioned in the earliest collections of hadith.
4. Narratives on this subject should be clear and free from any internal ambiguity or contradictions.
5. There should be no contradiction between reports on Second Coming and other narratives in the collection of hadiths.

Now the question is whether these requirements are duly met in the narratives of the Second Coming of Christ? The answer is a clear negation. The details are as follows in the form of several issues.

First Objection: The Earliest Book of Hadith Does Not include the Narratives of the Second Coming of Jesus

Among the available hadith books, the earliest is *As-Sahifah As-Sahiba*, which is famously known as *Sahifah Hammam ibn Munabbih*. Hammam ibn Munabbih was a Follower of the Companions (*Tabi'i*) and a disciple of Abu Huraira (RA). He compiled this document shortly before the year 58 H. It includes a total of 138 hadiths, all of which have been narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira (RA). These hadiths cover various subjects including beliefs, worship, mutual dealings, transactions, ethics, and manners⁵¹.

⁵¹ This entire book, in its original arrangement, is included in *Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal*. The compilation of *Musnad Ahmad* occurred between 220 AH and 237 AH. This means that works such as *Muwatta Imam Malik*

Surprisingly, this document does not contain any tradition regarding the Second Coming of Jesus. This absence of the relative narratives in the earliest compilation proves intriguing from several aspects

Firstly, from the aspect of how such an extraordinary tradition could be overlooked.

Secondly, one needs to consider the fact that Abu Huraira (RA) is one of the narrators who transmitted the traditions about the Second Coming of Jesus. It is astonishing that he did not include this tradition when dictating hadiths to his direct student, even though he had mentioned it elsewhere.

Thirdly, from the aspect that this document does contain the following two narratives concerning Jesus:

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: رأى عيسى ابن مريم رجلاً يسرق، فقال له عيسى: سرقت؟ فقال: كلا والذي لا إله إلا هو، فقال عيسى: آمنت بالله وكذبت عيني.

The Prophet (PBUH), said: Jesus, the son of Mary, saw a man stealing. Jesus asked him: 'Did you steal?' He replied: 'Certainly not, I swear by Him, besides whom there is no deity.' Jesus said: 'I

(179 AH), *Musnad Abu Dawood al-Tayalisi* (204 AH), *Musannaf Abdul Razzaq* (211 AH), *Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah* (235 AH), and some other collections predate *Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal*. However, all the books of the *Sahih Sittah* (*The Six Canonical Books of Hadith*) were published afterward, with their compilation dates ranging approximately from 250 AH to 303 AH. As part of *Musnad Ahmad*, this collection did not originally hold the status of being the earliest available compilation of hadith. Fortunately, in modern times, its manuscript was discovered. The eminent scholar of *Seerah* and history, Dr. Hamidullah, found it in a library in Berlin and had it published in 1955 from India. Following this discovery, it is now unanimously regarded as the earliest compilation of hadith. The most likely scenario is that it was compiled before the death of Hammam ibn Munabbih's teacher, Abu Huraira (RA), in 58 AH. However, even if it was compiled after this, its status as the earliest compilation of hadith remains unaffected, as Hammam ibn Munabbih's year of death is recorded as 131 AH.

believe in Allah and I deny my own eyes.' (Sahifah Hammam ibn Munabbih, No. 41)

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: أنا أولى الناس بعيسى ابن مريم في الأولى والآخرة قالوا: كيف يا رسول الله؟ قال: الأنبياء إخوة من علات وأمهاتهم شتى، ودينهم واحد، فليس بيننا نبي.

he Prophet (PBUH), said: 'In this world and in the Hereafter, I am the nearest of all the people to Jesus, the son of Mary. People asked: 'O Messenger of Allah, how is that?' He replied: 'The prophets are paternal brothers; their mothers are different, but their religion is one, and there is no prophet between us.' (Sahifah Hammam ibn Munabbih, No. 133)

Given that the tradition of the Second Coming of Jesus is obviously more significant and prominent in terms of content compared to these two traditions, the question arises: if these traditions are included, why is the more significant tradition not included?

Fourthly, from the aspect that this document also includes the following narrative concerning the *Dajjal* (the false Messiah):

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا تقوم الساعة حتى ينبعث دجالون كذابون قريب من ثلاثين كلهم يزعم أنه رسول الله.

The Prophet (PBUH), said: 'The Hour will not come until nearly thirty false Dajjals appear, each of whom will claim to be the messenger of Allah.' (Sahifah Hammam ibn Munabbih, No. 24)

The question arises that if the tradition regarding *Dajjal* is included, then why is it not the most important tradition concerning *Dajjal* included, which mentions the killing of *Dajjal* at the hands of Prophet Jesus?

Fifthly, in *Sahifah Hammam ibn Munabbih*, five narratives related to the signs of the Day of Judgment have been conveyed. They describe that near the Day of Judgment, the sun will rise from the

West, wealth will become abundant, knowledge will be taken away, the appearance of *fitnah* (tribulations) will increase, murder and mayhem will proliferate, there will be a major battle between two groups, and Muslims will fight a nation whose faces will be red, noses flat, and eyes small. These narratives are:

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا تقوم الساعة حتى تطلع الشمس من مغربها فإذا طلعت ورأها الناس آمنوا أجمعون، وذلك حين لا ينفع نفساً إيمانها لم تكن آمنت من قبل أو كسبت في إيمانها خيراً.

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'The Hour (Day of Judgment) will not come until the sun rises from the West, and when it rises and people see it, they will all believe, but that will be the time when believing will not benefit no one. It is as if he (that is, such a believer) had not believed before or earned some good through his faith.' (Sahifah Hammam bin Munabbih, No. 25)

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا تقوم الساعة حتى يكثر فيكم المال فيفيض حتى يهم رب المال من يتقبل منه صدقته. قال: ويقبض العلم ويقترب الزمان وتظهر الفتن ويكثر الهرج، قالوا: الهرج اى هو يا رسول الله؟ قال القتل القتل.

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'The Hour will not come until wealth increases amongst you, overflowing to the extent that the owner of wealth will be concerned about who will accept his obligatory charity'. He said: 'Knowledge will be taken away, time will draw near, fitnah will appear, and Harj (chaos, murder) will increase in frequency.' They asked: 'What is Harj, O Messenger of Allah?' He replied: 'Killing, bloodshed.' (Sahifah Hammam bin Munabbih, No. 22)

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا تقوم الساعة حتى تقتتل فئتان عظيمتان تكون بينهما مقتلة عظيمة و دعواهما واحدة.

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'The Hour will not come until two great groups fight each other, and there will be a great battle between them, and their cause will be the same.' (Sahifah Hammam bin Munabbih, No. 23)

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا تقوم الساعة حتى تقاتلوا جور
كرمان، قوماً من الأعاجم حمر الوجوه فطس الأنوف، صغار الأعين، كأن
وجوههم المجان المطرقة.

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'The Hour will not come until you fight Joora Karman; a non-Arab people with red faces, squashed noses, and small eyes, as if their faces are like flattened shields.' (Sahifah Hammam bin Munabbih, No. 125)

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا تقوم الساعة حتى تقاتلوا قوماً
نعالهم الشعر.

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'The Hour will not come until you fight a people whose shoes are made of hair.' (Sahifah Hammam bin Munabbih, No. 127)

The inclusion of these narratives related to the signs of the approaching Day of Judgment in the *Sahifah of Hammam bin Munabbih* and the non-inclusion of the most pivotal sign, the descent of Jesus, casts doubt on the traditions concerning the descent of Prophet Jesus.

Second Objection: The Earliest Collection of Hadith Does Not Include the Narratives of the Second Coming of Jesus

Muwatta is the first formal collection of hadith. It was compiled by Imam Malik ibn Anas ibn Malik after a strenuous effort of 40 years. It was compiled in around 140 AH on the behest of Caliph Mansur Abbasi. Apart from the narratives of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), it also includes sayings of the Companions and the Followers (*Tabi'in*). Imam Malik spent his entire life in Madinah and

composed his book in the environment of the city.⁵²

He collected narrations from those who had continuously been in the company of the esteemed Companions (may Allah be pleased with them). This book became popular throughout the Islamic world during the lifetime of Imam Malik himself. After its compilation, Imam Malik lived for about forty more years, during which he kept reviewing and amending the book.⁵³

The narrative on the descent of Jesus is not included in this collection of hadith.

One aspect of the objection is that the time of this collection's compilation is very close to the era of the Companions. The rest of the hadith collections were compiled nearly a hundred years later. It is the esteemed Companions who transmitted all the hadith narratives. What could be the reason that such an important narrative, which ought to be commonly known, was not transmitted to Imam Malik?

Second aspect is that this collection was compiled over a long period of forty years. Throughout this time, Imam Malik taught from it, refined it, and made revisions and additions. It is inconceivable that

⁵² The first to arrive in Madinah from Imam Malik's family was his great-grandfather, Abu Amir, who embraced Islam. At that time, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had already left this world, and hence Abu Amir could not attain the honor of being a Companion. He married into the Tamim tribe and settled permanently in Madinah. Imam Malik's father, Malik, and his uncle, Abu Suhail Nafi, narrated Hadiths from Abu Amir. Abu Suhail Nafi was a great Hadith scholar and was among the teachers of Imam Zuhri. Imam Malik's elder brother, Nadar, was also a scholar of Hadith. From these details, it is clear that his family resided in Madinah and had a special passion for the knowledge of Hadith.

⁵³ The majority of scholars have ranked *Muwatta* of Imam Malik among the foremost category of books of Hadith. Imam Shafi'i has been quoted as saying that after the Book of Allah, he has not seen any book on the face of the earth more authentic than *Muwatta* of Imam Malik. Imam Shah Waliullah is of the opinion that there is no book more sound in jurisprudence than *Muwatta* of Imam Malik.

such a narration did not reach him over such an extended period of compilation. If it did not reach him, that too is a matter of objection, and if it did reach him but he did not accept it, that too is cause for objection.

The third aspect is that Imam Malik compiled this book at the very center of Islam, that is, the city of the Prophet (Madinah). This implies that this is the place where the esteemed Companions spent their lives, the majority of the Followers were also based around this area compared to the rest of the Islamic world, and even those Followers who lived in other regions used to come to this region to perform pilgrimage and visit the Prophet's Mosque. It is apparently inconceivable that the narrative of Jesus's descent, if there were any, did not reach Imam Malik.

The fourth aspect is that the region of Hejaz remained the center for the call, teaching, and training by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).⁵⁴ Several narrators of the traditions of Jesus's Second Coming were from the land of Hejaz. Many of them were contemporaries of Imam Malik. It seems highly probable that Imam Malik would have met these individuals frequently. How is it possible that neither did these people discuss the narrations of Jesus's Second Coming with Imam Malik nor did Imam Malik inquire about them from these people despite his research and compilation of hadiths?

The fifth aspect is that the earliest narrator of these narratives of Jesus's Second Coming is Ma'amar ibn Rashid (a Follower), who was a contemporary of Imam Malik. Ma'amar was born in Basra in 95 AH and later settled in Yemen. The educational and teaching chain of Hammam ibn Munabbih, a disciple of Abu Huraira (RA), was ongoing in Yemen. Ma'amar ibn Rashid became a student of Hammam. Apart from him, Ma'amar also benefited from Qatadah and Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri.⁵⁵ He died in 153 AH at the age of 58. The

⁵⁴ This includes the regions of Makkah, Madinah, Taif, and others.

⁵⁵ Ma'amar ibn Rashid acquired knowledge from teachers whose names are: Thabit al-Bunani, Qatadah, Zuhri, Asim al-Ahwal Ayyub, Abu Usman Al-Ja'd, Zaid ibn Aslam, Saleh ibn Kaysan, Abdullah ibn Tawus, Ja'far ibn

question is, given the contemporaneity of Ma'amar ibn Rashid and Imam Malik, why did Imam Malik not take the narration of Jesus's Second Coming from him?

The sixth aspect is that Imam Malik has accepted and [included in his compilations] narratives from some of the narrators of hadiths on Jesus's Second Coming, while rejecting their narrations about the Second Coming itself. What could be the reason that he took other narrations from those narrators but left out the extraordinary narration of Jesus's Second Coming? Some of the narrators of the reports on descent of Jesus were contemporaries of Imam Malik, and some lived in Madinah during his time, yet Imam Malik did not take a single narration from them. The biographical details of a few such narrators are as follows:

1. Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri (died 124 AH) is one such narrator who transmitted the narratives about the descent of Jesus. He lived in Madinah and was a contemporary of Imam Malik. Imam Malik narrated approximately 115 narrations on Zuhri's authority but did not include his narrations about Jesus's Second Coming.
2. Abd al-Rahman bin Hurmuz al-A'raj (died 117 AH) is also a transmitter of the hadith about Second Coming of Jesus. He lived in Madinah. Imam Malik recorded about 61 narrations on his authority but did not accept the narrative about Jesus's Second Coming.
3. Saleh bin Kaisan (died 140 AH) also narrated the hadith regarding the Second Coming of Jesus. He lived in Madinah and was a contemporary of Imam Malik. Imam Malik received three traditions from him, but did not include in his compilation the tradition about the Second Coming of Jesus.

Barqan, Al-Hakam ibn Aban, Ash'ath ibn Abdullah al-Hadani, Ismail ibn Umayyah, Thumamah ibn Abdullah ibn Anas, Bahz ibn Hakim, Samaak ibn al-Fadl, Abdullah ibn Uthman ibn Khuthaym, Abdullah ibn Umar al-Umari, Yahya ibn Abi Katheer, Hammam ibn Munabbih, Hisham ibn Urwah, Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir, Amr ibn Dinar, Ata al-Khurasani, Abdul Kareem al-Jazari.

4. Ziyad bin Saad al-Khurasani (died 150 AH) is a narrator of the hadith regarding the Second Coming of Jesus. He was a resident of Mecca and a contemporary of Imam Malik. Imam Malik reported three traditions from him, but not the one concerning the Second Coming of Jesus.

5. Muhammad bin Muslim bin Tadrus Abu Zubair (died 128 AH) is a narrator of the hadith regarding the Second Coming of Jesus. He resided in Mecca and was a contemporary of Imam Malik. Imam Malik did not accept any traditions from him.

6. Aswad bin Qais al-ʿAbdi al-Kufi (died 140 AH) is a narrator of the hadith concerning the Second Coming of Jesus. He was from Kufa and lived during the time of Imam Malik. Imam Malik did not include any traditions transmitted by him.

7. Saeed bin Jamhan Abu Hafs (died 136 AH) is a narrator of the hadith regarding the Second Coming of Jesus. He lived in Basra and was a contemporary of Imam Malik. Imam Malik did not mention any narratives on his authority.

8. Abu Malik al-Ashjaʿi (died 150 AH) is a narrator of the hadith regarding the Second Coming of Jesus. He resided in Kufa and was a contemporary of Imam Malik. Imam Malik did not narrate any narratives on his authority.

9. Maʿamar bin Rashid (died 153 AH) is a narrator of the hadith regarding the Second Coming of Jesus. He lived in Basra and was a contemporary of Imam Malik. Imam Malik did not receive any narratives from him.

The seventh aspect is that *Muwatta* contains a chapter regarding Jesus and the *Dajjal* titled ‘Chapter on the Descriptions of Jesus, son of Mary, and the *Dajjal*.’ Under this chapter, the following single tradition is narrated:

عن عبد الله بن عمر، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: أراي الليلة عند الكعبة، فرأيت رجلاً آدم كأحسن ما أنت راء من آدم الرجال، له لمة

كأحسن ما أنت راء من اللمم قد رجلها، فهي تقطر ماءً متكثًا على رجلين
أو على عواتق رجلين يطوف بالكعبة، فسألت من هذا؟ قيل: هذا المسيح
ابن مريم، ثم إذا أنا برجل جعد قطط أعور العين اليمنى، كأنها عنبة طافية،
فسألت: من هذا؟ فقيل لى هذا المسيح الدجال.

From Abdullah bin Umar, he said the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: 'In the dream I had last night, I saw that I was near the Kaaba. There, I saw a handsome person with a wheatish complexion as beautiful as you ever see among the wheatish complexions, with lovely hair, as good as you ever see among the hair. He had his hair combed and it dampened with water. He was doing tawaf around the Kaaba while leaning on two men or on the shoulders of two men. I asked: Who is this? It was said: This is the Messiah son of Mary. Then suddenly I saw another man with very curly hair, blind in the right eye. His eye looked as if it was a bloated grape. I asked: Who is this? It was said to me: This is the Dajjal, the false Messiah.' (Muwatta, No. 3405)

It is perplexing that while there is a separate chapter and therein is the hadith of Jesus and the *Dajjal*, the more prominent tradition of the Second Coming of Jesus is not mentioned. Even indirectly, there is no mention of it throughout the entire book.

Third Objection: Imam Bukhari Accepted Only a Few Narratives Concerning the Second Coming of Jesus

The number of *Marfu*⁵⁶ hadiths regarding the Second Coming of Jesus is more than 80. These are recorded in almost all the books of hadith with the exception of Muwatta Imam Malik.

These narrations are reported from the following Companions (may

⁵⁶ *Marfu* refers to a narration attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), meaning its chain of transmission reaches back to the Prophet. If the chain of transmission reaches a Companion, it is called *Mawquf*, and if it only goes up to a Successor (*Tabi'i*), it is termed *Maqtu*.

Allah be pleased with all of them):

1. Abu Huraira
2. Jabir bin Abd Allah
3. Al-Nawwas bin Sam'an
4. Abd Allah bin Amar
5. Hudhayfah bin Usaid al-Ghiffari
6. Thauban
7. Mujammi' bin Jariyah
8. Abu Umamah al-Bahili
9. Abd Allah bin Mas'ud
10. Usman bin al-Aas
11. Samurah bin Jundub
12. Abd Allah bin Umar
13. Anas
14. Wathilah bin al-Asqa'
15. Abd Allah bin Salam
16. Abd Allah bin Abbas
17. Aws bin Aws al-Thaqafi
18. Imran bin Husayn
19. Ummul Mu'minin Aishah bint Abu Bakr
20. Safinah, the freed slave of the Prophet
21. Hudhayfah bin al-Yaman
22. Abd Allah bin Mughaffal
23. Abdul-Rahman bin Samurah
24. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri

25. Ammar bin Yasir
26. Kaysan bin Abd Allah bin Tariq
27. Salamah bin Nufayl al-Sakuni
28. Ummul Mu'minin Safiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her)
29. Nafi' bin Kaysan
30. Abu Darda
31. Amr bin Awf al-Muzani

Out of the various and diverse narratives of the descent of Jesus, Imam Bukhari has selected the following three narrations:⁵⁷

1. حدثنا إسحاق، أخبرنا يعقوب بن إبراهيم، حدثنا أبي، عن صالح، عن ابن شهاب أن سعيد بن المسيب، سمع أبا هريرة رضى الله عنه، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: والذي نفسى بيده، ليوشكن أن ينزل فيكم ابن مريم حكماً عدلاً، فيكسر الصليب، ويقتل الخنزير، ويضع الجزية، ويفيض المال حتى لا يقبله أحد، حتى تكون السجدة الواحدة خيراً من الدنيا وما فيها، ثم يقول أبو هريرة: واقروا إن شئتم: وإن من أهل الكتاب إلا ليؤمنن به قبل موته، ويوم القيامة يكون عليهم شهيداً.

1. Ishaq narrated to us: Ya'qub ibn Ibrahim informed us, who narrated from his father, from Salih, from Ibn Shihab, that Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib heard Abu Huraira (RA) say: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: 'By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, it is soon that the son of Mary will descend among you as a just ruler. He will break the cross, kill the swine, abolish the jizya, and wealth will flow in abundance until no one will accept it. A single prostration (sajda) will then be better than the entire world and everything in it.' Then Abu Huraira said: Recite if you wish: 'And there is none among the People of the Book but will believe in him before his death, and on the Day of

⁵⁷ The translations of these narrations are also referenced in Chapter 1

Resurrection, he will be a witness against them.' (Sahih Bukhari No. 3448)

2. حدثنا قتيبة بن سعيد، حدثنا الليث، عن ابن شهاب، عن ابن المسيب أنه سمع أبا هريرة رضى الله عنه، يقول : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : والذى نفسى بيده، ليوشكن أن ينزل فيكم ابن مريم حكماً مقسطاً، فيكسر الصليب، ويقتل الخنزير، ويضع الجزية، ويفيض المال حتى لا يقبله أحد.

2. *Qutaybah ibn Sa'id narrated to us: Al-Layth narrated from Ibn Shihab, from Ibn al-Musayyib, who heard Abu Huraira (RA) say: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: 'By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, it is soon that the son of Mary will descend among you as a just ruler. He will break the cross, kill the swine, abolish the jizya, and wealth will flow in abundance until no one will accept it.'* (Bukhari, 2222)

3. حدثنا ابن بكير، حدثنا الليث، عن يونس، عن ابن شهاب، عن نافع، مولى أبي قتادة الأنصارى، أن أبا هريرة، قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : كيف أنتم إذا نزل ابن مريم فيكم، وإمامكم منكم.

3. *Ibn Bukayr narrated to us: Al-Layth narrated from Yunus, from Ibn Shihab, from Nafi', the freed slave of Abu Qatadah al-Ansari, that Abu Huraira said: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: 'What will your condition be when the son of Mary descends among you, and your leader (imam) will be from among you?'* (Bukhari, 3449)

From the study of these narrations, the following facts become clear:

1. Imam Bukhari has chosen only three narrations out of more than 80 *Marfu* narratives.
2. Two of these three narratives are essentially two different chains of the same hadith. This means the context and the meaning are the same, but they reached Imam Bukhari through

two separate chains of narrators.

3. There are detailed as well as concise narrations about the Second Coming of Jesus, and Imam Bukhari has chosen to rely on the concise ones.
5. The *Marfu* narratives are reported from almost 30 distinguished Companions. Imam Bukhari has selected narratives only from one Companion, Abu Huraira (RA).
6. Similarly, the central narrator in all three narrations is Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri, meaning Imam Bukhari only considered the narrations from al-Zuhri significant in this context.

This approach of Imam Bukhari gives the impression of his hesitation about all the narrations regarding the Second Coming of Jesus.

Fourth Objection: Time of Second Coming of Jesus Identified in the Narrative of Imam Muslim

The fourth objection is that some of the relevant parts of the event of Jesus's Second Coming, as mentioned in the narratives, have apparently already taken place in the past. The question arises: if his descent has not occurred despite the occurrence of these events, then how can we maintain certainty about the authenticity of the incident? Before explaining this matter, it is essential to understand two things about the nature of the foretold incident.

Firstly, the narratives of Jesus's Second Coming are accounts of a future event. As for their acceptance or rejection, there is a difference of opinion among Muslim scholars. The majority view is that their attribution to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is reliable, therefore the Second Coming of Jesus is certain. In contrast, some scholars believe that the attribution of these narratives to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is not reliable, hence it is incorrect to form the concept of Jesus's Second Coming based on them.

This disagreement may persist until one of the following two scenarios occurs:

1. Jesus descends before the Day of Judgement. In this case, the stance of those who believe in the authenticity of the narratives about Jesus's descent will be proven, and no room for disagreement will remain.
2. The other scenario is that the Day of Judgement occurs and Jesus does not descend. If this happens, then the viewpoint of those who doubt the attribution of these narratives to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) will be proven.

This means that if the matter of dispute relates to an observable event, the occurrence or non-occurrence of it serves as a decisive argument to resolve the dispute. If the event occurs, the argument of its proponents is substantiated; if the time passes and it does not occur, the argument of those disagreeing is substantiated. It means that no possibility of doubt or dispute remains thereafter.

Secondly, the event of Jesus's Second Coming, as mentioned in the narratives, comprises of several partial incidents. When an event is described as such, it is essential for it to occur in its entirety. The parts that make it up should also occur, and in the same order, without distortion or omission, with regard to the time and sequence of occurrences, and also considering secondary details. It is not justifiable to connect multiple parts of an event from different eras to indicate that it has already occurred. Nor it is appropriate to overlook parts that are different from the description of the event or to derive some ambiguous or illogical interpretation for the missing links of the description. In other words, an event attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) must meet every standard of reason and tradition. This is because his word is the word of Allah, where there is no possibility of error or forgetfulness.

After this introduction, let us now examine the hadith that clearly determines the time of Jesus's Second Coming. In Sahih Muslim, it is narrated:

عن أبي هريرة أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: لا تقوم الساعة حتى ينزل الروم بالأعماق أو بدابق، فيخرج إليهم جيش من المدينة، من

خيار أهل الأرض يومئذ.

فإذا تصافوا، قالت الروم: خلوا بيننا وبين الذين سبوا منا نقاتلهم، فيقول المسلمون: لا، والله لا نخلى بينكم وبين إخواننا.

فيقاتلونهم، فينهزم ثلث لا يتوب الله عليهم أبداً، ويقتل ثلثهم، أفضل الشهداء عند الله ويفتح الثلث، لا يفتنون أبداً.

فيفتحون قسطنطينية، فبينما هم يقتسمون الغنائم، قد علقوا سيوفهم بالزيتون، إذ صاح فيهم الشيطان: إن المسيح قد خلفكم في أهليكم، فيخرجون، وذلك باطل.

فإذا جاءوا الشام خرج، فبينما هم يعدون للقتال، يسوون الصفوف، إذ أقيمت الصلاة، فينزل عيسى ابن مريم صلى الله عليه وسلم، فأمهم فإذا رآه عدو الله، ذاب كما يذوب الملح في الماء، فلو تركه لانداب حتى يهلك، ولكن يقتله الله بيده، فيريهم دمه في حربته.

It is narrated from Abu Huraira that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: 'The Hour (Day of Judgement) will not occur until the Romans descend in al-A'maq or in Dabiq. An army from Madinah made up of the best people on earth at that time will face them.'

When both armies arrange themselves in ranks, the Romans would say: Do not stand between us and those (Muslims) who took prisoners from amongst us. Let us fight with them; and the Muslims would say: No, by Allah, we would never get aside from you and from our brethren that you may fight them.

They will then fight, and a third (part) of the army will flee from the battlefield, whom Allah will never forgive, a third (part of the army) which would be constituted of the best martyrs in the sight of Allah will be killed, and the remaining one-third of the army who would never be put to trail would win and conquer Constantinople. While they would be busy distributing

the spoils of war after hanging their swords by the olive trees, the Satan would cry: the Dajjal has taken your place among your families. Upon hearing this news, Muslims will immediately return. However, this news will be false.

Then when they arrive in Syria, the Dajjal will come out. At that time, after preparing for the battle, when Muslims are lining up in rows for the Fajr prayer, Jesus, son of Mary (PBUH), will suddenly descend and lead them in prayer. When the enemy of Allah would see him, he would dissolve just as salt dissolves in water. If he had been left alone, he would still have dissolved and died eventually, but Allah would kill him through Jesus's hand, and He would show his blood on Jesus's spear. (Sahih Muslim, No. 7460)

From this hadith, the following points are understood:

- This event will occur on the land of Syria before the Day of Judgment.
- The Muslim government of Syria will imprison some Christians.
- In response, a Christian army will set out to attack Syria.
- This army will continue to advance inside Syria until it reaches the location of ‘Amaq’ or ‘Dabiq’.
- When the Muslim government of Madinah learns of this attack, it will dispatch its army to assist the people of Syria.
- This army will consist of pious Muslims.
- When this army reaches Syria and lines up against the Christian forces, the Christian army will ask them not to intervene in the matter between them and Syria and to step aside.
- The soldiers from Madinah will refuse to retreat, saying that they cannot leave their brothers alone against the enemy.
- The battle will begin.
- At the beginning of the battle, one-third of the Muslim army

will flee. This will be a grave sin, which Allah Almighty will not forgive.

- One-third of the Muslim army will be martyred. These individuals will be the most exalted of martyrs in the sight of Allah.
- The remaining one-third of the army will defeat the Christians.
- The victorious army will then proceed towards the Christian stronghold of Constantinople.
- Eventually, Constantinople will be conquered by the Muslims.
- After the victory, the spoils of war will be distributed, and the contented Muslim soldiers, will hang their swords on olive trees.
- In the meantime, Satan will inform the Muslims that the *Dajjal* has reached their homes and families.
- Hearing this, the Muslim army will leave Constantinople to return to their homes.
- Upon their return, as they prepare to pray, Jesus, son of Mary (PBUH), will descend.
- Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will lead the prayer.
- Upon seeing Prophet Jesus (PBUH), the *Dajjal* will begin to dissolve.
- Before he fully dissolves, Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will strike him with a spear, killing him.

The details of this hadith clarify that Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will descend when the Muslim army, having conquered Constantinople, will be returning. Please note that this narrative from Imam Muslim explicitly states that Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will descend at the precise moment when the Muslim army, after conquering Constantinople, hears of the *Dajjal's* emergence and turns back towards Madinah.

The reality is that Constantinople was conquered on May 29, 1453,

corresponding to the 20th of Jumada al-Awwal 857 AH. Since then, it has remained in the control of Muslims, even becoming the capital of the Islamic State of Turkey under the name Istanbul.⁵⁸ Meaning, the time determined for the descent of Jesus, (PBUH) by the hadith in Imam Muslim has passed, immediately after the conquest of Constantinople in June/July 1453. Constantinople has been conquered, but the *Dajjal* has not appeared, nor has Prophet Jesus, (PBUH) descended.

If this is the reality, then we must either accept one of the two aspects of the narrative as correct and attribute the other to an error or addition by the narrator.

Either we must accept that the mention of the descent of Prophet Jesus (PBUH) is correct but the descriptions of the conquest of Constantinople and its victorious army are additional, having no connection to the descent of Prophet Jesus (PBUH). Or believe that the description of the conquest of Constantinople and its victorious army is correct, but the mention of the descent of Prophet Jesus (PBUH) is an addition.

The occurrence of both events simultaneously is unacceptable because one of these closely linked events has already taken place 570 years ago. However, the problem is that if we accept one event and deny the other, the entire narrative becomes questionable. This is because if the prophecy of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), has been correctly transmitted, it cannot undergo even the slightest alteration. It is a decree of the Almighty that unfolds exactly as uttered by the Prophet's blessed tongue.

While trying to solve this issue, our scholars have not preferred one of the mentioned possibilities or abstained from the narrative; instead, they have presented another interpretation. They believe that the conquest of Constantinople that occurred in 1453 is not the one mentioned in the narration. They believe the conquest of Constantinople will occur again. At that time, Jesus (PBUH) will

⁵⁸ This is the modern name of Constantinople.

descend, and the events mentioned in the said hadith will transpire.

This interpretation, however, raises several rational objections.

The first objection is that given the extraordinary historical significance of Constantinople and the centuries-long persistent efforts of the Muslims to conquer it, and considering the prophecy and the glad tidings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), a second conquest of Constantinople, if it does occur, cannot be as exceptional and monumental as the first.

To understand this objection, it is imperative to know basic information about the background of Constantinople and the efforts of the Muslims to conquer it.

Constantinople, the ancient name for Istanbul, was named after the Roman Emperor Constantine who adopted Christianity in the 3rd century CE and made this city his imperial capital. This city remained the capital of the Christian Byzantine Empire for 1100 years. In the 5th century CE, the Christian world was divided into two major empires: the western empire had Rome as its capital, and the eastern empire had its capital in Constantinople. The eastern empire included the Balkans, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and Ethiopia among others. The head of the church in this empire was called the Patriarch, while the head of the western church was known as the Pope.⁵⁹ Constantinople also had an extraordinary religious significance in the history of Christianity because one of the two central churches of Christianity was established there. Its name was Hagia Sophia. This church was one of the oldest and most sacred places of worship for Christians, who believed that it would never fall into the hands of non-Christians.

Constantinople's extraordinary status was such that the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) had promised paradise to the Muslims who would fight to conquer it. It is reported

⁵⁹ The Roman Empire, at the height of its power, was the world's greatest superpower, exerting political and cultural dominance over much of the world.

in Sahih of Bukhari:

فحدثتنا أم حرام: أنها سمعت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، يقول: أول جيش من أمتي يغزون البحر قد أوجبوا، قالت: ام حرام، قلت: يا رسول الله انا فيهم، قال: انت فيهم ثم قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: اول جيش من امتي يغزون مدينة قيصر مغفور لهم، فقلت: انا فيهم يا رسول الله، قال: لا.

Umm Haram narrated that she heard the Prophet (PBUH), say: 'The first of my Ummah to undertake a naval expedition in Allah's cause have made Allah's mercy and forgiveness obligatory for themselves.' Umm Haram added: 'I said, O Messenger of Allah, will I be among them?' He replied, 'Yes, you are among them.' Then the Prophet (PBUH) said, 'The first of my Ummah to attack the city of Caesar (Constantinople) will be forgiven.' I asked, 'Will I be one of them, O Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'No.' (Bukhari No. 2924)

It is reported in the Sahih of Muslim:

عن نافع بن عتبة، قال: كنا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في غزوة، قال: فاتى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قوم من قبل المغرب عليهم ثياب الصوف، فوافقوه عند اكمة، فإنهم لقيام ورسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قاعد. قال: فقالت لى نفسى: اتتهم فقم بينهم وبينه لا يغتالونه، قال: ثم قلت: لعله نجي معهم .

فاتيتهم، فقمتم بينهم وبينه، قال: فحفظت منه اربع كلمات اعدهن فى يدى. قال: تغزون جزيرة العرب، فيفتحها الله ثم فارس، فيفتحها الله ثم تغزون الروم فيفتحها الله، ثم تغزون الدجال فيفتحها الله.

قال: فقال نافع: يا جابر لا نرى الدجال يخرج حتى تفتح الروم.

Nafi' ibn Utba said, We were with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) on an expedition when some people came from the direction of the west wearing woollen clothes. they met him by a

hillock while they stood and the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, was seated.

Nafi says that a thought came to him that he should go to them and stand between them and him lest they try to assassinate him. Then he said to himself: Perhaps he is having a private conversation with them (and going there would be unsuitable). Anyway (giving preference to the first thought) I approached them and stood between them and the Prophet. On this occasion, I remembered four things that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) conveyed to me, counting them on my hand.

He said: You will wage war in the Arabian Peninsula, and Allah will grant you victory, then you will attack Persia and Allah will grant you victory, then you will fight the Romans⁶⁰ and Allah will grant you victory, then you will fight the Dajjal and Allah will grant you victory. Nafi' said: O Jabir bin 'Amr, I think the Dajjal will not emerge until the Romans are conquered.⁶¹ (Muslim No. 7466)

The first Muslim expedition set out to conquer Constantinople

⁶⁰ This refers to Constantinople, which was the capital of the Roman Empire.

⁶¹ These narrations convey two glad tidings from the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). The first is that a Muslim army will embark on a naval expedition for jihad, and in that army, Umm Haram (RA) will be included. The second is that the first Muslim army to wage jihad against the city of Caesar — Constantinople — will be deserving of Allah's forgiveness. The first prophecy was fulfilled during the caliphate of Uthman (RA) when Mu'awiyah (RA) launched an attack on Cyprus, utilizing naval forces for the campaign. This was the first naval expedition in the history of Islam. Among those who participated were 'Ubadah ibn Samit (RA) and his wife, Umm Haram (RA). The second prophecy came to pass during the caliphate of Mu'awiyah (RA), when he dispatched an army under the leadership of his son, Yazid, to conquer Constantinople. This army laid siege to the city but ultimately returned without achieving victory. Among the participants was the notable Companion Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (RA), who passed away during the siege and was buried near the city walls.

during the caliphate of Uthman (RA) and was led by Muawiyah (RA). This army attacked Cyprus. Although Muslims did not gain control over Cyprus, they managed to sign a treaty with its people.

Later, during his reign, Muawiyah (RA) dispatched an army under the command of Yazid ibn Muawiyah. This army laid siege to Constantinople. After a prolonged siege, when victory was not achieved, the army returned.

Subsequently, various rulers launched multiple attacks on Constantinople, but victory could not be secured.⁶² These rulers include Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, Hisham bin Abdul Malik, Mahdi Abbasi, Harun Al-Rashid, Bayezid Yildirim, and his son Murad II.

The glory of the conquest of Constantinople is attributed to the grandson of Bayezid Yildirim, Mehmed II. He began the siege of Constantinople on the 26th of Rabi‘ al-Awwal 857 AH, corresponding to April 6, 1453. After an extraordinary and historic struggle, he successfully conquered Constantinople on the 20th of Jumada al-awwal 857 AH, corresponding to May 29, 1453, and hence he became famous in history as Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror.

⁶² Mufti Taqi Usmani has described the notable reasons for the city’s invincibility in his travelogue *Jaban-e-Deeda* in the following words:

‘Firstly, the city’s location was such that it was encircled by sea bays forming a natural barrier. Secondly, it was a mountainous region where the winter season, particularly for the dwellers of Arabia, was unbearable. Thirdly, the city was surrounded by successive triple walls, with sturdy towers built at intervals of a hundred and seventy feet. Each wall was extremely solid, and between the first and second walls, there was an impassable trench, sixty feet wide and a hundred feet deep, making the fortress considered the most secure and unbreachable in the world. Fourthly, given the political and religious significance Constantinople held in the Christian world, the entire Christian community was ready to risk their lives at the slightest threat to it. Due to these reasons, most of the Muslim sieges failed to conquer the city. In certain sultan’s eras, the people of Constantinople were willing to pay taxes, but the city was never conquered.’ (Page 321)

This is the historical background of the conquest of Constantinople. If this is presented purely without any reference, everyone would believe that this extraordinary event could indeed be the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)⁶³.

Now, consider this from another angle. So, for example, hypothetically, if Prophet Jesus descends, but neither is Constantinople conquered nor does the emergence of the *Dajjal* occur, would it be said that Prophet Jesus will descend again at a later occasion and other events will happen then, or would it be said that the descent negates the other events?

Similarly, if the emergence of the *Dajjal* happens, but neither does Jesus descend nor is Constantinople conquered, would it be said that the *Dajjal* would emerge again and the remaining two events would occur at that time, or would it be said that this event negates the other two events?

So, the question is, if from the aforementioned three events, the conquest of Constantinople has occurred, but the other two connected events have not happened, what is the basis to avoid negating the other events?⁶⁴

⁶³ For this very spectacular background, Allama Iqbal has declared this city a culmination of the achievement of centuries of bloodshed. He writes:

*The tract of Constantinople, that is the Caesar's city
The perpetual banner of the grandeur of the Ummah's Mahdi
Like the Haram's dust this region is also holy
It is the shrine of descendants of Shah-i-Lawlak (PBUH)
Its breeze is holy like the fragrance of rose
A voice is calling from the tomb of Ayyub Ansari
'O Muslim! this city is the heart of the Nation of Islam!
This city is the reward for millenniums of blood sacrifices!'*

⁶⁴ The only answer to this is that the prohibiting factor here is that Imam Muslim has accepted the Hadith as attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). If this is the answer, then the question arises why scholars and Hadith experts critique narrations attributed to the Prophet (PBUH) from the perspectives of narration and understanding, and why they reject them if

It should be noted that the description of any past, present, or future event always includes certain relevant secondary events. To believe in the account of the event, one must believe in all its component events, their sequence, and their interconnection. It is not possible to exclude some components, change their sequence, or interpret them in such a way that the continuity is broken, or to imagine such a temporal distance between them that the narration of the event becomes doubtful.

It should also be clear that according to a hadith, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has stated that the signs of the nearness of the Day of Judgment will be sequential events. That is, they would not face irrational or unusual delays or postponement. The words of the hadith are:

عن عبد الله بن عمرو، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: الآيات خرزات منظومات في سلك، فإن يقطع السلك يتبع بعضها بعضا .

Abdullah bin Amr reported: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: 'The signs (of the Day of Judgment) are like beads strung on a string; if the string breaks, they will come after one another.' (Musnad Ahmed No. 7040)

عن أبي هريرة، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: خروج الآيات بعضها على إثر بعض، يتتابعن كما تتتابع الخرز في النظام.

Abu Huraira reported from the Prophet (PBUH) who said: 'The appearance of the signs (of the Day of Judgment) will follow one after the other like pearls falling in succession when the string is cut.' (Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat by Al-Tabarani No. 4271)

The second issue is that in order to accept this interpretation by scholars, we would need to turn back the wheel of civilization and culture. That is to say, it must be assumed that an era will return when wars will be fought with spears and swords instead of gunpowder,

there is any doubt, and why they sometimes differ from one another in their decisions of rejection and acceptance?

atomic, and chemical weapons. The system of maintaining a regular modern army, where soldiers are employees receiving salaries from the state, would come to an end, and the old method would resume, where soldiers would be allocated spoils of war after the victory.⁶⁵

The third issue is to assume that Turkey's capital of Istanbul (formerly Constantinople) will return to the control of the Romans, and it will regain its extraordinary religious and political significance in the world that it held in the fifteenth century or earlier.

The fourth issue is that embracing this interpretation negates the status of the related narrative or other similar narratives as prophecies. This is because a prophecy is only considered as such when it informs us with a definite and time-bound event in the future. Therefore, if the occurrence represented by the conquest of Constantinople is not determined – meaning it is not decided how many times the Muslims will conquer Constantinople and which conquest will be followed by the descent of Prophet Jesus – then how can this narrative be considered a prophecy? Furthermore, if the meaning and occurrence of one event in the narrative, namely the conquest of Constantinople, is ambiguous, then how can the meanings and occurrences of the other events, namely the descent of Prophet Jesus and the emergence of the *Dajjal*, be considered unambiguous?

Fifth Objection: Difference in Two Chains of a Single Narration About the Second Coming of Jesus

In Muslim's *Kitab al-Fitan wa Ashrat as-Sa'ah* (The Book of Tribulations and the Signs of the Hour), in the chapter titled *Bab fi al-Ayat allati takunna qabla as-Sa'ah* (Chapter: The Signs That Precede the Hour), these two narratives detail ten signs of the imminence of the Day of Judgment:

عن حذيفة بن اسيد الغفارى، قال: اطلع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم علينا ونحن نتذاكر، فقال: ما تذاكرون؟ قالوا: نذكر الساعة، قال: إنها لن تقوم حتى ترون

⁶⁵ Such a regression in civilization and culture appears incompatible with the structure of the universe upon which Allah has created it.

قبلها عشر آيات، فذكر الدخان، والدجال، والدابة، وطلوع الشمس من مغربها، ونزول عيسى ابن مريم صلى الله عليه وسلم، وياجوج وماجوج، وثلاثة خسوف: خسف بالمشرق، وخسف بالمغرب، وخسف بجزيرة العرب، وآخر ذلك نار تخرج من اليمن تطرد الناس إلى محشرهم.

Hudhayfah ibn Asid al-Ghifari narrates: We were conversing when the Prophet (PBUH) appeared before us. He asked, 'What are you discussing?' They replied, 'We are speaking of the Hour.' He said, 'Indeed, it will not come until you see before it ten signs,' and he mentioned the smoke, the Dajjal, the Beast, the rising of the sun from the west, the descent of Jesus son of Mary (PBUH), Gog and Magog, three landslides: one in the east, one in the west, and one in the Arabian Peninsula, and last of them a fire that will emerge from Yemen that will drive people to their place of assembly.⁶⁶ (Muslim No. 7285)

عن ابى سريحة حذيفة بن اسيد، قال: كان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فى غرفة، ونحن اسفل منه، فاطلع إلينا، فقال: ما تذكرون؟ قلنا: الساعة، قال: إن الساعة لا تكون حتى تكون عشر آيات خسف بالمشرق، وخسف بالمغرب، وخسف فى جزيرة العرب، والدخان، والدجال، ودابة الارض، وياجوج وماجوج، وطلوع الشمس من مغربها، ونار تخرج من قعره عدن ترحل الناس.

قال شعبة: وحدثنى عبدالعزيز بن رفيع، عن ابى الطفيل، عن ابى سريحة، مثل ذلك. لا يذكر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم. وقال احدهما فى العاشرة نزول عيسى ابن مريم صلى الله عليه وسلم، وقال الآخر: وريح تلقى الناس فى البحر.

Abu Sarifah Hudhayfah bin Asid (RA) narrates that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was in an upper room while we were sitting below. He came to us and asked, 'What are you

⁶⁶ A place in Yemen

discussing?’ We replied, ‘We are discussing the Day of Judgment.’ The Prophet (PBUH) said, ‘The Day of Judgment will not come until ten signs appear: the land sinking in the east, the land sinking in the west, the land sinking in the Arabian Peninsula, smoke, the Dajjal, the beast of the earth, Gog and Magog, the sun rising from the west, a fire emerging from the edge of Aden that will drive people forward.’

Shu'bah says that Abdul Aziz bin Rafi' narrated to me from Abu Tufail, who received a similar narration from Abu Sariyah (RA). They did not mention the Prophet (PBUH) (meaning they narrated a Mawquf hadith), and one of my narrators (Furat and Abdul Aziz) mentioned the descent of Jesus, son of Mary (PBUH) as the tenth sign. The other narrator stated that the tenth sign would be a wind that will carry people off and throw them into the sea. (Muslim No. 7286)

This is a single hadith that has reached Imam Muslim through two chains:

1. Imam Muslim - Sufyan bin Uyainah - Furat al-Qazaz (*tabi' al-tabi'in*) - Abu Tufail (*tabi'i*) - Hudhayfah ibn Asid (Companion) - the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).
2. Imam Muslim - Ubaidullah bin Ma'd - Ma'd al-Anbari - Sha'bah - Furat al-Qazaz - Abu Tufail - Hudhayfah ibn Asid (Companion) - the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

If we consider both chains, it becomes apparent that these are different versions of the same narrative. The evidence is that they recount the same subject of ten signs of the Day of Judgment, the same Companion Hudhayfah ibn Asid narrates, and the same Successor Abu Tufail transmits. Thereafter, different individuals report the narration further down the chain, meaning that it remains the same up to Abu Tufail, but diverse narrators have transmitted it beyond him. Furat and Sha'bah have relayed it further from Abu Tufail. Consequently, as Imam Muslim received this single hadith, it emerged through these two chains.

According to the report reaching through Sufyan bin Uyainah from Furat al-Qazaz, these ten signs of the Day of Judgment are recounted as follows:

1. The Smoke
2. The Dajjal's appearance
3. The Beast of the Earth
4. The sun rising from the west
5. The Second Coming of Jesus
6. Gog and Magog
7. The earth sinking in the east
8. The earth sinking in the west
9. The earth sinking in the Arabian Peninsula
10. A fire that will emerge from Yemen driving people forward

In the report reaching through Sha'bah from Furat al-Qazaz, nine signs are mentioned:

1. The Smoke
2. The Dajjal's appearance
3. The Beast of the Earth
4. The sun rising from the west
5. Gog and Magog
6. The earth sinking in the east
7. The earth sinking in the west
8. The earth sinking in the Arabian Peninsula
9. A fire that will emerge from Yemen driving people forward

In the report reaching through Sha'bah from Furat al-Qazaz, nine signs are mentioned and the Second Coming of Jesus is not included among them. Sha'bah's report concludes with the mention of these

nine signs. However, given that the narration begins with the mention of ten signs, all ten should be accounted for. To address this, Sha'bah quotes two different narrators conveying two distinct tenth signs:

- According to one narrator, the tenth sign is the Second Coming of Jesus.
- According to another narrator, the tenth sign is a wind that will scoop up people and cast them into the sea.

The analysis of the hadith presents two issues:

First, if an event has ten signs and one of them is extraordinarily prominent, how is it possible for a narrator to mention the other nine and omit that one? Normally, it is the less significant details that tend to be forgotten or overlooked. It seems implausible that all other matters would be reported, yet the most critical sign would be disregarded. Moreover, when seeking to determine the tenth sign by consulting two other narrators, if one of them suggests a different sign rather than the vitally important one, it raises concerns. This exact issue arises in the narration where only nine signs are mentioned in the original report, and the notably significant sign of the Second Coming of Jesus is absent. When inquiring about the tenth sign, another narrator offers that a wind will appear, which will lift people and throw them into the sea.⁶⁷

This same narration from Sufyan ibn Uyainah has also been reported

⁶⁷ Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, writes concerning the narration of *Rihun tulqi an-nāsa fi al-bahr* (the wind that will throw people into the sea):

'This chain, although mawquf (stopped at the level of the companions and not attributed directly to the Prophet), we deem it preferable in consideration of its content for two reasons: Firstly, because the time of the descent of Christ mentioned in a narration was immediately after the conquest of Constantinople. This conquest occurred in 1453 CE. Every knowledgeable person is aware that no such event has happened since then. Secondly, because the explicit statements regarding Jesus (PBUH) in the Qur'an do not in any way accept his descent like this.' (Monthly Ishraq, November 2021)

by Imam Tirmidhi. It does not mention the descent of Jesus. That is, the narration from Sufyan bin Uyainah that reached Imam Muslim mentions the sign of the descent of Jesus, but the narration reported by Tirmidhi from the same Sufyan ibn Uyainah does not mention the Second Coming of Jesus. The narrative reads:

عن حذيفة بن اسيد، قال: اشرف علينا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من غرفة، ونحن نتذاكر الساعة فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا تقوم الساعة حتى تروا عشر آيات: طلوع الشمس من مغربها، وياجوج وماجوج، والدابة، وثلاثة خسوف: خسف بالمشرق، وخسف بالمغرب، وخسف بجزيرة العرب، ونار تخرج من قعر عدن تسوق الناس او تحرق الناس، فتبيت معهم حيث باتوا، وتقبل معهم حيث قالوا.

Hudhayfab bin Asid (RA) reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, turned towards us from his room. At that time, we were discussing the Day of Judgment. He said: The Day of Judgement will not be established until you witness ten signs. The sun rising from the west, Gog and Magog, the beast of the Earth, and the Earth sinking three times—once in the east, once in the west, and once in the Arabian Peninsula—a fire that will emerge from within Aden which will herd people together, lodging where they lodge and resting where they take their midday nap. (Hadith No. 2183)

Sixth Objection: Absence of Mention of Jesus's Second Coming in Some Reports of the Signs of the Approaching Judgment Day

The reports clearly indicate that the event of Prophet Jesus's second coming is one of the signs of the Judgment Day, which is also agreed upon by the scholars. Some of those reports, which mention the signs of the approaching Judgment Day, list these signs. Some mention three signs, some four, some six, and some ten. Collectively, these reports bring forward the following signs:

1. Smoke
2. The emergence of the *Dajjal*
3. The beast of the Earth
4. The sun rising from the west
5. The descent of Jesus
6. Gog and Magog
7. The Earth sinking in the east
8. The Earth sinking in the west
9. The Earth sinking in the Arabian Peninsula
10. A fire that will emerge from Yemen, driving people together
11. A wind that will lift people and throw them into the sea
12. Death
13. The emergence of thirty false Dajjals
14. A majority of the Romans will be Christians

When we consider these signs, the most extraordinary is the descent of Jesus. It is the most prominent among the others, extremely unusual, and explicit in its significance and explanation. Therefore, it is a natural requirement that while a few out of these fourteen or fifteen signs, narrators should certainly mention this most prominent sign. It goes against human reason and experience to omit the most prominent matter and discuss comparatively less important details instead. But the reality is that in several reports about the signs of Judgment Day, the sign of Prophet Jesus's descent has not been mentioned.

In the following report mentioned in the Sahih Muslim, six signs of Judgment Day are mentioned, excluding the descent of Prophet Jesus:

عن ابى هريرة، ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: بادروا بالاعمال
ستا طلوع الشمس من مغربها، او الدخان، او الدجال، او الدابة، او خاصة
احدكم، او امر العامة

It is narrated from Abu Huraira (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: 'Hasten to do good deeds before six things happen: First, before the coming of the Dajjal, second, the Smoke, third, the beast of the earth, fourth, the rising of the sun from the west, fifth, the Day of Judgment, and sixth, before your death.' (Muslim no. 7584)

Similarly, the following report in Sahih Bukhari mentions eleven signs of Judgment Day, but it does not mention the descent of Jesus:

عن ابى هريرة، ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: لا تقوم الساعة حتى تقتتل فئتان عظيمتان يكون بينهما مقتلة عظيمة، دعوتهما واحدة، وحتى يبعث دجالون كذابون قريب من ثلاثين، كلهم يزعم انه رسول الله، وحتى يقبض العلم، وتكثر الزلازل، ويتقارب الزمان، وتظهر الفتن، ويكثر الهرج: وهو القتل، وحتى يكثر فيكم المال فيفيض حتى يهم رب المال من يقبل صدقته وحتى يعرضه عليه، فيقول الذى يعرضه عليه: لا ارب لى به، وحتى يتناول الناس فى البنيان، وحتى يمر الرجل بقبر الرجل، فيقول: يا ليتنى مكانه، وحتى تطلع الشمس من مغربها، فإذا طلعت ورآها الناس، يعنى آمنوا اجمعون، فذلك حين لا ينفع نفسا إيمانها لم تكن آمنت من قبل او كسبت فى إيمانها خيراً ولتقوم الساعة وقد نشر الرجلان ثوبهما بينهما، فلا يتبايعانه، ولا يطويانه، ولتقوم الساعة وقد انصرف الرجل بلبن لقحته فلا يطعمه، ولتقوم الساعة وهو يليط حوضه فلا يسقى فيه، ولتقوم الساعة وقد رفع اكلته إلى فيه فلا يطعمها.

Abu Huraira (RA) reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, stated: 'The Day of Judgment will not be established until two great groups wage war. There will be a massive bloodshed between them, though their calls will be the same. And until nearly thirty fraudulent Dajjals are dispatched, each claiming he is the Messenger of Allah. This will go on until knowledge is lifted, earthquakes will be very frequent, time (of the

Day of Judgement) will be near, tribulations will emerge, much killing will happen, wealth will proliferate so much it will overflow until the owner of wealth will worry about who will accept his charity. The situation will reach a point where a person will present his charity (sadaqah) to others, but those to whom he presents it will say that they do not need it. People will pride themselves on erecting tall buildings, competing in their construction. A man will pass by the grave of another, wishing to be in his place. The sun will rise from the west, and when it does rise that way and people see it, they will all believe, but that's when faith no longer benefits the soul that had not believed before or earned good in faith. Then, the Day of Judgement will swoop in unexpectedly so that two men would not manage to exchange or fold a garment between them; the Day of Judgement will arrive while a person returns with the milk of his she-camel and would not be able to drink it; the Day of Judgement will come while someone is mud plastering his trough and would not manage to fill water in it; and the Day of Judgement will come while he's bringing the morsel to his mouth and yet won't get to eat it.' (Bukhari No. 7121)

It should be noted that the sign of the *Dajjal* is mentioned among these eleven signs, but the most crucial sign of the descent of Jesus is not mentioned.

1. War between two great armies
2. The appearance of many *Dajjals*
3. Claims of prophethood by three individuals
4. The disappearance of knowledge
5. Increase in murders and anarchy
6. Abundance of wealth
7. Shortage of people willing to accept charity
8. Pride over large buildings

9. Competition in the construction of buildings

10. A desire for death among people

11. The sun rising from the west and people coming to faith upon seeing it

Similarly, a hadith in Tirmidhi mentions three signs, but it does not include the sign of the Second Coming of Jesus.

عن ابى هريرة، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: ثلاث إذا خرجن لا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ أَمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ⁶⁸، الدجال، والدابة، وطلوع الشمس من المغرب او من مغربها.

Abu Huraira reported the Prophet (PBUH) to have said: 'Three things, when they appear, one's faith will not benefit them if they had not believed before: the Dajjal, the beast, and the sun rising from the west.' (Tirmidhi No. 3072)

In a narrative of Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal, there are six signs of the apocalypse described, but they do not include the sign of the descent of Jesus.

عن عوف بن مالك الأشجعي قال: أتيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو في خدر له، فقلت: أدخل؟ فقال: ادخل قلت: أأكل؟ قال: كلك فلما جلست قال: أمسك ستاً تكون قبل الساعة، أولهن وفاة نبيكم. قال: فبكيت، قال هشيم: ولا أدرى بأيتها بدأ؟ ثم فتح بيت المقدس، وفتنة تدخل بيت كل شعر ومدر، وأن يفيض المال فيكم حتى يعطى الرجل مائة دينار فيتسخطها، وموتان يكون في الناس كقعاص الغنم قال: وهدة تكون بينكم وبين بنى الأصفر، فيغدرون بكم فيسيرون إليكم في ثمانين غاية، (وقال يعلى: في ستين غاية)، تحت كل غاية اثنا عشر ألفاً.

Auf bin Malik narrates: 'Once I sought permission to enter the house of the Prophet (PBUH) and asked whether I should come

⁶⁸ Surah Al-An'am 6:158

in or stay at the door. The Prophet (PBUH) said, 'Come in.' So I did. The Prophet (PBUH) was performing ablution in the best manner and then he said to me, 'Auf bin Malik, count six things before the Day of Judgment: first, your Prophet will pass away, then Jerusalem will be conquered, then there will be a plague among humans like the plague among sheep, then there will be emergence of tribulations, then there will be such an abundance of wealth among you that if a man were given a hundred dinars, he would get angry, then with an army consisting of eighty banners (and Ya'la said sixty banners) and each banner having twelve thousand soldiers, the Romans will come to fight you.' (Musnad Ahmad No. 23996)

There are other narratives regarding the signs of the Day of Judgement recorded in the books of hadith. The purpose here is only to present the issue that in many narratives about the signs of the Day of Judgment, there is no mention of the descent of Jesus. This casts doubt on the concept of the descent of Jesus, and as a result, it cannot be accepted as coming from the Prophet, peace be upon him.

Seventh Objection: A Few Contradictions between Narratives about the Second Coming of Jesus and Other Narratives

There can be no contradictions or inconsistencies in the words of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. Whatever he says concerning religion is from Allah and therefore is free from any errors, forgetfulness, contradictions, or inconsistencies. This is both a recognized fact and an established principle in hadith methodology. Thus, if a situation arises where two contradictory narrations are encountered, our scholarly tradition gives preference to the narration that aligns more closely with the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the principles of reason and knowledge. If such preference is not possible, an approach of reconciliation is adopted, considering the context, era, and audience. If even this proves difficult, a position of suspension (*tawaqquf*) is taken concerning both narrations, avoiding their use as evidence or argumentation.

Some details in the narratives concerning the Second Coming of Jesus – both internal and external – seem to present contradictions and inconsistencies. One prominent example of this phenomenon is as follows:

It is clear from the narratives about the descent of Jesus that this event is linked to the end times and that his descent will be a sign of the Day of Judgment. According to these narratives, after descending, Jesus will first kill the *Dajjal* and eliminate Christians and Jews from all over the world. Hence, the Day of Judgment will occur only when there are only Muslims left in the world.

Now, the following narrative in the Sahih of Imam Muslim presents a different picture, according to which the Day of Judgment will occur when Christians are in majority:

عن المستورد القرشي، قال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، يقول: تقوم الساعة والروم اكثر الناس، قال: فبلغ ذلك عمرو بن العاص، فقال: ما هذه الاحاديث التي تذكر عنك انك تقولها عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم؟ فقال له المستورد: قلت الذي سمعت من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال، فقال عمرو: لئن، قلت: ذلك إنهم لاحلم الناس عند فتنة، واجبر الناس عند مصيبة، وخير الناس لمساكينهم وضعفائهم.

Mustawrid Qurashi reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) saying, 'The Day of Judgement will be established when Romans will outnumber all other nations.' When this report reached Amr bin Al-As, he said: 'What are these narrations that you mention claiming to have heard from the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him?' Mustawrid said: I only narrate what I heard from the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. Amr said: If you have said this, (then it is true), for Christians are the most patient in the face of turmoil, are the quickest to recover from a calamity, and they are the best among people in dealing with the impoverished and the weak. (Muslim No. 2898)



Chapter Four

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Position

The previous chapter sheds light on the objections of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi about the concept of the Second Coming of Jesus. These objections arise from the texts of the Noble Qur'an, the principles of understanding hadith, historical facts, and the established norms of knowledge and rationale. These objections prevent the acceptance of the narratives of Second Coming of Jesus and its associated events as definitive, tangible, and testifiable occurrences. Additionally, it is not permissible to attribute the said concept to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The reason is that attributing any unconvincing and dubious matter to the honored person of the Prophet is contrary to religion and faith. Such an act can lead to serious consequences in this world and the hereafter.

The question that arises now is: If Javed Ahmed Ghamidi does not consider the conventional understanding of the descent of Prophet Jesus as attributed to the Prophet (PBUH) to be correct, does he then reject the numerous narratives on this topic? The answer is in the negative. He accepts all the narratives on this subject in principle. However, he interprets them in light of a narration from Sunan Ibn Majah and some other books that is attributed to Abdullah ibn Mas'ud. This narration clarifies that the mention of the descent of Prophet Jesus and the slaying of the *Dajjal* was stated by Prophet Jesus (PBUH) himself during the event of *Mi'raj* (the Prophet's ascension to the heavens). According to this narration, during the journey of *Isra* and *Mi'raj*, when the Prophet (PBUH) met with various prophets, the topic of the Day of Judgment was also discussed. At that time, Prophet Jesus (PBUH) mentioned that he would descend before the Day of Judgment and would kill the *Dajjal*. The narration is as follows:

عن عبد الله بن مسعود قال لما كان ليلة أسرى برسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لقي إبراهيم وموسى وعيسى. فتذاكروا الساعة. فبدأ إبراهيم. فسأله عنها. فلم يكن عنده منها علم. ثم سألوا موسى. فلم يكن عنده منها علم. فرد الحديث إلى عيسى بن مريم. فقال قد عهد إلى فيما دون وجبتها. فأما وجبتها فلا يعلمها إلا الله.

فذكر خروج الدجال. قال فأنزل فأقتله. فيرجع الناس إلى بلادهم. فيستقبلهم يأجوج ومأجوج وهم من كل حذب ينسلون. فلا يمرون بماء إلا شربوه. ولا بشيء إلا أفسدوه.

فيجأرون إلى الله. فأدعو الله أن يميتهم. فتنتن الأرض من ريهم. فيجأرون إلى الله. فأدعو الله. فيرسل السماء بالماء. فيحملهم في البحر. ثم تنسف الجبال وتمد الأرض مد الأديم.

فعهد إلى متى كان ذلك كانت الساعة من الناس. كالحامل التي لا تدري أهلها متى تفجؤهم بولادتها.

Abdullah ibn Mas'ud reported that on the night when the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was taken on the Isra (the Night Journey), he also met Prophets Abraham, Moses, and Jesus (peace be upon them). They discussed the Hour (Judgment Day). First, they asked prophet Abraham, but he did not have knowledge thereof. Then they asked Moses who also knew not thereof. Then they turned to Jesus who said, 'I have been informed about the events leading to the occurrence of the Day of Judgement, but as for the exact time of its occurrence, only Allah knows.'

(He) then mentioned the emergence of the Dajjal and said, 'I will descend and kill him.'

Then, people will return to their lands, and they will be confronted by Gog and Magog, who will emerge from every high place. They will not pass by water without drinking it, and they will not pass by anything without spoiling it.

The people will then plead to Allah, and I will pray to Allah to destroy them. (Then they will be destroyed.) The earth will be filled with their stench. Again, the people will plead to Allah, and I will pray to Allah. He will then send down rain from the sky, which will carry them and throw them into the sea.

The mountains will turn to dust and the earth will be stretched out like a hide.

I have been promised that when this happens, the Day of Judgment will be as close as a pregnant woman whose family does not know when she will suddenly give birth⁶⁹. (Ibn Majah, No. 4081)

According to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, this narrative resolves the ambiguities and objections related to the hadith reports associated with the Second Coming of Jesus. If this narrative is considered the basis and other narrations as its branches, then the narratives about the Second Coming of Jesus, the emergence of the *Dajjal*, the exodus of Gog and Magog, and all the narrations of the signs of Judgment Day align consistently and harmoniously, making it plausible for scholars to accept them.

It requires a detailed book to answer questions such as how this narrative holds the position of the basis, how other narrations are subordinate to it, and especially what could be the possible intent and subject matter of the descent of Prophet Jesus (PBUH). Here, a few points will be presented briefly to answer these questions.

1. The Narrative About the Second Coming of Jesus

This narrative from Abdullah ibn Mas'ud relates to the Second Coming of Jesus, the emergence of the *Dajjal*, the appearance of Gog and Magog, and the signs of the Day of Judgement. In Sunan Ibn Majah, it is listed under the chapter 'The Fitnah (tribulation) of the *Dajjal* and the Emergence of Jesus, son of Mary, and Gog and

⁶⁹ This narrative is also present in Musnad Ibn Abi Shaybah, Musnad Ahmad, Jami al-Bayan, Tabari, Musnad Shashi, and Mustadrak Hakam.

Magog.’ Some other narratives on this topic are also mentioned in the chapter. Moreover, this narrative includes all the issues that are an integral part of the concept of the Second Coming of Jesus and have been repeatedly reported in the narratives on this subject, namely:

- The descent of Jesus is one of the signs of the nearness of the Day of Judgment
- Prophet Jesus will descend before the Day of Judgment
- The *Dajjal* will emerge during the presence of Prophet Jesus
- Prophet Jesus will kill the *Dajjal*
- Then, during the presence of Prophet Jesus, Gog and Magog will emerge
- They will swoop down from every elevation
- Then Prophet Jesus will pray for their destruction, and they will be annihilated
- The earth will be filled with their corpses
- Then Prophet Jesus will pray, and the earth will be cleansed of their existence
- At that time, the Day of Judgment Day will be very near

These points make it explicitly clear that the mentioned narrative briefly conveys the same matters which are detailed in some other narratives regarding the Second Coming of Jesus. An example of this is the narration of al-Nawwas bin Sam’an (RA), which Ibn Majah has quoted in the same book and chapter. A comparison between the narratives proves that the narratives of Ibn Masud and al-Nawwas bin Sam’an, may Allah be pleased with them, are two different descriptions of the same claim, the first quite brief and the second fully detailed. Both the narratives include some diverse additional details that complement each other. This is the case with other narratives concerning this subject as well. The text of the narrative is as follows:

سمع النواس بن سمعان الكلبي. يقول: ذكر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الدجال الغداة. فخفض فيه ورفع، حتى ظننا انه في طائفة النخل.

فلما رحنا إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عرف ذلك فينا، فقال: ما شأنكم؟ فقلنا: يا رسول الله، ذكرت الدجال الغداة، فخفضت فيه ثم رفعت، حتى ظننا انه في طائفة النخل، قال: غير الدجال اخوفني عليكم، إن يخرج وأنا فيكم فانا حجيجه دونكم، وإن يخرج ولست فيكم فامرؤ حجيج نفسه، والله خليفتي على كل مسلم.

إنه شاب قطط، عينه طافئة، كاني اشبهه بعبد العزى بن قطن، فمن رآه منكم فليقرأ عليه فواتح سورة الكهف.

إنه يخرج من خلة بين الشام، والعراق، فعات يمينًا، وعات شمالاً، يا عباد الله اثبتوا.

قلنا: يا رسول الله، وما لبثه في الارض؟ قال: اربعون يومًا، يوم كسنة، ويوم كشهر، ويوم كجمعة، وسائر ايامه كايامكم.

قلنا: يا رسول الله، فذلك اليوم الذي كسنة تكفينا فيه صلاة يوم؟ قال: فاقدروا له قدره.

قلنا: فما إسرعه في الارض؟ قال: كالغيث اشتد به الريح، قال: فياتي القوم فيدعوهم فيستجيبون له، ويؤمنون به، فيامر السماء ان تمطر فتمطر، ويامر الارض ان تنبت فتنبت، وتروح عليهم سارحتهم اطول ما كانت ذرى، واسبغه ضروعًا، وامده خواصر، ثم ياتي القوم فيدعوهم فيردون عليه قوله، فينصرف عنهم، فيصبحون محلين ما بايديهم شيء، ثم يمر بالخربة، فيقول لها: اخرجي كنوزك، فينطلق، فتتبعه كنوزها كيغاسيب النحل.

Nu'as bin Sam'an (RA) narrates: One morning the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, spoke about the Dajjal. During this time, he lowered and raised his voice. From this, we got the impression that the Dajjal might be in the cluster of date palms nearby.

Later in the evening, we appeared before the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him. Seeing our faces stricken with fear, he asked, 'What has happened to you?' We said, 'O Messenger of Allah, when you spoke of the Dajjal and varied your voice between low and loud, it made us fear that the Dajjal might be present in the cluster of date palms nearby.' (Upon hearing this) he said, 'What I fear for you is more serious than the Dajjal. If the Dajjal appears while I am still among you, I will contend on your behalf against him, but if he appears after I am gone, then each Muslim must contend against him. Allah will protect every Muslim.'

(The Prophet continued,) 'The Dajjal will be a young man with curly hair, and one of his eyes will be blind. He will resemble 'Abdul-'Uzza bin Qatan. Whoever among you sees him should recite the opening verses of Surah al-Kahf.'

(Then he said,) 'He will emerge between Syria and Iraq, and will spread mischief right and left. O servants of Allah, steadfast you must remain!'

We asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, how long will he remain on earth?' He replied, 'Forty days. One day will be like a year, another day will be like a month, another like a week, and the rest of the days will be like your usual days.'

We asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, on that day which is like a year, will the prayers of a day suffice?' He replied, 'No, you must estimate the time and observe the prayers accordingly.'

Then we asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, how quickly will he travel the earth?' He said, 'Like clouds driven by the wind. He will come to the people and call them (to his falsehood), and they will believe and respond to him. He will issue a command to the sky, and it will rain; command the earth, and it will produce crops. By the evening, their pasturing animals will come back to them with elongated humps, fat flanks, and full udders.'

(He continued) 'Then he will come to another group of people and invite them, but they will reject his call. When he leaves, their wealth will vanish with him, and by morning they will be left empty-handed. Then he will pass by the wasteland and say, 'Bring forth your treasures,' and its treasures will follow him like swarms of bees.

He will then call a youth forward, slash him with a sword, and cut him into two pieces, then call him, and the youth will come running and laughing.

During this time, Allah will send Jesus, son of Mary. He will descend in the eastern part of Damascus, near the white minaret, wearing garments lightly dyed with saffron and placing his hands on the wings of two angels. When he lowers his head, it will seem as if water is dripping from it, and when he raises it, it will appear as though his hair is beaded with silvery pearls.

(The Prophet said:) 'The breath of Jesus, which will reach as far as his eye can see, will kill the unbelievers. Then he will pursue the Dajjal and catch him at the gate of Ludd and kill him.'

Afterwards, Jesus will go to the people whom Allah has protected from the Dajjal. He will wipe their faces and inform them of their ranks in Paradise. Then Allah will reveal to Jesus: 'I have brought forth servants of Mine whom no one will be able to fight. Take these (my servants) to the Ṭūr mountain.'

And Allah will send Gog and Magog, who will surge forth from every mound. The first of them will pass by the Sea of Galilee and drink all of its water. Their last group will pass by it and say, 'There was once water here.'

The Prophet Jesus and his companions will be besieged on the Ṭūr mountain until a bull's head will be more valuable to them than one hundred dinars. Then Jesus and his companions will supplicate to Allah, who will send insects to attack the necks of Gog and Magog, and in the morning they will perish like a

single person.

Then Jesus and his companions will descend down from the mountain, where not a span of land will be empty of their putrid rotting [bodies]. Then Jesus and his companions will again beseech Allah, and He will send birds whose necks are like those of camels to carry away those bodies and cast them where Allah wills.

Then Allah will send a rain that will wash the earth until it looks like glass. Then the earth will be told to bring forth its fruit and restore its blessing. Consequently, even a large group of people will be satiated by a single pomegranate, and its rind will be used to shelter them. There will be such a blessing in milk that the milk of one she-camel will suffice a huge crowd, and the milk of one cow will suffice a tribe, and the milk of one sheep will serve a family.

In those days Allah will send a pleasant wind which will soothe [people] even under their armpits, and will take the life of every Muslim – only the wicked will survive, and they will fight among themselves like asses. Then the Day of Judgement will be established upon them⁷⁰.

This narration by Nu'as bin Sam'an tells us explicitly that it is a detailed account of Abdullah bin Masud's narration.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi believes that an important principle of understanding hadith is to consider all narrations about one particular topic while determining the claim of any hadith so that all the available details about that event, occasion, or subject is brought to light. It helps explain which narrator has omitted which detail, which reporter included those details, which report creates ambiguity or generality, and which hadith offers relevant details with clarity. This

⁷⁰ This narration has been included in Sahih Muslim and Tirmidhi under Nos. 7560 and 2240 respectively. Allama Nasir al-Din Albani has declared it *Sahih*.

process produces a clear picture of the issue under discussion⁷¹. Thus, the inclusion of the aforementioned narration of Abdullah bin Masud with other narrations on the Second Coming of Jesus brings to light the actual reality and resolves all doubts and hesitations preventing the acceptance of the concept.

2. Mention of the Second Coming of Jesus in a Dream

It is clear from the narration of Ibn Masud (RA) that the Second Coming of Jesus was mentioned in the dream on the Night of Ascension (*Isra*).⁷² The opening words *Lamma Kaana Lailata*

⁷¹ Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has discussed this issue in Meezan in chapter titled *Mubadi Tadabbur-e-Hadith* under the section *Abadith-e-bab Per Nazar*.

... It is important to consider all the traditions of that particular subject while trying to find the objective of a hadith. At times, a reader understands a specific meaning of a hadith but when he reads other hadiths on the same topic, he sees a totally different meaning of that hadith. An example is the narratives about images. Some of those narratives indicate that all types of images are prohibited. However, a detailed study of all those narratives clearly explains that the prohibition only applies to images created for worship. Dozens of such examples can be found in hadith literature. Therefore, in case of any doubt regarding the meaning of a hadith, one must avoid making any conclusions without considering all narratives of that particular topic (64-65).

⁷² The word '*Isra*' means 'to take along.' In the hadith and their commentaries, this term is commonly used to refer to the two journeys of *Isra* and *Mi'raj* undertaken by the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). These are extraordinary journeys in the life of the Prophet (PBUH). During the first, he was taken to *Masjid al-Aqsa*. During the second, he was taken to the heavens. The journey to *Masjid al-Aqsa* is mentioned in the Qur'an in the following words:

'Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from Al-Masjid al-Haram to Al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing.' (Surah Al-Isra, 17:1) This verse describes the miraculous journey where Allah transported His servant, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in a single

Usriya bi-Rasūlillahi Sallallahu Alayhi wa Sallam Laqiya Ibraheema wa Moosa wa 'Eesa ('On the night when the Messenger of Allah met Abraham, Moses, and Jesus')—indicate this. They imply that the details the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) provided regarding the Second Coming of Jesus, the emergence of the *Dajjal*, and the release of Gog and Magog are linked to the events of *Isra* and *Mi'raj*.⁷³

Additionally, the Holy Qur'an attests that the Prophet's journey from Masjid al-Haram to Masjid al-Aqsa during which he witnessed the signs of Allah took place in the realm of a dream. The words of Surah Al-Isra, 17:60, *Wa Ma Ja'alna Ar-Ru'yaa Allati Arainaka* (The dream We showed you), establish this fact.

The Almighty Allah says:

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لَكَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ أَحَاطَ بِالنَّاسِ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الرُّءْيَا الَّتِي آرَيْنَاكَ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً
لِّلنَّاسِ وَالشَّجَرَةَ الْمَلْعُونَةَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ. وَخُوفُهُمْ فَمَا يَزِيدُهُمْ إِلَّا طُغْيَانًا كَبِيرًا .

Remember when [for such an admonition and warning,] We said to you: Your Lord has surrounded these people; [and they were making fun of this]. The dream We showed you We made

night from Masjid al-Haram in Makkah to Masjid al-Aqsa in Jerusalem, a place surrounded by blessings. The purpose of this journey was to show him some of the great signs of Allah, affirming His status as the All-Hearing and All-Seeing.

⁷³ The following narration from Abdullah ibn Abbas (RA) further clarifies that during the Prophet's (PBUH) description of his *Isra* journey, he also mentioned the *Dajjal* along with Jesus (PBUH):

The cousin of your Prophet (PBUH), Ibn Abbas (RA), narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: 'On the night I was taken on the Isra journey, I passed by Musa ibn Imran (PBUH). He was of wheatish complexion, tall, well-built, and resembled the men of the Shanu'ah tribe. I also saw Isa ibn Maryam (PBUH); he was of medium stature, with a reddish-white complexion, and his hair was straight. Among the many signs that Allah showed me during the journey, I was shown Malik, the keeper of Hell, and the Dajjal as well.' (Sahih Muslim, No. 165)

it a trial too for these people [because of this attitude of theirs] and that tree as well which has been cursed in the Qur'ān. We are only frightening them of their fate, but this thing is merely increasing them in their extreme rebelliousness.

From the Sahih Bukhari, the narration by Anas bin Malik supports the fact that the celestial journey of *Mi'raj* occurred in the realm of dream. The relevant parts of the hadith report read:

عن شريك بن عبد الله أنه قال سمعت أنس بن مالك قول: ليلة اسرى برسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من مسجد الكعبة انه جاءه ثلاثة نفر قبل ان يوحى إليه وهو نائم في المسجد الحرام، فقال اولهم: ايهم هو؟ فقال اوسطهم: هو خيرهم، فقال آخرهم: خذوا خيرهم، فكانت تلك الليلة. فلم يرهم حتى اتوه ليلة أخرى فيما يرى قلبه، وتنام عينه، — ولا ينام قلبه، وكذلك الانبياء تنام اعينهم ولا تنام قلوبهم....
...قال: واستيقظ وهو في مسجد الحرام.

It is narrated by Shareek bin Abdullah who said that he heard Anas bin Malik (RA) describing the night when the Prophet (PBUH) was taken from the Masjid al-Haram. (He describes): Before the commencement of the revelation, the Prophet (PBUH) was sleeping in the Sacred Mosque when three individuals (angels) came to him. One of them asked: 'Which one among these (people) is he?' The one in the middle replied: 'He is the best among these (people).' The last one said: 'Take the best among them.' (Then the three of them left). That night only this much happened.

After that, the Prophet did not see them until they came again on another night. At that time, his condition was such that his heart was seeing, but his eyes were asleep. And his heart never slept. This is the case with all prophets that (even while sleeping) their eyes may sleep, but their hearts never sleep...

...Anas (RA) narrates that, later, when the Prophet woke up, he

*was in the Sacred Mosque*⁷⁴. (Sahih Bukhari No. 7079)

The above details show that the prophecies about the descent of Jesus, the appearance of the Dajjal, and the emergence of Gog and Magog towards the end times are part of the observations of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on the night journey of *Isra* and *Mi'raj*. He observed these events in visions that occurred in his dreams.

3. Dreams of Prophets

Direct communication is one of the methods of inspiration and revelation Allah Almighty employs for the education and training of His prophets. This means that the words of Allah reach His prophets in the form of speech and communication. The divine scriptures are essentially a compilation of this very communication. The most notable example of this is the Qur'an, in which the word of Allah is reported in Allah's own words and styles.

Another method of education and training is through experiences and observations. In this method, realities are presented as visible objects for observation or in the form of similitude. Such observations are sometimes presented to the waking eye and sometimes in the form of dreams during sleep. In both forms, they are from Allah and are based on truth. One example of the former is Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) observation of Gabriel (AS) descending at the *Sidrat al-Muntaba*. An example of the latter type is the practical involvement of the Prophet during *Isra* and *Mi'raj*.

The second type is usually for matters that require sensory experience or direct observation for their full understanding. The prayer of Prophet Abraham (PBUH) asking the Lord to demonstrate methods of worship to him is a request for the practical manifestation of the methods of worship to be shown to him by Allah⁷⁵.

⁷⁴ For a detailed study on *Isra* and *Mi'raj* and the explanation of the relevant Qur'anic verses and hadith reports, please consult the book: *The Night Journey and Ascension into the Heavens: Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Stance*

⁷⁵ In Surah al-Baqarah verse 128, the following supplication has been

It clearly implies that dreams of all the divine prophets are from Allah and are a type of revelation and inspiration. Therefore, there is no interference from Satan or personal thoughts in them. They are true, conform to reality, and often appear to be clearer and more visible than what one might see with open eyes in a state of wakefulness. About such dreams, Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi writes:

'... The dreams shown to the prophets are true visions (ru'ya al-sadiqah). There are several distinctive aspects to keep in mind.

First, dreams are one of the means of divine revelation. Just as Allah Almighty reveals His words to His prophets and messengers through an angel, similarly, sometimes He provides guidance through dreams.

Second, these visions are very clear, unambiguous, and bright as daylight, giving the prophet full consolation and peace of heart. Even if something appears in a symbolic form, its interpretation is also made clear by Allah Almighty to the prophet.

Third, when the aim is to show events and realities, this means of communication proves more satisfactory for the prophets because it provides thorough details of the events and visually presents meanings and realities that cannot be described in words.

Fourth, the observation through dreams is more definitive,

mentioned: *Lord! And make both of us submissive to You and make from our descendents also a community that will submit to You and teach us our rites of worship and show favor to Us.* Explaining this supplication, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi writes: The actual words are *Wa Arina Manasikana*. The imperative verb *arina* means 'show us.' This word has been used by Abraham (PBUH) because the prophets of God have been taught the rituals of worship generally by an angel through practical demonstration whether in reality or in a vision. The singular of the plural word *Manāsik* is *Mansak* and it means both 'the method of sacrifice' and 'the place of sacrifice.' From here it came to be used in a wider sense to connote the rituals of *hajj* and *'umrah*. (*Al-Bayan* 1/130)

extensive, much deeper, and far-reaching than actual observation with the naked eye. The eye can be deceived, but a true vision is free from deception. The eye can only see within a limited scope, but a dream encompasses a far wider range at a single moment. The eye is incapable of observing the truths and meanings; it is limited only to what is visible, but a dream grasps meanings, truths, and even illuminations and manifestations. Prophet Moses (PBUH) desired to see divine manifestation with his eyes but could not bear it. In contrast, our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) during the night of Mi'raj observed many things clearly without his vision becoming dazzled. (Tadabbur-e-Qur'an 4/475-476)

4. Interpretation of Allegorical Observations

The truths shown to the prophets, either directly as visual scenes or through true dreams (*ru'ya al-sadiqah*), sometimes correspond exactly to the observation and at other times require interpretation. In the first instance where observations correspond to the results, there is no confusion or ambiguity. They are clear to the prophets and also easily understood by their audiences. This is because what the prophet sees is either an exact reflection of the past or present event, or is destined to happen in the near future. An example is the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) direct observation of the physical structure of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. He observed it once during the night of *Isra* in a dream and on another occasion in a state of wakefulness when the disbelievers rejected his claim. When the rejecters asked for the detailed description of Al-Aqsa Mosque to validate their rejection, Allah presented the mosque before the Prophet who described its full details while looking at it directly.

As for those observations that are not meant to be understood literally, they require interpretation and explanation. They are generally shown in the realm of dreams. Some of these scenes are presented in the form of allegory and similes, where the purpose and reference are not literal but metaphorical and allegorical. According to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, these types of observations imply revelation through

manifestation. Hence, they need to be understood in terms of interpretation and allegory rather than literally. Regarding the hadith reports about the signs of the Day of Judgment and tribulations, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi writes:

The events related to the signs of the Day of Judgment and tribulations described in the narratives were not communicated but shown to him (the Prophet), regardless of whether they were in a state of dream or wakefulness. For this reason, the mixture of real events and allegory found in such observations need serious consideration for their explanation. (Monthly Ishraq, Lahore, December 2021)

The Qur'an mentions many instances of such dreams. Some examples are as follows:

In Surah As-Saffat, it is mentioned that Prophet Abraham (PBUH) saw in his dream that he was slaughtering his son, Prophet Ishmael, peace be upon him. The apparent interpretation, of course, was that he must devote his son to the service of the *Kaaba* for the sake of Allah. However, instead of interpreting the dream, he chose to follow it literally. Prophet Ibrahim's aimed to leave no shortcoming in following the command and to apply it with utmost perfection. Allah Almighty praised Prophet Abraham's immense spirit of submission and consent, and with utmost love and attention, explained the reality that it was a dream that needed interpretation rather than literal application⁷⁶.

فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُ لِلْجَبِينِ . وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَنْ يَا إِسْمَٰعِيلُ . قَدْ صَدَّقَت الرُّعْيَا...

⁷⁶ The action of Prophet Abraham (PBUH) that rendered this event eternal was his decision to act upon the dream in its literal sense, despite knowing that such dreams are generally symbolic or allegorical and are not usually interpreted literally. Thus, he essentially eliminated any potential for permissible interpretive errors. The point is that on one hand, there was a slight chance of misinterpretation, and on the other hand, he had to sacrifice his beloved son. The approach he chose left no room for even a permissible interpretational error.

Then when both of them submitted and the father laid down his son on his forehead and We called out to him: 'Abraham! You have made your dream come true,'... (Surah As-Saffat 103-105)

In his dream, Prophet Joseph (PBUH) saw the sun, the moon, and eleven stars prostrating before him. It did not imply that these celestial bodies would bow before him. Rather, it meant that his parents and eleven brothers would bow before him respectfully. It is clear from the Qur'an that when this incident occurred, Prophet Joseph regarded it as the fulfillment of his dream:

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَى يُوسُفَ أَوَىٰ إِلَيْهِ أَبَوَيْهِ وَقَالَ ادْخُلُوا مِصْرَ إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَمِينٌ
وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوا لَهُ سُجَّدًا وَقَالَ يَأْبَتِ هَذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُءْيَايَ مِنْ
قَبْلُ قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّي حَقًّا....

Then when these people came over to Joseph, he gave his parents a special place near him and said: 'Stay in Egypt, if God wills, with peace.' [After reaching his house,] he made his parents sit on the throne and everyone bowed before him in prostration. Joseph said: 'Father! This is the interpretation of my dream that I saw earlier. My Lord made it a reality.' (12:99-100)

According to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, this method is adopted regarding the circumstances and incidents to happen in the future. They appear in the realm of dreams allegorically or metaphorically. The nature of these dreams is such that the events going to unfold in the future appear in the form of examples. It is as if the example takes physical form, appears in the form of an event, or sometimes describes the event in words. In all cases, the relationship between the event and the example is that of a simile. This is the reason why these observations need interpretation rather than literal application.

Among such dreams mentioned in the Qur'an and hadith, some have been interpreted within the Qur'an and hadith themselves, while others have converted into established historical facts⁷⁷. They no

⁷⁷ One prominent example of this is the dream of the Prophet (PBUH) in

longer require interpretation or explanation. However, prophetic dreams that have yet to be fulfilled are, by all means, subject to interpretation. People of knowledge and wisdom can ponder upon them and interpret and explain them.

A prominent example is the dream of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in which he saw himself migrating towards a land with palm trees and observed the tip of his sword breaking and then becoming whole again. The interpretation was that he would go to Yathrib (Medina), where the battle of Uhud would occur. Muslims would first experience defeat and then emerge victorious. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself informed of these interpretations. In *Sahih Muslim*, there is a narration by Abu Musa Ash'ari that reads:

عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال رأيت في المنام أني أهاجر من مكة إلى أرض بها نخل فذهب وهلي إلى أنها اليمامة أو هجر فإذا هي المدينة يثرب

which he saw himself migrating to a land filled with date palm trees and witnessed the tip of his sword breaking and then becoming whole again. The interpretation of this vision was that he would migrate to Yathrib (later known as Madinah), where the Battle of Uhud would take place. In this battle, the Muslims would initially face defeat but would later achieve victory. The Prophet (PBUH) himself provided the interpretations of these dreams. In *Sahih Muslim*, there is a narration from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (RA):

The Prophet (PBUH) said: 'I saw in a dream that I was migrating from Makkah to a land with date palm trees. I thought it might be Yamamah or Hajr, but it turned out to be Madinah, which is Yathrib. In that same dream, I saw myself shaking a sword, and its tip broke off. That incident symbolized the setback the Muslims faced on the Day of Uhud. Then I shook the sword again, and it returned to its original, intact state. This symbolized the victory Allah granted and the regrouping of the Muslims after they had been scattered in the battle. In the same dream, I saw cows, and by Allah, they represented good. The cows symbolized the Muslims who were martyred at Uhud, and the good was the blessings and rewards Allah bestowed after that, as well as the ultimate reward Allah granted us following Badr.'

ورأيت في رؤيى هذه أنى هزرت سيقًا فانقطع صدره فإذا هو ما أصيب من المؤمنين يوم أحد ثم هزرتة أخرى فعاد أحسن ما كان فإذا هو ما جاء الله به من الفتح واجتماع المؤمنين ورأيت فيها أيضًا بقرًا والله خير فإذا هم النفر من المؤمنين يوم أحد وإذا الخير ما جاء الله به من الخير بعد وثواب الصدق الذى أتانا الله بعد يوم بدر.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: In my dream, I saw that I was migrating from Mecca to a land with palm trees. I thought perhaps it was Yamamah or Hajar, but it turned out to be Medina, Yathrib. In this same dream, I shook my sword, and its tip broke off, and that was what befell the believers on the day of Uhud. Then I shook it a second time, and it became as perfect as it was before, and that was the victory that Allah brought, and the believers (after they had scattered) came together again. I also saw cows in this dream, which by Allah, was good too. The cows meant the group of (martyred) believers on the day of Uhud, and the good that came was the goodness and the true reward that Allah brought to us after the day of Badr. (Sahih Muslim No. 2272)

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's position on such dreams is that:

- They should be understood in the light of the interpreted dreams of the prophets.
- The meanings of their allegories should be determined by considering the complete knowledge of religion.
- The results of one's research and contemplation on them should be presented not as definitive but as a probable opinion.
- Where the interpretation of any allegory is unclear, instead of unnecessary speculation, one should wait for Allah's decision.

Therefore, according to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, the traditions reported about the Second Coming of Jesus, the appearance of the *Dajjal*, the emergence of Gog and Magog, and the great wars and tribulations of

the last era are description of the truthful dreams of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). They are based on allegorical and metaphorical style. They should be interpreted, and if an interpretation cannot be understood, the authenticity of the narrative should be accepted while suspension of judgment about their meaning is advised.

He writes:

... The tribulations, wars, and signs of the Day of Judgment described in the narratives should be viewed from this perspective. Where the interpretation is not clear, the matter should be entrusted to Allah because such things usually become clear only after their actual occurrence, and the intended purpose is that they become clear at their appointed time. (Monthly Isbraaq, Lahore)

5. Explanation of the Allegory of the Second Coming of Jesus

The above discussion has sufficiently proven the following realities:

First, the descent of Jesus and its details are mentioned during the events of *Isra* and *Mi'raj*.

Second, the events of *Isra* and *Mi'raj* occurred in the realm of a dream; therefore, all the narratives of the Second Coming of Jesus are descriptions of the dream of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

Third, the dreams of prophets are a type of divine revelation and inspiration. They represent the absolute truth and cannot be equated to ordinary human dreams.

Fourth, these dreams generally take the form of allegories; despite being authentic and based on truth, they require an interpretation.

Fifth, the need for interpretation necessitates that these visions should not be taken in literal meaning but rather be understood in a metaphorical sense, and instead of seeking their literal meanings, one should search for their symbolic meanings.

After this summary, let us try to understand the interpretation that

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has presented regarding the allegory of the Second Coming of Jesus.

Abdullah bin Masood (RA) reported that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his dream observed a gathering involving Prophet Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, peace be upon them. They were discussing the timing of the Day of Judgment⁷⁸. The first question was asked to Prophet Abraham (PBUH) who replied that he did not know about its timing. When Prophet Moses (PBUH) was asked, he too expressed his unawareness. Upon asking Prophet Jesus (PBUH) he stated that he was not aware of the exact time but knew that before the Day of Judgment, the *Dajjal* would appear, and he (Jesus) would descend and kill him (the *Dajjal*). The words of the narration are:

...فرد الحديث إلى عيسى بن مريم. فقال قد عهد إلى فيما دون وجبتها. فأما وجبتها فلا يعلمها إلا الله. فذكر خروج الدجال. قال فأُنزل فأقتله.

... *It was then said to Jesus, son of Mary (PBUH) to speak and he said: I have been informed of the events just before the establishment of the Day of Judgment. As for the time it will be established, that is not known to anyone except Allah. Then he mentioned the appearance of the Dajjal and said: 'I will descend and kill him.'* (Ibn Majah No. 4081)

According to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, the words *fa'anzala* and *faqtulahu* (I will descend and I will kill him) in the narration cannot be taken literally to mean that Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will descend physically from the sky. There are two main reasons for this:

Firstly, the Qur'an outright rejects this assumption. Prophet Jesus (PBUH) has been discussed from several aspects in the Qur'an, but despite the opportunity to mention it, there is not the slightest hint of his second coming. From verses 116-119 of Surah Al-Maidah, it is

⁷⁸ It is also a fundamental part of the responsibilities of the divine messengers. They are responsible to inform the people about the Day of Judgment. Therefore, it is quite natural for them to discuss the timing of the Day of Judgment and the signs that indicate its nearness.

clear that on the Day of Judgment, Allah will question Prophet Jesus (PBUH) about the straying away of the Christians from the right path. In his response, Jesus will express his unawareness. However, it is apparent that if there were to be a second coming, he would not be unaware of it. Then, in verse 55 of Surah Aale Imran, the course of action until the Day of Judgment concerning Jesus (PBUH) is described. There too, no mention of the descent of Jesus is present⁷⁹.

Secondly, the specified time for the Second Coming of Jesus mentioned in the narratives has passed, and the incident of the Second Coming of Jesus has not occurred.

This fixed time is 857 Hijri, corresponding to 1453 CE, which passed 570 years ago⁸⁰. If the words concerning the descent of Jesus were to mean his personal descent, it would have been necessary for the *Dajjal* to also appear at that time, and that Prophet Jesus would have descended and killed him. However, historical evidence contradicts it.

Based on these conclusive reasons, it is incorrect to interpret the prophecy of the Second Coming of Jesus as referring to his physical descent. Such an interpretation leads to objections against the verses of the Qur'an and renders the hadiths contradictory to established fact⁸¹. Subsequently, the only way to accept the Second Coming of Jesus is to consider it symbolic and to infer a metaphorical

⁷⁹ The detailed discussion on these objections is present in the previous chapters.

⁸⁰ Hadith No. 7460 in Sahih Muslim has described the incident of the Second Coming of Jesus in detail. It is clear from that hadith that Jesus (PBUH) will descend at the time when the Muslim army will conquer Constantinople, and upon hearing the news of the emergence of the *Dajjal*, return towards Medina. Constantinople was conquered on May 29, 1453, corresponding to 20 Jumada al-Awwal 857 AH, and it remains under Muslim rule to this day. However, neither has the *Dajjal* appeared, nor has Jesus (PBUH) descended, nor has he killed the *Dajjal*. A detailed discussion on this narration can be found in the preceding chapters.

⁸¹ On the contrary, if we reject the two narratives declaring them against the Qur'an and the historical facts, there is nothing on which we can base the concept of the second coming of Jesus.

interpretation. Doing so is considered valid for two reasons:

1. Reference to the Second Coming of Jesus in a Dream: Future events concerning prophets, peace be upon them, are generally shown through allegories in dreams. This matter was also shown to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in a dream.
2. The Allegorical Style of Jesus's Speech: The Gospel makes it clear that Jesus's manner of speaking was allegorical. He often used figurative language to clarify his point, narrating parables, presenting examples, and speaking through similes, metaphors, and hints⁸².

Based on the above reasoning, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has categorized the account of the Second Coming of Jesus as allegorical and determined its true significance in the light of the noble Qur'an, the Bible, and the hadiths. Hence, his stance is that the meaning of the Second Coming of Jesus here is not his personal descent, but rather a metaphorical one⁸³. Therefore, when Prophet Jesus said, 'I will come

⁸² This matter is clarified on every page of the Gospel. The following verses from the Gospel of Matthew vividly highlight the nature and reality of this style:

On that day, Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such a large crowd gathered around him that he had to get into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying: 'A farmer went out to sow his seed'... His disciples came to him and asked, 'Why do you speak to the people in parables?' He replied, 'Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them'... That is why I speak to them in parables: 'Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand'... But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear... Listen then to what the parable of the sower means... He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of the heavens is like a mustard seed'... He told them still another parable: 'The kingdom of the heavens is like yeast... All these things Jesus said to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable.' (Matthew 13:1-34)

⁸³ It is just similar to Abraham's (PBUH) dream of slaughtering his son and

down', it did not imply that He would personally descend again but he meant that his guidance—which the Christians have entirely obliterated—will once again become manifest. He has explained in his commentary on the hadith narrated by Abdullah ibn Masud:

The Qur'an and hadiths clarify that these are events that occurred in a dream, which require interpretation. Therefore, in the narratives of the Second Coming of Jesus, we have interpreted it as the descent of his guidance, which will be manifested to his followers close to the Day of Judgement as if he himself came down from heaven, reformed his community, and then left. (Monthly Ishraq, Lahore)

In Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's view, this allegory is much like the one he used regarding his own adjudication. It is clear from the Gospel according to Matthew that he, as a messenger, also referred to the establishment of his justice as his arrival and had said:

Just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man (Jesus). For in the days before the flood, people were eating, drinking, and marrying up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. (Matthew 24: 37-39)

6. Exegesis and Explanation of the Allegory of the Second Coming of Jesus

In the matter of the Descent of Jesus (PBUH), Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's stance is based on an analogy between the words of the hadith and their intended reference, and the words of the Gospel and their corresponding reference. Specifically, he has compared the words narrated in the hadith, '*I (Jesus, son of Mary) will descend,*' to the Gospel's phrasing, '*The Son of Man (Jesus, son of Mary) will come.*' He has interpreted the intended meaning of the hadith in the same

Prophet Yusuf's (PBUH) dream of the sun and the stars bowing before him which despite being true, also carried metaphorical explanations.

manner as the metaphorical fulfillment of the Gospel's prophecy, which is recorded in the annals of history.

In this analogy, it is essential to understand the relationship between the analogy itself and its counterpart - the descent of Jesus in the sense of the descent of his guidance, and the counterpart to which it is being compared - the coming of Jesus in the sense of the establishment of justice. For this purpose, it is important to understand the allegory and its interpretation upon which it is analyzed.

Jesus (PBUH) was not only a prophet but also a divine messenger. He descended as the court of justice of God for the Israelites. In that role, he was responsible to culminate the argument of religion against them and then to enforce divine reward and punishment. According to the divine law, if the Israelites believed in him, they would benefit from the blessings of heaven and earth, and if they rejected him, they would be deserving of punishment and would face God's wrath in this world⁸⁴. It was the misfortune of the Israelites that instead of faith and obedience, they chose the path of rejection and transgression. Even the extraordinary birth of Jesus (PBUH) his miraculous speech in the

⁸⁴ The law of the prophets' justice is described in Surah Yunus (10:47) in these words: *Wa Likulli Ummatin Rasūl; Fa Iza Ja'a Rasūlubum Qudīya Baynabum Bil-Qist wa Hum La Yuzlamoon* ([His law is that] for every nation there is a messenger. Then, when their messenger comes their fate is justly decided and no injustice is done to them). Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has clarified this, stating: 'This is a statement of the law which has been explained at many instances in this exegesis: before Prophethood and Messengership were confined to the progeny of Abraham (PBUH), all nations of the world were communicated the truth by their respective messengers. From its details which have been mentioned in the Qur'ān, it is evident that a rasūl decides the fate of his addressees and implements the judgment of God on them in this very world. The Qur'ān informs us that this final phase in the preaching endeavor of a rasūl comes after it passes through the phases of *indhār*, *indhār-i 'ām*, *itmām al-hujjah* and *hijrah wa barā'ah*. It is in this phase that the divine court of justice is set up on this earth. Punishment is meted out to the rejecters of the truth and those who have accepted it are rewarded, and, in this way, a miniature Day of Judgement is witnessed on the face of the earth.' (Al Bayan 2/438)

cradle, and his magnificent supernatural signs⁸⁵ could not persuade them to acknowledge the truth. Eventually, their enmity for the truth and the callousness in their hearts reached such an extreme level that they plotted to kill him⁸⁶.

When the nations of the Messengers reach this extreme point of rebellion, their respite from God comes to an end, and the decision for the implementation of punishment is issued. At this moment, the Messenger is separated from the nation for safety. The safety is ensured through physical migration to another land or spiritual migration to the heavens through death. Both forms of migration lead towards Allah, occur with His permission, and follow His predetermined wisdom and strategy.

For Jesus (PBUH), the divine plan was that Allah would grant him death and raise his blessed body to Himself. Additionally, it was declared that those who denied him would face divine punishment for their rejection.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Thus, by the command of Allah, he would breathe life into clay birds to turn them into living creatures, cure the born blind, treat the incurable leprosy patients, raise the dead, and even inform the visiting people of what they had eaten and what they had stored in their homes.

⁸⁶ This was indeed the same plan that had been devised by the people of Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH) before Jesus, and after him by the people of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

⁸⁷ According to the divine practice (*Sunnat-e-Ilahi*), the punishment that befalls the deniers of a Messenger in this world can generally be classified into three scenarios: In the first scenario, the Messenger's nation is fundamentally rooted in polytheism. As a result of the Messenger's call, a significant portion of the people come to believe in him, and they establish authority in a specific land. In such a case, the punishment is executed through the swords of the Messenger and his followers. This was the case with the nation of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the descendants of Ismail. In the second scenario, the nation is also based on polytheism, but only a small number of people accept the Messenger's call. The Messenger does not have access to a land of migration (*Dar al-Hijrah*) where he can establish authority. The punishment for such a nation involves separating the Messenger and his followers from

This punishment was imposed a few years after the death of Jesus (PBUH), in 70 AD. Its practical manifestation occurred when the Roman Empire attacked and conquered Jerusalem. The sign of the Israelite's magnificence, the Temple of Solomon, was demolished⁸⁸. One hundred and thirty-three thousand men were killed, and sixty-seven thousand people were enslaved. The entire city was destroyed and reduced to ruins. This was the form of divine punishment that came after Jesus's completion of the argument against his people, referred to in the Holy Qur'an as '*wa'dul-ākhirati*' in the following verse:

...فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ الْآخِرَةِ لِيُسُوفُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَلِيَدْخُلُوا الْمَسْجِدَ كَمَا دَخَلُوهُ
أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَلِيُتَبَرُّوا مَا عَلُوا تَتَّبِعُوا.

...After that, when the time of the second promise arrives, We depute some other mighty people of Ours so that they may ruin your faces and barge into your mosque the way they had done the first time and ravage whatever they can lay hands on. (17: 7)

About this punishment, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi writes:

This is the mention of the destruction that came upon the Jews by the hands of the Roman Emperor Titus in 70 AD, after Jesus's

the rest of the people, after which the remainder of the nation is obliterated from existence. This is what happened with the nations of Nuh, Hud, Salih, Lut, Shu'ayb, and other similar communities. In the third scenario, the nation is fundamentally rooted in monotheism, yet it denies the Messenger. The number of believers is so small that they cannot overpower the deniers. Furthermore, the Messenger and his followers do not have access to a land of migration. The punishment for such a nation involves the imposition of humiliation and subjugation until the Day of Judgment. However, they are not eradicated from existence because of their foundational connection to monotheism. This was the case with the Israelites, who were subjected to this punishment as a consequence of rejecting the prophethood of Jesus (PBUH).

⁸⁸ This temple has not been rebuilt to this day. It should be noted that the significance of Solomon's Temple for the Jews is akin to that of the Kaaba for Muslims.

completion of his argument. On this occasion, thousands were killed, thousands enslaved, thousands were sent to work in the mines of Egypt and thousands were sent to amphitheaters and colosseums in various cities to become sport for the people by being thrown to wild beasts or by serving as training for gladiators. All tall and beautiful girls were chosen by the victors for themselves and the city of Jerusalem and its mosque were laid to waste. (Al-Bayan 3/67-68)

This is the same justice that descended from heaven upon the Israelites because of Prophet Jesus's completion of the argument of religion against them. Jesus (PBUH) had foretold of this divine justice in the allegory of his second coming. Below is the complete passage from the Gospel where Jesus predicted the arrival of this judgment. He explained that the current generation of Jews would face the same consequences of reward and punishment that the people of Noah faced, and it will take the form that he (Jesus) would bring this divine justice:

Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. The heavens and the earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. Just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will at the coming of the Son of Man⁸⁹. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known

⁸⁹ The term 'Son of Man' is used by Jesus (PBUH) to refer to himself. Thus, here the coming of the Son of Man refers to the coming of Jesus (PBUH) himself.

in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore, be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. (Matthew 24:34-44)

The meaning of this prophecy in the Gospel is that before the end of the generation in which Jesus was sent, he will descend again among them. At that time, he will complete his mission of Messengership and will enforce the punishment for their rejection of him. Now the question is: Did the punishment of Allah descend upon the Israelites as foretold in this prophecy? The answer is affirmative. In 70 AD, the divine retribution unfolded just as it was described in the prophecy.

Another question is: Did Jesus physically descend to deliver the judgment of reward and punishment upon the Israelites for the fulfillment of the prophecy? The answer is negative. He did not come personally, but his judgment was enforced upon the Jews through the swords of the Romans⁹⁰.

This historical evidence proves that the prophecy of Jesus's coming mentioned in the Gospel did not mean his personal descent. Instead, it was his judgment that descended from the heavens, just like the judgment of Noah. The only difference was in the instruments used for the punishment. For Noah's judgment, instruments of the heavens, like clouds and winds, were used, and for Jesus's judgment, earthly instruments, like swords and spears, were employed.

This detailed explanation has fully ascertained the fact that phrases in the Gospel such as 'Son of Man (Jesus) will come' symbolize the coming of Jesus's retribution and cannot be construed as actual physical coming of Jesus.

After having established this argument, it is important to know that

⁹⁰ The revelation of God's punishment upon the rejecters of His messengers is a divine phenomenon. Whether it happens through windstorm, heavy rains, thunderstorm, vibration, earthquake, screaming sounds, or destruction through human armies, it always comes from Allah and is a manifestation of his never changing *Sunnah*.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has analogized the narratives of the Second Coming of Jesus with the same example from the Gospel, adopting the position that just as the '*coming of Jesus's justice*' is depicted through the metaphor of the '*coming of Jesus,*' the '*appearance of Jesus's guidance*' is similarly symbolized by the '*Descent of Jesus*'⁹¹. That is, the manner of expression used in the phrases of the Gospel – '*coming of Son of Man*'⁹², and '*Jesus will come*'⁹³ – is also the style found in the narratives with the phrases like *fa'anzala*, ('*I will descend*'⁹⁴), *an yanzila fīkum ibnu Maryam*. ('*Son of Mary will descend among you*'⁹⁵), and *fayab'athu Allāhu 'Īsā ibna Maryam* ('*Allah will send Jesus, son of Mary*'⁹⁶). The meaning of these phrases is also metaphorical and symbolic. Therefore, just as Jesus's '*coming*' symbolizes the '*coming of his justice*' in Mathew, his '*coming*' in these narratives should imply the '*coming of his guidance*.'

Furthermore, both the figurative expressions found in the Gospel and the narratives have reportedly been uttered by Prophet Jesus (PBUH). This consistency in the style of delivery from the same personality also supports Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's view.

The above discussion regarding the metaphorical meaning of the Second Coming of Jesus leads to the following conclusions:

- The words *fa'anzala*, *faqtulahu* (I will descend, I will kill) mentioned in narratives are originally the words of Prophet Jesus, which he stated in front of Prophet Muhammad on the occasion of

⁹¹ In the light of the Qur'an, it is an established fact that Allah's Messenger brings only two things for his people: guidance (*hidayah*) and judgment (*adalat*). Guidance refers to the religion based on wisdom and divine law, which the nation is obligated to accept. Judgment refers to the decree of reward and punishment that is executed upon the nation after the completion of proof (*Itmam-e-Hujjah*).

⁹² Mathew 24:37

⁹³ Mathew 24:44

⁹⁴ Ibn Majah 4081

⁹⁵ Sahih Bukhari 2222

⁹⁶ Sahih Muslim 7568

the *Mi'raj*.

- Their mode of expression is metaphorical, like the general style of Prophet Jesus.
- In these words, Prophet Jesus adopted the same style that he had used in the sermon in the Gospel.
- The Gospel contains a metaphor for the arrival of Prophet Jesus, the real-life historical manifestation of which is the imposition of divine justice upon his nation.
- The Gospel contains a metaphor for the coming of Prophet Jesus, the manifestation of which is the implementation of divine justice, a proven reality based on established historical facts.
- Narratives metaphorically describe the descent of Prophet Jesus, which possibly signifies the descent of his guidance.

7. 'Descent of Jesus' Meaning 'Descent of the Guidance of Jesus'

According to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, the metaphorical expression 'Descent of Jesus' signifies 'Descent of the guidance of Jesus.' This raises a pertinent question: If the guidance of Prophet Jesus had already arrived two thousand years ago, what is the nature of its return, and why is there a need for it now?

The answer lies in the concept of the renewal and revival of his guidance. It suggests a second manifestation of his guidance, necessitated by its complete erasure from the beliefs and practices of his followers. A religion has been adopted that is entirely contrary to his original guidance, and what is worse, it is misrepresented as his true teachings. History attests that such a profound misrepresentation has not occurred with the guidance of any other Messenger.

Three extraordinary aspects highlight this tragic incident:

First, the guidance of Jesus has been deprived of the foundation of monotheism. It is an immense tragedy of human history that that a Messenger who upheld divine monotheism has been turned into an

emblem of polytheism. People have been made to believe – God forbid – that he is the son of God and the physical manifestation of God Himself.

Secondly, the established law that Jesus sought to uphold has been entirely abrogated. A Messenger who claimed to reinforce the laws of the Torah is now associated with the belief that the Torah is only relevant to the Israelites and that Christians are exempt from any divine law.

Thirdly, the belief that Jesus was crucified to atone for the sins of all humanity has undermined fundamental religious concepts such as trial, sin and virtue, and reward and punishment.

These significant deviations have become the defining identity of Christians. Despite their numerous sectarian differences, all Christian sects are united in these transgressions.⁹⁷ For this reason, the Qur'ān uses the term *Daal* (astray) to describe them.⁹⁸

In this context, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi hypothesizes that before the Day of Judgment, Jesus's original guidance will be restored. The likely scenario is the emergence of a movement within Christianity that abandons the religion formulated by Saint Paul and re-establish the original teachings of Jesus.⁹⁹ This would essentially be a second manifestation of his preaching and guidance.

Now, if you examine the contents of the narratives from this perspective, several points seem to align with this theory. For example:

- The cross will be broken. The cross is a symbol of the Trinity

⁹⁷ The Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox Christians have many differences among themselves, but they are united in these fundamental deviations.

⁹⁸ Surah Al-Maidah 5:77

⁹⁹ The Muslim Ummah too has witnessed several rebirths and rejuvenation of the religion. Occasionally, reputed modernists and reformers have arrived in the world to guide the Muslim Ummah out of the straying and put them on the right path. Imam ibn Taymiyyah and Imam Farahi are two prominent examples from the past and the recent history of the Ummah.

and the most significant emblem of polytheism. If Jesus's guidance were to reappear, it would imply that the cross, along with all its associated notions, would be shattered.

- The pig will be killed. The pig essentially symbolizes the prohibitions of the Shariah. When Jesus enforced the law of the Torah, all the laws that were ordained for the Israelites became obligatory for Christians as well. However, Saint Paul declared them specific to the Israelites and freed Christians from adhering to these laws. As a result, the prohibition of pork and other Shariah laws became null and void. In other words, all prohibitions were made lawful. Now, if the original law is restored in the form of the revival of guidance, it will necessarily entail deeming the pig as forbidden again. This is referred to as the 'killing' of the pig.
- The enmity between Christians and Muslims will come to an end. It is a natural outcome of the specified phenomenon. If Christians return to the original guidance and convert from the belief in Trinity back to monotheism, the foundation for conflict between them and Muslims will be eradicated. Subsequently, their united front against the *Dajjal* and his Jewish supporters and allies is understandable.

The remaining prophecies in the traditions can also be interpreted accordingly.



Chapter Five

Objections on Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Stance

It is essential to conclude the discussion with a response to some questions and possible objections against the stance of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, when seen in comparison with the view of the traditional scholars.

The first question concerns how Javed Ahmed Ghamidi interprets those verses of the Qur'an based on which esteemed scholars and exegetes establish that Jesus (PBUH) is alive in the heavens. If Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's interpretation differs with theirs, then what are the details of his reasoning and argumentation?

The second question concerns the nature of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's disagreement with his teacher, Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi, regarding the ascension of Jesus (PBUH) while alive. What is the reason that despite agreeing on the principles of Qur'anic interpretation, the two scholars have differed between themselves on this topic?

The third question is, why Javed Ahmed Ghamidi does not include the Descent of Jesus and other similar events and information in the articles of faith?

The following topics detail the discussion on these questions:

1. The meaning of '*innī mutawaffika*'
2. The use of '*tawaffā*' for sleep
3. The interpretation of '*wa rāfi'uka ilayya*'
4. '*innī mutawaffika*' – Amin Ahsan Islahi's Interpretation

5. The meaning of ‘*Qabla Mawtihi*’ in Surah An-Nisa
6. Does the concept of the Descent of Jesus form part of the articles of faith?



1. The Meaning of *Innī Mutawaffika*

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has interpreted the term ‘إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ’ - ‘*Innī Mutawaffika*’ - (‘I will cause you to die’) in Surah Aale Imran to mean ‘death.’ According to him, the meanings of the words in this verse, the composition of its sentences, its contextual usage, and the references and evidences found in the Qur’an, all indicate that the word ‘*tawaffā*’ is used here in the sense of death. To interpret it as meaning ‘to take someone in full’ (without death) is incorrect in this context.¹⁰⁰ Hence, in his exegesis *Al-Bayan*, the translation of the mentioned verse is as follows:

وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكِرِينَ . إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يُعِيسِي إِيَّيْ مُتَوَفِّيكَ
وَرَأَيْعَكَ إِيَّيْ وَمُطَهَّرَكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ ثُمَّ إِيَّيْ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ
تَخْتَلِفُونَ.

[This is what happened] and the Israelites started to devise covert schemes [against him] and [in response] God also devised a hidden scheme and in such scheming God is the best.

At that time when God said: ‘Jesus, I have decided to give you death and lift you up to Myself and I shall purify you from these who have disbelieved in you and shall grant your followers supremacy over these disbelievers until the Day of Judgement.

¹⁰⁰ This statement makes it clear that Javed Ahmed Ghamidi differs from traditional scholars on the meaning of *tawaffā*. While he interprets it to mean ‘giving death,’ traditional scholars understand it as ‘receiving something wholly and completely.’

Then to Me finally you shall all have to return. So, at that time, I shall give verdict on what you have been differing in'. (3:54-55)



Meaning of *Tawaffā*

The word *tawaffā* is derived from the root (و ف ي) in the verb form of *tafa'u'*. In its essential meaning, the verb is used in the sense of *akhdbu ash-shay'i wafiyyan*, 'أخذ الشيء وافيًا', which means to take something entirely and completely in possession.¹⁰¹ Additionally, it is metaphorically used to signify death.

According to exegetes, in this context, the word *tawaffā* is not used in its metaphorical sense but rather in its fundamental sense. Therefore, it does not mean to cause the death of Jesus but instead to take him entirely and intact into custody. This interpretation is supported by the continuation of the sentence beyond *Innī mutawaffika*, as it is followed by the words *rāfi'uka ilayya* (رَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ). These additional words prevent *tawaffā* from being understood in the sense of death.

The reasoning is that, in the case of death, the embodied existence consisting of both the soul and body ceases to remain intact, making the act of raising meaningless. If *tawaffā* were to imply death, the object pronoun *ka* (كَ, referring to Jesus) would lose its referent, as Jesus's personal identity would no longer remain unified. Instead, his soul and body would separate into two distinct components. Additionally, in verse 159 of Surah An-Nisa, the words *wa mā qatalūhu wa mā salabūhu* (neither did they kill him nor did they crucify him) clearly refute the occurrence of death, affirming that the Israelites neither killed nor crucified him. This denial of Jesus's (PBUH) killing and crucifixion inherently negates his death. Given

¹⁰¹ The word *mutawaffi* is the active participle derived from the same root. In the expression *Innī mutawaffika*, the subject is Allah, implied in the word *innī*, indeed I. The pronoun *ka*, referring to the addressee, that is, Jesus, is the object.

the Qur'an's emphatic and unequivocal denial of Jesus's death, it is not appropriate to impose the metaphorical meaning of death on the word *tawaffā* in this context.

This is a summary of the reasoning of scholars in determining the meaning of *tawaffā*.¹⁰²

According to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, *tawaffā* here is explicitly used in the sense of death, and it is not correct to construe it in the sense of taking something in its entirety. His arguments are as follows:

Firstly, the established rule of language is that the meanings of words and expressions are determined by their conventional and commonly used meanings. The determination of the meanings of words used in a sentence does not depend on our personal preferences—where we pick a preferred meaning from a dictionary's multiple definitions and apply it arbitrarily to a word. Rather, it is governed entirely by how the word is conventionally used in the language.¹⁰³ Similarly, deciding whether a word is used in its literal or figurative sense in a particular context is not within our discretion. This determination is also guided by the common usage of the language.

For example, the verb “to pass” can mean different things depending on context. Consider the sentences:

‘She passed the exam.’

‘She passed away last night.’

Although both use the same verb, the first sentence clearly means that

¹⁰² For detail of these arguments refer to Chapter 2, ‘The View of the Traditional Scholars.’

¹⁰³ It should be clarified, however, that lexicon—whether it manifests in spoken language or is compiled in dictionaries—is fundamentally based on convention. That is, it is convention that determines the meanings in which a particular word is used, which meanings are specific to certain styles, what contextual indicators distinguish between literal and figurative meanings, and which meanings are common and well-established versus rare, unfamiliar, or contrary to expectation.

she successfully completed a test. The second, however, is a conventional euphemism for death. One cannot interpret 'passed away' to mean exam success, nor can 'passed the exam' imply death. Despite sharing the same root, these expressions have developed distinct, fixed meanings based on usage and context.

While both sentences might appear similar, their conventional usage dictates distinct meanings. The first sentence unequivocally conveys the idea of death and cannot imply a physical relocation to another place in this world. On the other hand, the second sentence explicitly conveys a worldly transition, such as relocating to a new residence, and cannot be interpreted as a reference to death. These are established meanings rooted in convention.

If one were to arbitrarily assign a different meaning without clear context or justification, it would violate the norms of the language and misrepresent the speaker's intent.

Therefore, the meaning of *tawaffā* must not be determined merely by exploring its various dictionary meanings but by analyzing its usage in the specific sentence and context. The decision should align with the conventional usage of the language. Specifically, when this verb has Allah as the subject and a human as the object, the question arises: should it be interpreted in its literal sense (to take in full) or in a figurative sense (to cause death)? The answer lies in how the language conventionally employs this structure. That conventional usage will dictate the interpretation, and it is that interpretation which should be accepted.

Secondly, the meaning of a verb in a sentence is determined in relation to its affiliated subject and object. A verb always establishes a relationship between a subject (the doer of the action) and an object (the receiver of the action). Therefore, the meaning of the verb is inherently shaped by the entities to which it is ascribed.

Subjects and objects are diverse, and their variations can influence the interpretation of the verb. In this context, the critical question arises: does a change in the subject or object of a verb alter its meaning? The answer is unequivocally yes. This demonstrates that the meaning of a

verb in a sentence cannot be deduced solely from the verb itself. Instead, it must be interpreted in conjunction with the specific affiliations to which it is connected, as these affiliations are integral to defining the action described.

For understanding, a common verb used in everyday Urdu language, *uthana* (to lift), is presented as an example. You will see that the verb is the same, but with the change of its subject or object—the affiliate—the meaning of the verb has changed.

1. *Ladke ko maa ne utha liya hai* - The boy has been lifted by the mother. (Meaning physically lifted in her lap. Literal meaning)
2. *Ladke ko Allah ne utha liya hai* - The boy has been lifted by Allah. (Meaning death has been given. Figurative meaning)¹⁰⁴
3. *Ladke ne samaan sir par utha liya hai* - The boy has lifted up the luggage on his head. (Meaning things have been placed on his head. Literal meaning)
4. *Ladke ne aasman sar par utha liya hai* - The boy has lifted the sky over his head. (Meaning he has caused commotion. Figurative meaning)¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Here are a few examples where the Urdu word *ladka* is the object.

1. *Khilarioon ne ladkke ko utha liya hai*, the players picked up the boy, that is they have hoisted him on the shoulders, literal. 2. *Police ney Ladke ko utha liya hai*, meaning police have picked up the boy, that is, they have arrested him, figurative sense. 3. *ghundoo ne Ladke ko utha liya hai*, Ruffians have picked up the boy, meaning they have kidnapped him, figurative. 4. *Bhen ney Ladke ko utha liya hai*, the sister has awaken the boy, figurative.

¹⁰⁵ Here are a few examples in which the word *ladka* (boy) appears as the subject.

1. *Ladke ney qadam utha liya hai*, that is, he has firmly decided to do something (literal and figurative). 2. *Ladke ney bera utha liya hai*, the boy expressed his intention to do something (figurative). 3. *Lakre ne haath utha liya hai*, that is, the boy has given up (figurative). 4. *Ladke ney halaf utha liya hai*, the boy has taken oath (figurative). 5. *Ladke ney Qur'an utha liya*

In these examples, the same verb *uthana* (to lift) is used with the same corresponding preposition *lena* (to take).¹⁰⁶ However, by simply changing the subject or object, the meanings are entirely transformed. This highlights that the meaning of a verb cannot be inferred in isolation or by comparing it directly to other uses of the same verb, even with similar prepositions.

For instance, when we hear the phrase *us ney aasman sar par utha liya hai* ('he has lifted the sky over his head'), we do not interpret it literally, as if someone is physically carrying the sky on their head. Instead, the conventional usage of this phrase conveys an exaggerated emotional or dramatic reaction. In contrast, the phrase *samaan sar par utha liya* ('has lifted luggage on his head') straightforwardly refers to the physical act of carrying luggage.

Similarly, when we hear *Allah nay ladke ko utha liya* ('Allah has lifted up the boy'), we do not deduce that Allah has physically transferred the boy alive to the sky. The established usage of such expressions implies that Allah has caused the boy's death. On the other hand, if someone points to the phrase *maan nay ladke ko utha liya hai* ('the mother has lifted the boy'), which employs a similar structure, and asks why it is understood to mean the mother has physically picked

hai, the boy has sworn an oath by the Qur'an (literal and figurative). 6. *Ladke ney bathiyar utha liya hai*, the boy has taken up arms (literal and figurative). 7. *Ladke ney use sar aankhoon per utha liya hai*, the boy has welcomed him warmly (figurative) 8. *Ladke ney use bathoon par utha liya hai*, that is, the boy bears with his/her whims (figurative) 9. *Ladke ney pehra utha liya hai*, meaning, the boy has removed the guard (figurative) 10. *Ladke ney qarz utha liya hai*, that is, the boy has taken a loan (figurative) 11. *Ladke ney boht ranj utha liya hai*, that is, the boy has suffered a lot (figurative) 12. *Ladke ney kafi tajraba utha liya hai*, that is, the boy has gained a lot of experience (figurative) 13. *Ladke ney kafi nuqsan utha liya hai*, that is, the boy has suffered a lot of loss (figurative).

¹⁰⁶That is, if the object (silah) changes, a greater variety of meanings will emerge. This can be observed by reflecting on the stylistic differences between expressions such as "utha rakha hai" (has been lifted and kept), "utha diya hai" (has been lifted and taken away), and "uthaya hai" (has lifted).

up the boy in her arms, the response is clear: this distinction is rooted in the conventions of language and expression.

Thirdly, it is a fact that the verb *tawaffā* is interpreted differently when ascribed to different subjects and objects. The author of *Aqrah al-Mawarid* has described four prominent references to it:

1. When an object appears as the direct object of this verb, its meaning will be *akhdh al-shay'a waafiyan* or *akhdh al-shay'a bi tamaamihi* i.e., to take something in its entirety or completely:

توفي حقه توفياً: اخذه وافياً. ويقال توفيت من فلان ما لي عليه.

He has received all his rights: meaning that he has completely taken that thing (right). For example, it is said that I have taken everything from that person that he owed to me. (Aqrah al-Mawarid 1472)

2. If the word 'duration' (*muddat*) serves as its direct object, the meaning will be the completion or fulfillment of that duration.

وتوفي المدة: بلغها واستكملها.

'tawaffā al-muddah' means that he has reached the age/time, or he has completed the period. (Aqrah al-Mawarid 1472)

3. If number of people (*adad al-qawm*) appears as its direct object, it will mean counting the people completely or fully.

توفي عدد القوم: عددهم كلهم.

'tawaffā adad al-qawm' meaning he has counted all the people. (Aqrah al-Mawarid 1472)

4. When the subject of the verb *tawaffā* is Allah and the object is a human, it will mean that Allah has seized that person's soul, i.e., has given him death.

توفي الله زيداً: قبض روحه (تُؤْفَى) فلان مجهولاً: قبضت روحه ومات.

فالله المتوفى والعبد المتوفى.

'tawaffā Allāhu Zayd-an' meaning Allah has seized Zaid's

soul. 'Tuwuffiya fulanun', is used in the passive to mean: The person's soul has been seized, that is, he has died. Allah will be the one seizing, and the person will be the one seized. (Aqrab al-Mawarid 1472)

The complete text from *Aqrab al-Mawarid* is as follows:

(توفى) حقه توفياً: اخذه وافياً، مطاوع وفي ويقال 'توفيت من فلان ما لى عليه' والمدة: بلغها واستكملها وعدد القوم: عدهم كلهم وفي التاج عدهم لهم و الله زيداً: قبض روحه (تُوفى) فلان مجهولاً: قُبِضَتْ روحه ومات فالله المتوفى والعبد المتوفى.

'Tawaffā haqqa hu tafaulan': He received his full right, meaning he completely took that thing (right). In this example it is synonymous with the verb waffā. And it is said: tawaffāytu min fulanin mali 'alayhi, that is, I took everything from someone that was my right upon them. 'Tawaffā al-mudda' means that he reached the end of the period or he completed the period. 'Tawaffā 'adada al-qawm' means that he counted all the people. 'Tawaffā Allah Zaidan' means Allah took Zaid's soul, and he died. 'Tuwuffiya fulanun', is used in the passive to mean: The person's soul has been seized, that is, he has died. Allah would be the taker, and the person would be the one whose soul is taken.

Fourthly, keeping this perspective, let us look at the words of the verse. It is declared:

... يَعْزِي إِلَى مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعَكَ إِلَى...

...Jesus, I have decided to give you death and lift you up to Myself... (3:55)

The phrase *Innī mutawaffika* clearly shows that the verb *tawaffā* is used, with the subject being the pronoun 'I' (represented by *Innī*), which refers to Allah, and the object being the pronoun 'you' (represented by *ka*), which refers to Jesus, peace be upon him. This means that the action of *tawaffā* is emanating from Allah and is being

applied to a human, Prophet Jesus. In this situation, the meaning must decisively be that of taking the soul, which necessarily results in death. Hence, considering the Arabic language and expression, no other meaning except the death of Jesus can be inferred here.

Fifthly, examples from the Qur'an and hadith also testify that when *tawaffā* is used in relation to Allah as a subject and a human as an object, it means to take life. Not a single example can be presented from the Qur'an and hadith that deviates from this rule of language and expression. These examples are listed on the following pages.



***Tawaffā* Means Taking the Soul: Examples from the Qur'an**

The verb *Tawaffā* has been used multiple times in the Holy Qur'an. It appears in the following forms when it means the taking of the soul:

- i. *Tawaffā* as an action of Allah Almighty
- ii. *Tawaffā* as an action of angels
- iii. *Tawaffā* as an action of death
- iv. *Tawaffā* in the passive form (*Yutawaffā*)

Before examining the relevant verses that pertain to these verb forms, it is essential to first understand the concept of death. What constitutes the act, event, or stage that is referred to as death, or that results in death? The Holy Qur'an provides a clear answer to this question. In Surah Az-Zumar, it is stated:

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا...

In reality, it is God Who claims souls when their time of death arrives ... (39:42)

The implication is that when the act of taking up the soul (*Tawaffā al-Nafs*) is ascribed to Allah, it means death takes place. So, the term for death is *Tawaffā al-Nafs*, and *Tawaffā al-Nafs*, in turn, signifies

death. Thus, when we say death, it means that *Tawaffā al-Nafs* has occurred, and when we say *Tawaffā al-Nafs*, it means that death has taken place.¹⁰⁷

After this clarification, now observe the examples of the use of *Tawaffā* in the sense of death in the Holy Qur'an:

i. *Tawaffā* as an Action of Allah Almighty

Several verses in the Holy Qur'an use the verb *Tawaffā* as an act of Allah Almighty. That is, the structure of the sentence is such that Allah Almighty is the subject, and humans are the object. The following words or phrases appear in this context:

- '*natawaffāyannaka*,' (O Prophet), We shall grant you death.
- '*Yatawaffākum*,' He (Allah) gives you death.
- '*Tawaffānā*,' (O Lord) grant us death.¹⁰⁸
- '*Tawaffānī*,' (O Lord) grant me death.

In all these styles of expression, the derivations of the verb *tawaffā* are used. The sentence is composed in such a way that Allah Almighty is the subject, and humans are the object. Details are as follows:

a. In verses 46 of Surah Yunus, 40 of Surah Ar-Rad, and 77 of Surah Ghafir, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is addressed and told that if the Quraysh persist in denying his messengership, they shall be subjected to a torment in this world that precedes the punishment of the

¹⁰⁷ If the Qur'anic definition of *tawaffā al-nafs* (taking of the soul) is kept in mind, then the phrase *Innī mutawaffīka* in Surah Aale-Imran should also be understood in the same sense. Furthermore, it should be noted that whenever forms such as *natawaffāyannaka* (we will take you), *yatawaffākum* (He takes you), *tawaffāna* (take us), and *tawaffānī* (take me) appear in the Qur'an, they consistently refer to different human souls (*anfus insaniyah*). For instance, *yatawaffākum* would mean *He takes your souls* (*yatawaffā nafsakum*) or *He takes the souls* (*yatawaffā al-anfus*).

¹⁰⁸ Though this verb takes the form of a command/request from the human being, yet the subject to give death is Allah.

hereafter, and which inevitably afflicts the deniers of messengers according to the divine sunnah. This is a promise from Allah; therefore it is absolute and unwavering. The history of messengers in the Qur'an shows that this torment comes in two forms: first, where the punishment is given during the lifetime of the messenger, as in the case where Pharaoh and his army were drowned during the lifetime of Moses (PBUH). The other form is when Allah issues His decree of punishment after the messenger has passed away. An example of this is the punishment that befell upon the Jews, which began after the departure of Jesus (PBUH). The aforementioned verses imply the possibility of these two scenarios concerning the Quraysh, the Prophet's community. That is, it is possible that Allah may reveal a part of this punishment during the Prophet's life, or He may decide after the Prophet's demise.

In all three places, the phrase *natawaffāyannaka* (نَتَوَفِّيَنَّكَ) is used, which means 'We shall cause you to die.' The verb *tawaffā* is used for the Prophet Muhammad, and Allah is the doer. It has been stated:

وَأَمَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفِّيَنَّكَ فَإِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ . وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ رَسُولُهُمْ قُضِيَ بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ.

We shall definitely show you a part of what We are promising them [O Prophet] Or give death to you and thereafter deal with them. Nevertheless, they have to return to Us. Then God is a witness to what they are doing.

[His law is that] for every nation there is a messenger. Then, when their messenger comes their fate is justly decided and no injustice is done to them. (10:46-47)

وَإِنَّمَا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفِّيَنَّكَ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاءُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ.

We shall show you some part of the warning We are sounding them or give you death and after that deal with them Ourselves.

Nonetheless, your responsibility is only to communicate and taking account is Our responsibility. (13:40)

فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَأَمَّا نُرِيدُكَ بِعَظْمِ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفِّيكَ فَأَلَيْنَا يُرْجَعُونَ.

[They are not believing, O Prophet!] So, be patient. There is no doubt that the promise of God is true. Then We shall show you some part of the torment with which We are threatening them with or give you death and then deal with them; nevertheless they have to return to Us alone. (40:77)

The respected teacher has explicated this matter by writing:

This is a reference to the established practice of God prescribed for those who reject God's messengers. It is these two situations which generally arise. Examples of the first of them are mentioned in the Qur'ān at a number of places. An example of the second are the Jews who began to be punished once Jesus (PBUH) had passed away. (Al-Bayan 4/382)

- b. The phrase *yatawaffākum* (يَتَوَفَّيْكُمْ) appears in verse 70 of Surah An-Nahl and verse 104 of Surah Yunus. It means that Allah is the one who causes death to you (humans). Surah An-Nahl discusses the reality that life and death are under the control of Allah. He is the one who has created humans and He will bring death upon them. Whether death comes in childhood, youth, or old age, Allah is the one to decide. The length or brevity of life is dependent on His Will. In Surah Yunus, this truth is highlighted through the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to his audience. It means that it is Allah who will cause you to die, He is the one to whom you will be answerable. The verses are as follows:

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَفَّيْكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْزَلِ الْعُمَرِ لِكَيْ لَا يَعْلَمَ بَعْدَ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ.

In a similar way, God has created you; then it is He Who makes you die. [Some of you die early] and some of you are made to

reach feeble age so that after knowing a lot they know nothing. In reality, it is God only Who knows; it is He alone Who has power over everything. (16:70)

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنتُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِّن دِينِي فَلَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِينَ تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِن آعْبُدِ اللَّهَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّكُم ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ.

[O Prophet!] Say: People! If [even now] you are in doubt about my religion, then listen that I do not worship those whom you worship besides God; I, in fact, worship the God Who gives you death [so that you can gather before Him for accountability.] I have been directed to be among the believers. (10:104)

- c. The verb *tawaffānā* (تَوَفَّانَا) appears in a supplicatory manner in Surah Aale Imran and Surah Al-A'raf. Its meaning is: (O Lord) grant us death.

The attitude of the insightful Companions is described in verses 190 to 194 of Aale Imran, who actively and wholeheartedly responded to the call of Allah's messenger after it was presented. Unlike the foolish, they neither engage in petty arguments nor demand signs but raise their hands in prayer to their Lord for His forgiveness and for their lives to end among the faithful servants of God. The Qur'an has expressed their prayer in the following words:

رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا ۖ رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ

Lord! We have heard a caller who would call to faith: '[People!] Believe in your Lord,' so we believed. Then Master! Forgive now our sins; avert from us our evil deeds and make us die with Your faithful. (3:193)

In Al-A'raf, the encounter between Prophet Moses (PBUH) and the magicians of Pharaoh is detailed. It describes how, upon realizing the truth, the magicians believed in Moses (PBUH). Pharaoh threatened them, saying that if they sided with Moses without his permission, he would dismember their hands and feet on opposite sides and crucify

them. They responded with unwavering resolve, stating that Pharaoh could do as he pleased since they would not renounce their faith, as they had seen the signs of their Lord and knew they had to return to Him. Alongside, they prayed to Allah to endow them with patience and steadfastness amidst their trial and grant them death while they were steadfast in Islam:

قَالُوا إِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ . وَمَا نُنْقِصُ مِثًّا إِلَّا أَن أَمَّا بِأَيْتِ رَبِّنَا لَمَّا جَاءَتْنَا
رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَتَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ.

They replied: [Then what will happen is that] we shall only return to our Lord. You are harming us in anger because when the signs of our Lord came to us, we professed faith in them. Lord! [Now] bless us with loads of patience and let us die as Muslims. (7:125-126)

d. In Surah Yusuf, verse 101, the words *Tawaffānī* (تَوَفَّنِي), which mean ‘O Lord, cause me to die,’ are found. These words are part of Prophet Joseph's (PBUH) supplication. This occasion was when his father and brothers prostrated before him, fulfilling the interpretation of his childhood dream in which he saw the sun, the moon, and eleven stars prostrating to him. After praising and glorifying Allah, he prayed that he be given death while steadfast in Islam. His words were:

رَبِّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ ۖ فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ أَنْتَ وَلِيٌّ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ.

Lord! You granted me a share in political authority and taught me from the knowledge of interpreting words. O Creator of the Heavens and the Earth! You are my guardian in this world and the next. Make me die on Islam and include me among your righteous people. (12:101)

ii. *Tawaffā* as an Action Performed by the Angels

Causing humans to die is an act of Allah, but Allah, most often, delegates this task to His angels. Hence, the term *tawaffā* is also mentioned in the Holy Qur'an as an act performed by the angels of

Allah. On all such occasions, it signifies the taking of the soul, meaning death.

a. Verse 61 of Surah al-An‘am discusses this very action of the agents of Divine decree and destiny. Allah has stated that when He decides on the death of a human being, He sends His angels to take that person’s soul. These agents carry out their duties with full responsibility. They do not falter in performing their task. It is said:

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمْ
الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ.

He fully dominates His servants and deposes [His] guardians over you. Until when the time of death of anyone of you arrives, it is only the angels sent by Us who claim his soul and are never negligent [in this task]. (6:61)

This responsibility of the angels is such that the Holy Qur’an has named the angel responsible for taking lives as *Malak al-Maut*, meaning the Angel of Death. In Surat Sajdah, it is said:

قُلْ يَتَوَفَّاكُم مَّلَكُ الْمَوْتِ الَّذِي وُكِّلَ بِكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ.

Tell them: Your soul will be claimed by the very angel of death who has been deputed to you; then you shall be returned to your Lord alone. (32:11)

b. Verse 97 of Surah an-Nisa mentions those hypocrites and excuse-makers who live in the land of disbelief. They accept a life of disbelief, but not migration. They tolerate disobedience to Allah but are not ready to leave their dwellings for the sake of practicing the religion. When the angels come to take their souls, they will say to them, questioning their supposed helplessness, ‘Was not Allah’s Earth expansive enough that you could have migrated from your region to another?’

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّيْنَاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَالِبِينَ أَنفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا
مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا

فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَاؤُهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا.

[Even at this instance, people who are not willing to come out of the cities where they are being persecuted, tell them O Prophet that] people whose souls will be claimed by the angels in such circumstances that [while endangering their faith] they were being unjust to their souls; they will ask them: 'What circumstances were you in?' 'We were totally helpless in this land,' they will reply. The angels will say: 'Was not the land of God spacious enough for you to migrate in it?' So, it is these people whose abode is Hell, and what an evil abode it is. (4:97)

c. In Surat Al-Anfal, the same matter is mentioned regarding the disbelievers:

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ ۖ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ.

Had you been able to see [you would have known what had happened at that time] when the angels were claiming the souls of these disbelievers whilst striking them on their faces and their backs and while saying: 'Taste now the torment of the fire!' (8:50)

d. Verse 27 of Surah Muhammad (47) warns the hypocrites of Quraysh about their outcome. It states that if they continue with their hypocritical behavior, then the day is not far when Allah's stern angels will strike their faces and backs while seizing their souls:

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا تَوَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ.

[If this is their attitude,] what will happen at the time when angels claim their souls while striking their faces and their backs? (47:27)

Such a daunting situation will also be faced by those who remain entrenched in the filth of polytheism and continue keep calling upon others besides Allah. When the angels come to take their souls, they will be enveloped in despair, with no alternative but to admit their disbelief themselves. In Surah Al-A'raf, it is mentioned:

فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ يَنَالُهُمْ نَصِيبُهُمْ
مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا يَتَوَفَّوهُمْ ۖ قَالُوا أَإِنَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْعُونَا
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ ۖ قَالُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْنَا وَشَهِدُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَافِرِينَ.

So who can be more unjust than those who impute falsehood to God or deny His revelations. What has been [written for them] in their record as their share [in the life of this world] will reach them. Until when Our angels come to them to claim their souls, they will ask: 'Where are those whom you worshipped besides God?' They will reply: 'All of them have been lost upon us,' and will bear witness against themselves that they were in fact disbelievers. (7:37)

e. The same point is mentioned regarding the disbelievers of Quraysh in verse 28 of Surah An-Nahl, that when Allah's angels approach them, they too will fabricate excuses and will insistently say that they were not committing any wrong deeds. The angels will say that Allah is fully aware of what they were doing. At that point, the angels will seize their souls:

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّوهُمْ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِيٓ أَنْفُسِهِمْ ۖ قَالُوا السَّلَامَ ۖ مَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ مِنْ شَوْءٍ
بَلَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ.

On those whose souls will be claimed by the angels such that they would be doing injustice to their souls. So, they will immediately concede: 'We were not doing anything evil.' [The angels will reply:] 'Why not! Indeed, God knows full well what you have been doing.' (16:28)

From the subsequent verses in the same discussion, it is clear that the matter of seizing the souls by the angels is not exclusive to disbelievers, polytheists, hypocrites, and other criminals, but the souls of pure and righteous people will also be seized by them. The difference will be that while seizing the souls of the righteous, they will utter words of peace to them and give them the glad tidings of Paradise. It is stated:

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّوهُمْ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ ۖ يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا

كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ.

Those whose souls are claimed by the angels such that they are pure. The angels will say: 'Peace be to you. Go and live in Paradise as a reward for your deeds.' (16:32)

iii. *Tawaffā* as an Action of Death

The verb *tawaffā* as an action of death, is also used in a way where death itself becomes the subject. This is not only in Arabic but a common style in all languages, where a verb, condition, or event appears as the subject in the sentence. For instance, in our language, we say:

Disaster befell him.

Calamities surrounded him.

Fear overcame him.

Sleep overwhelmed him.

Illness afflicted him.

Poverty struck him down.

Death took him.

In verse 15 of Surah An-Nisa, the words *hattā yatawaffāhunna al-mawt* (حَتَّى يَتَوَفَّهِنَّ الْمَوْتُ) are used. It means: 'Until death takes them.' These words are in reference to habitual prostitute women. It is stated to confine these women to their homes until they fall victim to death or until Allah decrees another law concerning them.¹⁰⁹

وَالَّتِي يَأْتِيَنَّ الْفَاحِشَةَ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ فَاسْتَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوتِ حَتَّى يَتَوَفَّهِنَّ الْمَوْتُ أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا.

And upon those of your women who commit fornication, call in as witnesses four people among yourselves to testify over them;

¹⁰⁹ Later on, the law about the punishment of fornication was revealed and abrogated the law under discussion. The law about zina is mention in the inaugural verses of Surah An-Nur.

then, if they testify, confine them to their homes until death overtakes them or God finds a way for them. (4:15)

iv. *Tawaffā* in the Passive Form (*yutawaffā*)

The Holy Qur'an also uses the verb *tawaffā* in the passive present tense form (*mudari'*).¹¹⁰ In this regard, the words *yutawaffā* (يُتَوَفَّى) from Surah Al-Hajj and Surah Ghafir, and *yutawaffawna* (يُتَوَفَّوْنَ) from Surah Al-Baqarah (2) have been used. Their meanings are, respectively: 'He is given death' and 'They are given death.' According to the convention of the Arabic language, in this form, Allah Almighty is the implied doer, not mentioned due to the passive voice construction. In this style, *tawaffā* is also used in the context of death. The relevant verses in the Holy Qur'an are as follows:

a. In verse 5 of Surah Al-Hajj and verse 67 of Surah Ghafir (40), the different stages of human life in the world are described. It is stated that Allah nurtures humans after creating them. Some of them He calls back to Himself during their childhood, some reach Him in their youth, while others die in old age. All of their lives are limited, and a specific time for their death is appointed. No one can escape it, and just like death comes, the Day of Judgment will also certainly arrive. It cannot be prevented:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّنَ الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنٰكُمْ مِّن نُّرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِّن نُّظْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِّن عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِّن مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ لِّنَبِّئِن لَّكُمْ وَنَقَرُ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِّتَبْلُغُوا أَشَدَّكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يُتَوَفَّى وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْدَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْلَا يَعْلَمَ مِن بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ وَأُثْبِتَتْ مِن كُلِّ رَوْحٍ بِهِيجٌ.

People! If you have any doubt on being raised to life again, then

¹¹⁰ In the case of the passive voice (*fi'l majhool*), the subject (*fa'il*) is not mentioned; instead, the object (*maf'ool*) takes its place as the focal point of the action.

reflect that We have created you from clay, then from sperm, then from a clot of blood, then from a lump of flesh which may be completed and also remains incomplete. So that We make evident to you some facts [that you should understand]. Whatever We want, We continue to lodge in the wombs until an appointed time. Then bring you forth in the form of a child. Then give time so that you may reach your maturity. And some from you are called back early and some are made to reach pathetic [old] age so that even after knowing a lot know nothing. Similarly, you see the earth dry. Then when We rain down water on it, it becomes lush and grows and sprouts exquisite things of all kinds. (22:5)

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا
ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشَدَّكُمْ ثُمَّ لِتَكُونُوا شُيُوخًا ۚ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يَمُوتُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلِتَبْلُغُوا
أَجَلًا مُّسَمًّى وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ.

It is He Who has created you from clay, then from a drop of fluid, then from a clot of blood; then He brings you out from the womb of the mother in the form of a child; then He nourishes you so that you reach your mature age; then He gives you respite so that you may reach old age. And some of you may die before this and some He gives respite so that you may complete an appointed term and all of this because you understand [the facts]. (40:67)

b. In Surah Al-Baqarah, where the law of the waiting period (*iddah*) for widowed women is described, the term *yutawaffawna* (يُتَوَفَّوْنَ) is used for their deceased husbands. This refers to the men who pass away. The words of verse are:

وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ
وَعَشْرًا ۖ فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ.

And those of you who die and leave wives behind, they too should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days; then when they have fulfilled their term, there is no blame on you

about what they do with themselves in accordance with the norms. And God is well acquainted with what you do. (2:234)

Tawaffā Means Taking the Soul: Examples from the Hadith

The word *tawaffā* has also been frequently used in hadiths to mean death. Here are a few examples for instance. First, here is the narrative in which this very action of *tawaffā* is used for Prophet Jesus's death.¹¹¹ It is narrated in Abu Dawud:

عن أبي هريرة عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: ليس بيني وبينه يعني عيسى عليه السلام نبي، وإنه نازل، فإذا رأيتموه فاعرفوه، رجل مربوع إلى الحمرة والبياض، بين ممصرتين، كأن رأسه يقطر وإن لم يصبه بلل، فيقاتل الناس على الإسلام فيدق الصليب، ويقتل الخنزير، ويضع الجزية، ويهلك الله في زمانه الملل كلها إلا لإسلام ويهلك المسيح الدجال، فيمكث في الأرض أربعين سنة ثم يتوفى، فيصلى عليه المسلمون.

It is narrated from Abu Huraira that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: There is no prophet between me and him (i.e., Jesus). And he is to descend. When you see him, recognize him. He will be a medium-statured man, his face will have a color of red and white. He will be wearing two yellow garments. His hair will be as if water is trickling from it, though it will not be wet. He will fight people for the sake of Islam. He will break the cross, kill the pig, and abolish the jizya. Allah will destroy all nations except Islam during his time. He will kill al-Masih ad-Dajjal. He will live on Earth for forty years. Then he will die, and the Muslims will pray his funeral prayer. (Abu Dawud No. 4324)

According to a narration in Bukhari, Anas bin Malik (RA) used the phrase *watawaffāhu Allāhu ‘alā rāsi sittīna sanah* which means

¹¹¹ All the exegetes and commentators who interpreted the word *mutawaffika*, appearing in Surah Aale Imran, to mean ‘receiving alive’, have explained this word in the Hadith to mean die.

‘Allah gave him death at the age of sixty years’ for the death of the Prophet Muhammad, (PBUH):

عن انس بن مالك رضى الله عنه... بعثه الله على راس اربعين سنة، فاقام بمكة عشر سنين وبالمدينة عشر سنين، وتوفاه الله على راس ستين سنة.

It is narrated from Anas bin Malik... Allah made him (the Prophet Muhammad) a messenger at the age of forty. He stayed for ten years (after prophethood) in Mecca and ten years in Medina, and approximately at the age of sixty, Allah gave him death. (Bukhari No. 5900)

In another narration by Bukhari, the incident has been reported wherein Ali and Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both, came to Umar (RA) with a matter concerning the inheritance of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. On this occasion, Umar, while mentioning the death of the Prophet and Abu Bakr Siddiq (RA) used the same verb *tawaffā*. The relevant part of the narration is as follows:

قال لعلی وعباس: انشدكما بالله، هل تعلمان ذلك؟ قالوا: نعم، ثم توفي الله نبيه صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال ابو بكر: انا ولى رسول الله، فقبضها ابو بكر يعمل فيها بما عمل به فيها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وانتما حينئذ .

واقبل على على وعباس، تزعمان ان ابا بكر كذا وكذا والله يعلم انه فيها صادق بار راشد تابع للحق، ثم توفي الله ابا بكر .

Then he (meaning Umar, RA) asked Ali and Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them: ‘I ask you by Allah, do you also know this?’ They said, ‘Yes, we know.’ Then Allah Almighty gave death to His Prophet, and Abu Bakr (RA) said that he is the Khalifa of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. Accordingly, he took possession of that property and acted in it according to the practice of the Prophet, peace be upon him.

Then turning to Ali and Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both, he said: 'You both were present at that time. You know very well that Abu Bakr (RA) did just so and Allah knows that Abu Bakr (RA) was sincere, cautious, well-intentioned, on the right path, and a follower of the truth. Then Allah Almighty also gave death to Abu Bakr.' (Bukhari No. 5358)

In a narration by Ibn Majah, the words *tawaffā Allah* (توفي الله) have been used for the death of Prophet Adam, peace be upon him:

عن ابى لبابة بن عبد المنذر قال: قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: إن يوم الجمعة سيد الايام واعظمها عند الله... خلق الله فيه آدم واهبط الله فيه آدم إلى الارض وفيه توفي الله آدم...

Abu Lubabah bin Abdul Munder (RA) says that the Prophet (PBUH) said: Indeed, the day of Friday is the leader of all days and the most revered in the sight of Allah Almighty;... Allah Almighty created Adam on this day, on this day He sent him down to Earth, and on this day Allah Almighty gave Adam death... (Ibn Majah No. 1084)

In al-Beyhaqi's *Sunan al-Kubra*, Abdur Rahman bin Auf (RA) reported that on one occasion the Prophet (PBUH) prolonged a prostration such that it was feared that Allah had given him death. The word *tawaffā* has been used twice in this narration to mean death. The narration is as follows:

عن عبد الرحمن بن عوف قال: ... فاستقبل القبلة فسجد فأطال السجود وأنا وراءه حتى ظننت أن الله تعالى توفاه فأقبلت أمشي حتى جثته فطأطأت رأسي أنظر في وجهه فرفع رأسه، فقال: ما لك يا عبد الرحمن؟ فقلت: لما أطلت السجود يا رسول الله، خشيت أن يكون الله قد توفي نفسك.

Abdur Rahman bin Auf (RA) reports: ...The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) faced the Qibla and went into prostration. I was following him in prayer. He prolonged the prostration to such an extent that I feared that Allah Almighty had granted him

death. I came close and looked at his face by lowering my head. Upon this, he raised his head and asked: Abdur Rahman, what is the matter? I replied, O Messenger of Allah, when you extended the prostration, I feared that Allah had given you death. (Sunan al-Kubra No. 2936)



2. The Use of *Tawaffā* for Sleep

The examples from verses of the Qur'an and hadith mentioned above fully ascertain that when *Tawaffā* has Allah Almighty as the Doer (*Fa'il*) and a human as the object (*Maf'ool*), its meaning is the capture of the soul, that is, death. In this case, this verb cannot have any other meanings. Against this reasoning, an objection is raised that there are two instances in the Qur'an where Allah Almighty is the Doer of *Tawaffā* and human beings are the object. Yet despite this, the verb does not convey the meaning of death. It is instead used in the context of sleep, which is a state of life. These two instances are as follows:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِالنَّهَارِ...

It is He Who claims your souls at night and also knows what you do during the day...(6:60)

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا....

In reality, it is God Who claims souls when their time of death arrives and those whose time of death has not come, He claims them similarly in the state of sleep... (39:42)

As per Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, it is incorrect to interpret the word here as being used in the sense of sleep. In this instance as well, the word is used in the exact same sense of 'capturing the soul,' as it has been used in Surah Aale Imran and other previously mentioned references.

As explained earlier, when the act of *Tawaffā* is described in a context where Allah is the subject (the doer) and a human being is the object,

it signifies the capture of the soul. Death and sleep are two distinct outcomes of this act of soul capture. Therefore, in such usage, the direct meaning of *Tawaffā* is not death itself but rather the act that leads to it. Its fundamental meaning is, without a doubt, the capture of the soul.

The above verses of Surah Al-An‘am and Surah Az-Zumar make it clear that in both situations, death and sleep, the soul is captured and goes into the custody of Allah Almighty.¹¹² The difference is that in the case of sleep, it is returned and the person wakes up, whereas at the time of death, it is not returned and the person does not wake until the Day of Resurrection.¹¹³ The distinction between wakefulness and non-wakefulness is from the standpoint of our observation. The true nature of this distinction falls among the matters of the unseen, hence beyond our comprehension and perceptions.

The summary of this discussion is that when *tawaffā* is used in the context of an act of Allah Almighty, its sole meaning will be the capture of life. However, depending on the outcome, it will be applied in two different ways: one related to death and the other related to sleep. Thus, *tawaffā* in the sense of capturing life holds a common aspect in both manifestations. Due to this commonality, sometimes the terms sleep and death are used interchangeably. This is not just a similarity in concept or appearance, but also in the actual event. The words for death used for sleep in the following morning supplication taught by the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, are based on this reason:

الحمد لله الذي أحيانا بعد ما أماتنا وإليه النشور.

Praise be to Allah, who has granted us life after death and to whom we shall return one day. (Bukhari No. 6312)

¹¹² The nature of soul's being captured at the time of sleep is not known to us. Only Allah knows it. We have been told that when a man sleeps his soul is captured, the way it is captured at the time of death.

¹¹³ The soul captured at the time of sleep, is returned after a while. However, in case of death the soul captured will be returned on the day of Resurrection.

Thus, when *tawaffā* is used for sleep, it should not be considered a metaphorical use of death. It is the actual use of this word, meaning the capture of the soul.

This can be understood from the use of the word *ahyā'un* (أَحْيَاءُ) in the following verses of Surah Al-Baqarah and Surah Aale Imran:

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ

And do not say that those slain in [this] cause of God are dead; they are not dead; in fact, they are alive, but you are not aware [of the manner in which they live]. (2:154)

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ

[Do not pay heed to these things, O Prophet!] and whoever have been slain [during this war] for the cause of God, never regard them as dead. They are not dead; in fact, they are alive in the presence of God; they are being well provided for. (3:169)

In these verses, the term *ahyā'un* is used for those who are killed in the path of Allah, meaning they are alive. Here the word 'alive' retains its commonly understood meaning, just as we use the word 'life' in everyday language. Therefore, it would be incorrect to imply from these verses that 'life' carries two distinct meanings: one as life and another as the absence of life. The distinction between ordinary life and the life of a martyr does not lie in the question of being alive or not. Instead, it pertains to the nature and quality of life as perceived through our understanding and observation¹¹⁴. One form of life is accessible to some extent to human comprehension, while the other transcends our capacity to fully grasp or fathom its reality¹¹⁵.

¹¹⁴ For example, the word 'living' is used for all living things including animals and plants in the same meaning. The difference we observe between the two living things is based on our observation and experience. They are related to the condition and situation of those living things. It has nothing to do with the common usage of the word.

¹¹⁵ The words *wa lākin la tash'urūn* (but you are not aware) have sufficiently

The established method of language expression is such that sometimes; while remaining firm in their used meanings, it conveys additional meanings to simplify the word for a reader. In this case, their apparent meaning is the same well-known one, but the implied meaning can be metaphorical.

Please review the following two couplets by Allama Iqbal as an example:

جس میں نہ ہو انقلاب، موت ہے وہ زندگی
روح اُم کی حیات کشمکش انقلاب
چمن زارِ محبت میں خموشی موت ہے بلبل
یہاں کی زندگی پابندیِ رسمِ فغاں تک ہے

Where there is no revolution, that life is death,

The life of nations' spirits lies in the struggle of revolution.

In the garden of love, silence is death to the nightingale,

The life here is bound to the tradition of complaint.

In the first couplet, Iqbal equates a life without revolution to death, while in the second couplet, he equates silence to death. Therefore, it would be incorrect to infer that death has one meaning as silence and another as a life devoid of revolution. Every literary critic understands that, in this context, death is used in its conventional sense. However, the poet has metaphorically compared the stillness of inaction and rigidity to death, emphasizing the lifelessness inherent in such states.

From this detail, it is clear that when the agent of *tawaffā* is Allah and the subject is a human being, it implies the taking of life, and this applies to two different states - death and sleep.

The question arises: sleep and death are two distinct states—one allows life to continue, while the other marks its end. In this context, how can it be determined whether the phrase *tawaffā Allāh nafsū-hu* ("Allah took his soul") refers to death or sleep? The answer lies in the

explained this concept.

context and indicators within the text.

The determination of whether a word in a sentence is used literally, metaphorically, or technically depends on the evidence provided in the sentence itself. Similarly, when a speaker chooses between different meanings of a word, the choice is clarified by indicators within the speech. These indicators—whether explicit or implied—exist within the sentence or its broader context, ensuring that the intended meaning is clear. As a result, the reader can easily discern the speaker's intention without ambiguity.

The indicators in the aforementioned verses of Surah Az-Zumar and Surah Al-An'am, which have specifically associated the action *tawaffā* with sleep, are the phrases *fi manamiha* (in their sleep) and *bil-layl* (at night). Apart from these, the context and the style of the sentence also suggest that no other meaning except sleep can be accepted here.



3. The Interpretation of *wa Rāfi'uka ilayya*

The phrase *wa rāfi'uka ilayya* (and I will raise you to Myself) in verse 54 of Surah Aal-e-Imran has been used to argue that these words prevent *tawaffā* from being interpreted as death. This argument is based on the notion that, in the case of death, the existence comprising both the soul and the body—upon which the act of elevation (raising) can be applied—no longer remains intact. In such a scenario, the object pronoun '*ka*' ('you') would lose its coherence, as its referent is Jesus (PBUH) himself. While alive, Jesus (PBUH) remains a unified identity. However, in death, this personal identity does not persist in the same form; rather, it divides into distinct components—the soul of Jesus and the body of Jesus. This separation, it is argued, would render the notion of raising 'you' to Allah unclear or inapplicable if *tawaffā* were to imply death in this verse.

This argument is in itself against the norms of language and expression and the convention of the Holy Qur'an. It overlooks the reality that

language is about communication, not logic. The intent and meanings conveyed by language are not determined by causal relationships as in mathematics, but are understood based on convention and usage. If well-known and conventional expressions are ignored, language turns into riddles and is unable to perform its fundamental function of communication.

Therefore, if someone presents the words *wa rāfi‘uka ilayya* (and I will raise you to Myself) from the mentioned verse as evidence to the argument that the object of the verb ‘raf’ applies to Jesus, who is a combination of body and soul, hence it is imperative that he was raised alive, then by the same principle, another person could use the words *thumma ilayya marji‘ukum* (then you shall all return to Me) to argue that the object of the verb ‘raj’ includes all the addressees, including Jews and Christians, who are a combination of body and soul and that it proves that all of them shall also return alive.

For better understanding of the subject, here are the sentences within the verse:

وَمَكْرُوا اللَّهَ وَمَكَّرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكْرِينَ . إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يُعِيسِي إِيَّيْ مُتَوَفِّيكَ
وَرَأْفَعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ ثُمَّ إِيَّيْ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ.

[This is what happened] and the Israelites started to devise covert schemes [against him] and [in response] God also devised a hidden scheme and, in such scheming, God is the best.

At that time when God said: Jesus, I have decided to give you death and lift you up to Myself and I shall purify you from these who have disbelieved in you and shall grant your followers supremacy over these disbelievers until the Day of Judgement. Then to Me finally you shall all have to return. So, at that time, I shall give verdict on what you have been differing in. (3:54-55)

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s position on this discussion is that the meaning of raf (raising) cannot be determined in isolation from the structure and context of the sentence. Similarly, the interpretation of

the preceding and following parts of the verse cannot be based on an isolated understanding of *raf'*. Instead, the meanings of both parts—*Rāfi'uka ilayya wa mutabhiruka mina alladhīna kafarū* (I will raise you to Myself and purify you from those who disbelieve)—must be determined in relation to *Innī mutawaffika* ('Indeed, I will cause you to die').

Since the meaning of *tawaffā* is conclusively understood as death, i.e., the taking of the soul, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi asserts that no interpretation of the subsequent words should contradict or deviate from this established meaning. Based on this principle, he interprets the pronoun of address in *rāfi'uka* ('your raising') as referring to the body of Jesus (PBUH) from which the soul had already been taken. According to him, this special treatment was granted to Jesus (PBUH) so that his pure body could be safeguarded from desecration or insult. He writes:

That is the Almighty after claiming Jesus's soul will also lift his body to Him so that these evil-doers are not able to desecrate it. Jesus (PBUH) was a messenger of God and about messengers of God as per a law stated by the Qur'ān, the Almighty protects them and until their mission is accomplished none of their enemies is able to harm them in any way. Similarly, the Almighty does not tolerate people showing disrespect to them and people who are bent upon this are given respite to some extent and then He necessarily shields these messengers from their evil. (Al-Bayan 1/359)

As far as the words *Wa mutabhiruka mina alladhīna kafarū* are concerned, according to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, they apply to the entire personality of Jesus. The meaning is that Allah will remove him from the impurities of the false beliefs and vile morals of the Jews and take him to His pure world:

The Almighty will separate him from these immoral people who are incriminated with evil concepts and take him to the world of the righteous which has been prepared for them. Meaning, I will separate you from those who are immersed in contaminations of

knowledge and intellect and character and take you to the world prepared for the righteous and virtuous ones. (Al-Bayan 1/359)



4. *Innī mutawaffika* - Maulana Islahi's Interpretation

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's esteemed teacher, Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi, in the mentioned verse of Surah Aale Imran, did not interpret the word *tawaffā* as meaning the seizing of the soul or death. He has taken it to mean 'taking completely' instead. Therefore, he does not believe in the death of Jesus, peace be upon him. According to him, the stance of the majority of scholars is correct, which states that God lifted Jesus (PBUH) while he was alive. To substantiate his position, he has presented several other arguments in addition to the meaning of *tawaffā*. The summary of these arguments is as follows:

1. The literal meaning of *tawaffā* is 'the complete taking', implying taking something in its entirety.
2. It is metaphorically used for death.
3. The context of the speech will determine whether this word is used in its literal sense (taking in entirety) or metaphorical meaning (death).
4. The following indications prevent accepting the metaphorical meaning of *tawaffā* (death) here:
 - a. The verse and its context emphasize the good tidings and the promise of divine support. Interpreting *tawaffā* as death does not align with this portrayal of support and good tidings. Instead, it would suggest that the Jews's scheme to cause the death of Jesus (PBUH) was successful, which directly contradicts the text's clear indication that God thwarted their plan. The style and context of the verse, therefore, support the interpretation of Jesus (PBUH)

being lifted alive, rather than the meaning of death.

- b. If *tawaffā* is understood to mean causing death, then the significance of the words *rafi'uka ilayya* (I will raise you to Myself) becomes redundant. In that case, the statement would have been complete with *mutawaffika* (I will cause you to die) alone, without any need for the addition of *rafi'uka ilayya*. However, if *tawaffā* is interpreted as "taking completely" rather than death, the inclusion of *rafi'uka ilayya* fits seamlessly into the context and adds clarity to the narrative. This interpretation allows the phrase to convey its intended emphasis and aligns with the overall coherence of the verse.
- c. There is no doubt that the verb *Raf*^f (raise) can also mean elevation in degrees, but it is clear from the Qur'anic parallels that whenever it comes in this context, it comes without the preposition *Ilā* (towards Me). In the mentioned verse, it has come as *rāfi'uka ilayya*. So, it cannot mean 'I am the one who elevates your ranks'. In that case, the phrase *ilayya* would be superfluous. Hence, it is not possible to accept that *tawaffā* means death and *rāfi'uka ilayya* refers to elevation in ranks.
- d. In the Qur'an, when this matter is mentioned in Surah An-Nisa, the words *mutawaffika* are not used. Instead, the phrase *rafa'ahu Allāhu ilayh* (Allah raised him towards Himself) are used. This means that Allah has taken him towards Himself. Thus, the Qur'an has made it clear in which sense *tawaffā* is used in Surah Aale Imran.
- e. When the Qur'an mentions the same matter in Surah An-Nisa, the words '*mutawaffika*' are not used. Instead, the phrase '*rafa'ahu Allāhu ilayh*' ('Allah raised him to Himself') is used, meaning that 'Allah lifted him towards Himself.' In this way, the Qur'an itself clarifies the meaning of '*tawaffā*' as used in Surah Aal-e-Imran. Furthermore, Allah explicitly negates the killing and crucifixion of Jesus

(PBUH), which indirectly negates his death. After this clear refutation, adopting the stance that Jesus (PBUH) died is incorrect. This explanation makes it evident that the term ‘*tawaffā*’ does not carry the meaning of death in this context.

This is the summary of the position of Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi. Details are as follows:

The original meaning of tawaffā in Arabic is ‘to take something completely’ or ‘to seize something completely’. The use of this word to mean ‘to cause death’ is not literal but metaphorical. Words that are used in both their literal and metaphorical meanings depend on context indicators for their correct interpretation. The following context indicators are against interpreting tawaffā here as causing death:

First, this occasion is about the promise of victory and glad tidings from Allah to Prophet Jesus and his followers. The stories of all messengers testify that when their nations intended to kill them, Allah gave them the glad tidings of His protection and victory. If we look at this verse, it is clear that the whole verse is about glad tidings and the promise of victory. In this context, how can one say, ‘I am going to cause you to die’? That would have been what the Jews wanted. The only difference would have been that death would not have come at the hands of the Jews but through divine action.

Second, if tawaffā here means causing death, then the words ‘Rafiuka Ilayya’ (raising you to Myself) that follow become entirely unnecessary. What would be the point of saying, ‘I am going to cause you to die and raise you to Myself’? The context suggests that the words ‘Rafiuka Ilayya’ are clarifying the meaning of tawaffā, indicating that your tawaffā will be in the form of being raised to Me.

Third, the meaning of ‘Rafiuka Ilayya’ as merely elevating in rank is incorrect. In such a case, the word ‘Ilayya’ (to Me) becomes

redundant, and no word in the Qur'an is used redundantly. If the expression of a higher status was the sole purpose, then in Arabic, 'Rafiuka' would have sufficed; 'Ilayya' was not needed. Look at the Qur'an, where this word is used to express the notion of higher status, it is used without 'Ilayya'. For example:

‘مِنْهُمْ مَّنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ’ – ‘Among them are also those whom Allah spoke to and raised some of them in degrees. (2:253)’

‘وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ’ – ‘And if We had willed, We could have elevated him with Our signs, but he clung to the earth. (7:176)’

‘وَرَفَعْنَاهُ مَكَانًا عَلِيًّا’ – ‘and [like Abraham] We had made him rise to a lofty status. (19:57)’

Fourth, in another place in the Qur'an where this subject is mentioned, the word Mutawaffika (causing you to die) is completely omitted. After negating the killing and crucifixion, the only thing affirmed is being raised. 'Bal Rafaa'hu Allahu Ilayhi' (But Allah raised him to Himself) is a very clear indication that the Qur'an is describing the literal form of tawaffā as Allah raising him towards Himself. Look at the verse:

وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ۚ بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا .

Neither did they kill him nor did they crucify him; in fact, the matter was muddled up for them. Those who are disagreeing in this are inflicted with doubts about it; they have no knowledge about it; they are only following conjectures. They certainly did not slay him; in fact, God had lifted him up to Him. And God is Mighty, very Wise. (4:157-158)

This verse was the most appropriate place to explain how Jesus (PBUH) died because here the Qur'an vehemently and forcefully

refutes those who claimed his killing or crucifixion. If he had indeed died, the Qur'an would have clearly stated at this point that he was neither killed nor crucified but rather Allah gave him death. However, not only did the Qur'an refrain from saying this, but it also did not use the word *tawaffā* (causing death) here. Only the phrase '*Rafa'hu Allahu Ilayhi*' (Allah raised him to Himself) is used. Any discerning person can estimate how little room there is to interpret death from this *Raf'* (raise) after the negation of killing and crucifixion.

وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا - *Wa mutahhiruka mina alladhina kafaru* (purifying you from those who disbelieve) means separating you from the impure society and placing you among the righteous and virtuous. It's a divine practice for prophets, peace be upon them, to stay among their people as long as there is some hope of their people to become believers. This hope ends when the people plot to kill the prophets. At that time, the prophets migrate following the divine command. Just as after the separation of the soul, the body is left only to decay and decompose, similarly, after the departure of a prophet, his rejecters are left to nothing but humiliation and disgrace. The prophets and their companions leave the impure environment and enter a pure and healthy one, which enhances their spiritual strength and health. On the contrary, the enemies of prophets, deprived of life-giving elements, swiftly move towards destruction... Since the ascension of Jesus (PBUH) to heaven is also a form of migration, he, like all other prophets who migrated, was given the glad tidings of victory and success after his migration, as mentioned later.' (Tadabbur-e-Qur'an 2/103-105)

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, with utmost respect, does not agree with the stance of Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi. His difference with Islahi's arguments is based on the following points:

1. The word *tawaffā* in this verse cannot be interpreted as 'complete taking.' When this word is used by Allah or His angels as an action directed toward a human being, it specifically

means 'taking the soul' according to the conventions of the Arabic language. Numerous instances in the Holy Qur'an support this interpretation, and there is no example where it is used to signify 'complete taking.' This interpretation is further unsupported by hadith or classical Arabic literature. Consequently, when this verb appears in such a context, it must necessarily be understood as 'taking the soul.' Interpreting it otherwise would contradict the established conventions of the Holy Qur'an and the Arabic language.

2. When *tawaffā* definitively means 'taking the soul,' the other parts of this verse—*rāfi'uka ilayya* (raising you to Me) and *mutabhiruka min al-ladhīna kafarū* (purifying you from those who disbelieve)—must also be understood in the same context. Likewise, the interpretation of the words in verse 158 of Surah An-Nisa should also align with this understanding.
3. The context of the verse indeed emphasizes the glad tidings and support from Allah. In this instance, Allah demonstrates this support by foiling the secret schemes of the Jews through His divine plan.

Firstly, Allah declared His protection of Jesus (PBUH) from the treachery of the Jews. Despite their relentless efforts, they were neither able to kill nor crucify him. It was Allah Himself who took Jesus's soul.

Secondly, Allah announced the preservation of Jesus's body from any form of disrespect. To ensure this, He raised it to Himself, safeguarding every aspect of his existence from harm.

Thirdly, Allah provided solace by assuring that He would remove Jesus (PBUH) from the presence of his enemies and take him to the company of the righteous and virtuous. In essence, this aligns with Allah's practice regarding His messengers: after completing their mission and delivering the divine argument, He commands them to leave the deniers so His punishment may befall those who reject the truth.

As for the glad tidings, it has been explicitly stated that the followers of Jesus (PBUH) will always prevail over those who reject his message. Additionally, a perpetual penalty of subjugation was imposed on the deniers, lasting until the end of time.

This is a summary of the stance of Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi and in comparison, the stance of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi. The comparison clearly shows that the prominent evidence of Amin Ahsan Islahi's position is that the verse and its context emphasize the glad tidings and the promise of victory from Allah. If death were to be interpreted, the event would not manifest as a symbol of glad tidings and victory; instead, it would become a manifestation of the Jews' desire. Since this argument has also been adopted by other scholars, it is appropriate to understand Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's position in more detail. We clarify this in the following two points:

A. The Sunnah of Allah, divine practice, regarding His messengers is that once the argument has been completed upon the addressees, the primary responsibility of the messenger is fulfilled. The next phase is the imposition of divine punishment upon the transgressors, and reward for the believers. On this occasion, Allah Almighty decides about the life of the messenger according to the condition of the nation. If He plans to establish the reward and punishment in presence of the messenger, He keeps the messenger alive, otherwise, He puts him to death. In Surah Al-Mu'min and Surah Yunus, Allah Almighty has informed the Messenger of Allah, may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, of this Sunnah of His. The verses read:

فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ فَأَمَّا نُرِيَّتَكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَإِلَيْنَا
يُرْجَعُونَ

[They are not believing, O Prophet!] So, be patient. There is no doubt that the promise of God is true. Then We shall show you some part of the torment with which We are threatening them with or give you death and then deal with them; nevertheless they have to return to Us alone. (40:77)

وَأَمَّا نُرِيكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَقَّعُكَ فَالْيَتَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَى مَا يَفْعَلُونَ.

We shall definitely show you a part of what We are promising them [O Prophet] Or give death to you and thereafter deal with them. Nevertheless, they have to return to Us. Then God is a witness to what they are doing. (10:46)

Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi, in his interpretation of the verse, writes:

The address is to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The meaning is that the punishment they are being warned about, which they are considering empty threats due to its delay, and for which they are impatiently urging you, may be partly shown to them during your lifetime if Divine wisdom deems it appropriate. Otherwise, Allah will grant you death, and their return will be to Him. Then, Allah will lay bare all their records in front of them. (Tadabbur-e-Qur'an 4/60)

In the mission of Jesus (PBUH), this stage arrived when the Israelites were fully prepared to implement their plan. At this juncture, Allah decided to take the approach of death of his messenger. Thus, Allah announced His support and glad tidings for Jesus by declaring that He would take Jesus's soul and purify his noble person from the deniers. The matter of reward and punishment for the Israelites would be such that the followers of Jesus – the Christians – will remain dominant over the rejecters – the Jews – until the Day of Judgment. The verse states:

وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكِيرِينَ . إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يُعِيشِي إِيَّيْ مُتَوَقِّعِكَ وَرَافِعَكَ إِلَى وَمُطَهَّرَكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَى مَرْجِعِكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ

[This is what happened] and the Israelites started to devise covert schemes [against him] and [in response] God also devised a hidden scheme and in such scheming God is the best.

At that time when God said: Jesus, I have decided to give you death and lift you up to Myself and I shall purify you from those who have disbelieved in you and shall grant your followers supremacy over these disbelievers until the Day of Judgement. Then to Me finally you shall all have to return. So, at that time, I shall give verdict on what you have been differing in. (3:54-55)

B. When a Messenger of Allah completes the argument against his rejecters, and they become utterly helpless against his evidence and arguments, they start looking for ways to get rid of the Messenger. Typically, they resort to two methods: either they exile the Messenger or plot to kill him. The Qur'an makes it clear that the communities of the Messengers have dared to adopt both these methods. In Surah Ibrahim, where the stories of Allah's Messengers are narrated, there is also a mention of the disbelievers threatening to exile the Messengers:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُوْدَنَّ فِيْ مِلَّتِنَا
فَأَوْحَى إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ الظَّالِمِيْنَ.

At this, the disbelievers said to their messengers: 'We shall definitely banish you from our land or you will have to ultimately return to our way.' Then their Lord revealed to them: "We shall destroy these unjust people. (14:13)

Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi interprets the above verse in the following words:

In the life of every Messenger, there eventually comes a phase when, being exhausted by his call, his people give him the notice that he must revert to their faith, or they will exile him from their land. When the situation reaches this point, Allah Almighty, through revelation, gives His Messengers glad tidings that He will destroy those oppressors and after which He will settle His Messengers on the Earth. (Tadabbur-e-Qur'an 4/317)

In Surah Al-Isra, there is mention of these very ploys by the disbelievers of Quraysh concerning the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him:

وَأَنْ كَادُوا لَيَسْتَفِزُّوكَ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ لِيُخْرِجُوكَ مِنْهَا وَإِذَا لَا يَلْبَثُونَ خِلْفَكَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا.

They are bent upon uprooting you from this land and driving you away from it. But if this happens, then they too will not be able to stay here for long. (17:76)

Similarly, it is a well-known fact that on the night when Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) migrated from Mecca, the disbelievers of Quraysh had plotted his murder.

In the case of Prophet Abraham (PBUH), this action had actually been carried out. Surah Ankabut informs that when Abraham's addressees had no answer to his call, they decided to kill him and even acted upon it, but Allah Almighty kept him well protected:

فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا اقْتُلُوهُ أَوْ حَرِّقُوهُ فَأَنْجَاهُ اللَّهُ مِنَ النَّارِ...

So, [when Abraham presented his message,] the only reply his nation gave was that they began saying to one another: 'Kill him or burn him.' Then God saved him from the fire... (29:24)

Regarding the matter of Jesus (PBUH), the Israelites resolved to kill him and, for this purpose, devised a conspiracy. The Qur'an refers to their scheme with the words *wa makarū* (and they plotted). This conspiracy was similar to the plans made by the people of Prophet Abraham's nation before Jesus (PBUH) and by the people of Prophet Muhammad's nation after Jesus (PBUH). The Qur'an uses the term *makr* (plot) to describe the conspiracy against Prophet Jesus and the term *kayd*¹¹⁶ (scheme) to refer to the conspiracy against Prophet Abraham. In Surah As-Saffat, it is stated:

¹¹⁶ Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, explaining the term *Kayd*, writes: 'This means they sought to throw him into the fire temple under some pretext. The reason for this was likely the fear that an open attack could provoke resistance from Prophet Ibrahim's (PBUH) family. It is well-known that a similar strategy was employed by the leaders of the Quraysh in the case of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).' (*Al-Bayan*, Vol. 4, p. 274)

فَارَادُوا بِهِ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَاهُمُ الْأَسْفَلِينَ.

So, they tried to play a trick with him; but We did not let them succeed. (37:98)

When the nations decide to adopt such a brutal treatment with the Messengers of Allah, Allah then protects His Messengers and enforces the decree upon those nations. At this point, the Messenger is separated from that nation. The separation can occur in the form of migration to a different land while alive, or migration to the heavens through death. In both cases, it is a migration towards Allah, which manifests according to His command and His wisdom. The Qur'an has described this with reference to Prophet Abraham (PBUH) using the terms *muhājirun ilā rabbī* (a migrant towards my Lord) and *dhāhibun ilā rabbī* (one who goes to my Lord). This was the occasion when the people of Prophet Abraham (PBUH) decided to kill or burn him:

... وَقَالَ إِنِّي مُهَاجِرٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ.

Abraham [saw that none except him is prepared to believe in him, he] said: I migrate towards my Lord. Indeed, He alone is Powerful and very Wise. (29:26)

وَقَالَ إِنِّي ذَاهِبٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ.

Abraham said: [Leaving you aside, now] I shall go towards my Lord. He shall definitely guide me. (37:99)

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi writes about this migration of Prophet Abraham (PBUH):

This is an expression of migration from his nation after Abraham (PBUH) had conclusively communicated the truth to them. When people are after killing a warner from God, His messengers are directed in this manner to migrate from them. On such occasions, it is not known what will happen in the future. Thus, it is needed that every step that the Lord guide them on whose trust such a big decision has been made. These words

express precisely this trust in God. (Al Bayan 4/275)

After completing the argument against the nation of Lot and Shuayb (peace be upon them), when Allah decreed the punishment, He also separated these Messengers from their nations. Prophet Lot was commanded to take his family, except his wife, and leave his town. It is said about Prophet Shuayb (PBUH) that Allah delivered him and those who believed with him from the oppressors. This is mentioned in the following verse of Surah Hud:

قَالُوا يُلُوْطُ اِنَّا رُسُلُ رَبِّكَ لَنْ يَّصْلُوْا اِلَيْكَ فَاَسْرِ بِاَهْلِكَ بِقِطْعٍ مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ وَلَا يَلْتَفِتْ مِنْكُمْ اَحَدٌ اِلَّا اَمْرًا تَاْتُكَ اِنَّهُ مُصِيبُهَا مَا اَصَابَهُمْ اِنَّ مَوْعِدَهُمُ الصُّبْحُ اَلَيْسَ الصُّبْحُ بِقَرِيْبٍ.

The angels said: Lot! We have been sent by your Lord; [rest assured:] they will not even be able to come near you. So, leave this place with your family in the last part of the night and none of you should look back, except for your wife, because she is to go through what these people will go through. The time of morning is fixed for their [punishment. Why do you worry?] Is not the morning near? (11:81)

وَلَمَّا جَاءَ اَمْرُنَا نَحْنُ شُعَبِيَّا وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَاَخَذَتِ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا الصَّيْحَةَ فَاصْبَحُوْا فِيْ دِيَارِهِمْ جٰثِيْنَ.

[At this,] when Our directive was issued, We delivered with Our special blessing Shu'ayb and those who had embraced faith with him, and those who had been unjust [to their souls] were struck by a roar and they were left lying face down in their houses. (11:94)

As for Jesus (PBUH), the method adopted to save him from the Israelites and to migrate him towards Allah was that Allah caused him to die and lifted his blessed body away from them.¹¹⁷ It is stated in

¹¹⁷ This was done to prevent the possibility of the Israelites daring to disrespect Jesus's (PBUH) being.

Surah An-Nisa:

وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ^ط وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ
مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ^ج وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا^ا. بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ^ط وَكَانَ
اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا .

Neither did they kill him nor did they crucify him; in fact, the matter was muddled up for them. Those who are disagreeing in this are inflicted with doubts about it; they have no knowledge about it; they are only following conjectures. They certainly did not slay him; in fact, God had lifted him up to Him. And God is Mighty, very Wise. (4:157-158)

Among these verses, *bal rafa'ahu Allāhu ilayh* means that Allah took the soul of Jesus (PBUH) and lifted his body from within the Israelites. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi writes:

The clarification of this lifting is provided by the Qur'an in verse 55 of Surah Al-Imran (3) in such a manner as after death, Allah will lift him towards Himself. This means that the soul will be taken and his body will also be lifted so that his enemies cannot dishonor it. Jesus (PBUH) was a Messenger of Allah, and concerning Messengers, Allah's law in the Qur'an is that He protects them, and their enemies are never successful in harming them until their mission is accomplished. Likewise, Allah does not tolerate the insult and humiliation of them, and those who pursue it are, after being given a certain extent of respite, inevitably protected by Allah from their overreach. (Al-Bayan 1/573)



5. The Meaning of *Qabla Mawtihi* in Surah An-Nisa

Surah An-Nisa was revealed after the migration of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina. This was the time when a Muslim state had been

established in Medina and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was culminating the argument of the religion against the People of the Book and purifying and cleansing the Muslims. Hence, the subject matter of this Surah revolves around laying down the foundations for a righteous society for the Muslim community and its purification¹¹⁸.

This Surah contains 176 verses. However, its main subject concludes at verse 126. The verses completing the subject matter are:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا
وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا. وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ
شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطًا.

[These Hypocrites give preference to the Idolaters with regard to the believers] and [do not understand] who has a better religion than he who resigns himself to God and is one thorough in his deeds and follows the way of Abraham who was totally devoted – and [because of this very reason] God had chosen Abraham to be His friend. [Who is more worthy than God to submit oneself to because] to God belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth, and God encompasses all things. (4:125-126)

The portion of the Surah from this verse to its conclusion functions as an appendix, addressing questions that arose during the time of its revelation.

The first question was posed by the Muslims who struggled fulfilling the demands of faith and morals. This question begins with the following words in verse 127: *Wa yastaftūnaka fī an-nisā'* (They ask you for a legal verdict concerning women). It pertains to the issues of dowry and justice in the case of marrying the mothers of orphans. The answer to this question has been given in verses up to 134.

The second question is evident from the behavior of the hypocrites. They preferred their relationships with the People of the Book over truth and righteousness, and questioned why Allah had decreed

¹¹⁸ Al-Bayan 1/442

punishment for the Jews and Christians along with the polytheists. Their question has been answered in verses up to 152.

The third question was raised by the People of the Book in the form of a demand. The response is offered in verses up to 175.

The fourth and final question is about the rulings on inheritance mentioned at the beginning of the Surah. The response to this is given in verse 176.

The third question that the People of the Book raised with Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the form of a demand is stated in verse 153 of the Qur'an:

يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ...

These People of the Book ask you to bring down directly to them a book from the heavens [instead of this Qur'an]. (4:153)

Allah Almighty has responded to this in an extremely stern tone, enumerating the worst crimes of the Jews with the full force of His speech. Regarding this exchange of question and answer, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has written:

Now this is the third question which in response to the call of this Surah was posed by the People of the Book in the form of a demand. They demanded that instead of the Qur'an, they wanted a book directly revealed to them from the heavens. Only after that would they be willing to embrace faith. The answer given to them is couched in such an aggressive tone that in the words of Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi anger is exuding from every single word. He writes:

... The whole speech from the beginning to the end is based only on the charge sheet against them and the force and flow of the discourse is such that it becomes difficult to ascertain where exactly the speech ends. In such a forceful and furious discourse, the predicate is generally suppressed. It is as if the rage of the speaker has taken the place of this predicate, and it becomes evident from the subject as to what the speaker intends to say.

(Tadabbur-e-Qur'an 2/415) (Al-Bayan 1/567-568)

In this indictment of crimes, the following criminal activities of the Jews have been described:

1. They demanded from Moses to make them see Allah directly. (Verse 153)
2. Despite witnessing clear signs, they took the calf as a deity. (Verse 153)
3. Allah hung the Tūr mountain over their heads to take their solemn pledge that they would enter the place of worship humbly and not desecrate the Sabbath, but they broke this firm covenant. (Verse 154)
4. They rejected Allah's signs. (Verse 155)
5. They killed the prophets without any justification. (Verse 155)
6. They said that their hearts were impervious to Moses's teachings. (Verse 155)
7. In general, they chose disbelief. (Verse 156)
8. They slandered Mary. (Verse 156)
9. They falsely claimed to have killed Allah's Messenger Jesus. (Verse 157)
10. Despite prohibition from Allah, they continued to trade in usury. (Verse 161)
11. They consumed people's wealth through illicit means. (Verse 161)

This is a list of the crimes committed by the People of the Book. Their questions clearly indicate that this response does not meet their demand. Their demand is that Allah should send down a book directly to them instead of this Qur'an. This statement is an expression of Allah's severe wrath. The reason for this is that their demand is the worst manifestation of their narrow-mindedness, baseness, and insolence. Therefore, Allah, with the full grandeur of His speech, has exposed their reality and, between the lines, indicated that those who have previously made even greater demands and

persisted in defiance despite witnessing Allah's magnificent signs will not refrain from such behavior.

The ninth crime from the list is that they claimed to have killed Jesus who was in direct protection of God because of his status as a divine messenger and could not be harmed by anyone. Since this claim was tantamount to challenging the divine law of Messengership of Allah, it was immediately refuted forcefully declaring:

... وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ۚ بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ...

...neither did they kill him nor did they crucify him; in fact, the matter was muddled up for them. Those who disagree on it are inflicted with doubts about it; they have no knowledge about it; they are only following conjectures. They certainly did not slay him; in fact, God had lifted him up to Him... (4:157-158)

From this detail, it is clear that the above sentence is not related to the next sentence, but to the previous sentence, which is the ninth crime of the Israelites. The words of the sentence are:

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ...

Because of their claim that we have killed Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah... (4:157)

Now the question arises as to what is meant by the directive of verse 159, and the answer to that is that it is a response to the demand of the Israelites, which appears at the beginning of the discourse in the following words:

يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ ...

These People of the Book ask you to bring down directly to them a book from the heavens [instead of this Qur'an]. (4:153)

In response to this, it has been stated:

وَإِنَّ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ ۚ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ

شَهِيدًا.

[This is a list of their crimes; so, if they are now demanding that a book other than the Qur'an be directly revealed to them from the heavens, just ignore them. O Prophet!] Everyone from among these People of the Book shall definitely believe in [this Qur'an] before his death; and on the Day of Judgement it will bear witness to them. (4:159)

Finally, it is clarified that the People of the Book who accept the Qur'an as Allah's book are exempted from this admonition. They not only accept the Qur'an as the divine book but also consider the books that were revealed earlier as divine revelations from Allah. It is stated:

لَكِنَّ الرِّسْحُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَالْمُقِيمِينَ الصَّلَاةَ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أُولَئِكَ سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا .

However, those of deep knowledge among them and those who have faith believe in what has been revealed to you and what was revealed before you and are especially diligent in the prayer, pay the zakah, and believe in God and the Last Day. It is those whom We shall soon richly reward. (4:162)

According to this detail, the arrangement of the discourse comes forth as follows:

1. The demand of the Israelites from the Messenger of Allah for a book directly sent down to them, instead of the Qur'an
2. The first parenthetical sentence¹¹⁹: Allah's expression of anger and

¹¹⁹ A parenthetical sentence is a comment or clarification that comes in the middle of a discourse and is related to some aspect of the relevant part of the speech. It stands separate from the discourse, such that if it were removed, the continuity of the speech would not be disrupted. What is a parenthetical sentence? How does it enter into the midst of a speech? To what extent is it related or unrelated to the overall speech? To understand these things, let's look at a part of the famous poem *Jawab-e-Shikwa* by Allama Iqbal. In it, a

reprimand regarding their illegitimate demand by pointing out their crimes

3. The answer from Allah to the Israelites's query: The declaration that every individual from the People of the Book who is an addressee of the Messenger of Allah will come to believe in the Qur'an as Allah's book before their death

4. The second parenthetical sentence: The addition of some more crimes in their list of crimes.

list of shortcomings and weaknesses of Muslims is described. While mentioning these, two interjected sentences also come into the middle. The speech itself indicates that these sentences are not a part of the record of deeds:

Our hands are powerless, hearts content with disbelief,
The Ummah causes disgrace to the Prophet.
The idol-breakers have departed, those remaining are idol-fallers,
Ibrahim was the father, and now the son is Azar.
New wine-drinkers, new wine, new vats,
New Kaaba sanctuary, new idols, you too are new.
Those were the days when this was the essence of elegance,
The pride of the spring season was the desert tulip.
The Muslim was devoted to Allah,
Once, this mischief-maker was your beloved.
*Now go and pledge your faith to serve some local deity,
And confine Muhammad's following to some a locality.*
How burdensome to you is the awakening in the morning,
Love is not from us, indeed, sleep is dear to you.
The burden of Ramadan is heavy on a free temperament,
You say it yourself, is this the way of loyalty?
*The nation exists with religion, without religion, you too do not exist,
If there is no mutual passion, then the assembly of stars does not exist either.*
Those who possess no skill in the world, you are them,
Those who do not care about their abode, you are them.
Those in whom settled lightning, that threshing floor is you,
Those who eat the heritage of their ancestors' graves, you are them.
You who seek a good name by trading graves,
Would you not sell them, if you obtain stone idols!

5. Commentary on those from the People of the Book who accept the Qur'an as the divine book: Their admiration and the announcement of a great reward for them

In this context, now read the whole discourse once more so that the purpose and meaning of the verse under discussion become clear in its full context and subtext:

يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىَٰ كَبِيرَ
مِّنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ ۖ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ ۖ وَأَتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا .
وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ بِمِيثَاقِهِمْ وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا
تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِّيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا . فِيمَا تَقْضِيهِمْ مِّيثَاقَهُمْ وَكُفْرِهِمْ
بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ ۚ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا . وَبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا
عَظِيمًا . وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا
صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ
عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا . بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا
حَكِيمًا . وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَآ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ ۚ وَبِوَمِ الْفِتْمَةِ يَكُونُ
عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا . فَيُظْلَمُونَ الَّذِينَ هَآذُوا حَرَمَنَا عَلَيْهِمْ طَبِيبٌ أُحْلَتْ لَهُمْ
وَبَصَدَّهِمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا . وَأَخَذَهُمُ الرَّبُّوَا وَقَدْ نُهِوا عَنْهُ وَكُلِّهِمْ
أَمْوَالُ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ ۚ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا . لَكِنَّ الرُّسُخُونَ
فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ
وَالْمُقِيمِينَ الصَّلَاةَ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ
سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا .

These People of the Book ask you to bring down directly to them a book from the heavens [instead of this Qur'an]. So, this is no matter of wonder. Of Moses they made an even greater demand. They had asked him: 'Show us God face to face.' Then, because of

this rebelliousness, a thunderbolt struck them. After that, they deified the calf even when obvious signs had come to them; yet We still forgave this and had given Moses clear dominance [on them].

And We had lifted ʾTūr over them with a covenant with them and had directed them: 'Enter the gates [of the city] bowing your heads,' and had said to them: 'Do not be disobedient in the matter of the Sabbath,' and [on all these things] We had taken from them a firm covenant. Then because they broke their covenant [We laid a curse on them] and because they denied the revelations of God and because they killed the prophets unjustly and because they said: 'Our hearts have a covering on them.' – no, in fact, it is God who has sealed their hearts because of their disbelief; so, [now] they will seldom embrace faith and because of their disbelief and because of their vicious accusation against Mary.

And because of their claim: 'We have killed the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of God.' – even though neither did they kill him nor did they crucify him; in fact, the matter was muddled up for them. Those who are disagreeing in this are inflicted with doubts about it; they have no knowledge about it; they are only following conjectures. They certainly did not slay him; in fact, God had lifted him up to Him. And God is Mighty, very Wise. [This is a list of their crimes; so, if they are now demanding that a book other than the Qur'ān be directly revealed to them from the heavens, just ignore them. O Prophet!] Everyone from among these People of the Book shall definitely believe in [this Qur'ān] before his death; and on the Day of Judgement it will bear witness to them.

Then only because of the iniquity of these Jews, We had also forbidden them wholesome things which had been allowed to them and because they have been stopping others a lot from the path of God and because they have been taking interest even though they had been stopped from it and because they have been

unjustly devouring the wealth of others, and it is for their disbelievers that We have prepared a woeful punishment. However, those of deep knowledge among them and those who have faith believe in what has been revealed to you and what was revealed before you and are especially diligent in the prayer and pay the zakah and believe in God and the Last Day. It is these whom We shall soon richly reward. (4:153-162)

With this explanation and detail, the references of all pronouns in verse 159 have become completely clear. According to this:

- The singular masculine absent pronoun in *layu'minanna bihi* ('لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ') refers to the Glorious Qur'an.
- The singular masculine absent pronoun in *qabla mawtibī* ('قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ') refers to every individual from among the People of the Book living in the land of Hijaz during the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).
- The subject of the verb *yakūnu* ('يَكُونُ') is the Glorious Qur'an.
- The plural masculine absent pronoun in *alayhim shahīdan* ('عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا') refers to the People of the Book residing in the land of Hijaz during the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

This is Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's stance regarding the mentioned verse. If someone enquires about the basis on which he has identified the references for these pronouns, the definitive answer is that he has done so through the standard methodology applied in any discourse.

A fundamental principle of language and expression is that the references of pronouns in a discourse are understood from the subject matter, context, and indicators within the text. Pronouns such as *he*, *they*, *it*, and *them* serve as substitutes for nouns mentioned earlier in the discourse. When these pronouns are used, they must follow a clear reference to the nouns they replace. In cases where ambiguity arises, the context, subject matter, and intent of the discourse are used to

clarify their reference. These components are collectively referred to as ‘indicators.’

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has declared the reference of the pronoun in *layu’minanna bihī* to be the Glorious Qur’an and the reference of the pronoun in *qabla mawtibī* to be every member of the People of the Book who was a direct addressee of the Prophet’s message. The detail of the indicators for this determination in the discourse is as follows:

The first indicator is the phrase at the beginning of the discourse *yas’aluka ahl al-kitābi an tunazzila ‘alayhim kitāban mina as-samāi* (The People of the Book are demanding from you to send down a book directly from the heavens upon them). This sentence outlines the whole subject matter of the discourse, namely, what Allah Almighty has chosen for His commentary. That is, the People of the Book’s demand that the Prophet should present a book specifically revealed for the Israelites as opposed to the Qur’an which was revealed upon his heart. The rest of the discourse is a manifestation of Allah’s reproach over this demand.

From this sentence, along with understanding the subject under discussion, the following information is also gathered:

1. The phrase *yas’aluka ahl al-kitābi* clarifies that the People of the Book making the demand refer to the Jews and Christians who were present in the land of Hijaz during the time of the Prophet (PBUH).
2. The phrase *tunazzila ‘alayhim* shows that they are not accepting the Qur’an as a book revealed from the sky, for it is not being revealed upon them (the Jews).
3. The common noun *kitāban* makes it clear that the book the People of the Book are demanding is something other than the Qur’an.

This indicator shows that the subject matter of the discourse is the issue of the People of the Book’s belief or disbelief in the Qur’an.

The second indicator is found at the end of the discourse in these

words: *Lākin ar-rāsikhūna fī al-ʿilmi minhum wal-muʿminūna yuʿminūna bimā unzila ilayka wa mā unzila min qablaka, wal-muqīmīna as-salāta wal-muʿtūna az-zakāta wal-muʿminūna billāhi wa al-yawmi al-ākhirī, ulāʾika sanuʿtībim ajran ʿazīmā* (However, those of deep knowledge among them and those who have faith believe in what has been revealed to you and what was revealed before you and are especially diligent in the prayer and pay the *zakah* and believe in God and the Last Day. It is these whom We shall soon richly reward.) This section mentions those People of the Book who believe that the book revealed to the Prophet, the Glorious Qurʾan, is from Allah. This means there were two types of people among the People of the Book during the Prophet's time. The majority were those refusing to accept the Qurʾan as a divine book. Yet, among their knowledgeable and faithful, there were individuals recognizing the Qurʾan as a revelation from Allah. This indicator also clarifies the discourse's subject as the belief or disbelief of the People of the Book in the Qurʾan.

Additionally, this sentence clarifies the following facts:

1. The conjunction *lākin* (but), which indicates a qualification, necessitates that if the subsequent mention is of the group of the People of the Book who are accepting the Qurʾan as a divine book, then preceding it should be a mention of the group that is not accepting the Qurʾan as a divine book.
2. The pronoun *minhum* (among them) suggests that it must be referring to the people already mentioned. And those previously mentioned were the People of the Book during the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).
3. Since the word *yuʿminūna* (they believe) is used for the People of the Book who are accepting the Qurʾan as a divine book while maintaining their religious faith, it must be taken to mean believing rather than having religious faith.
4. The words *sanuʿtībim ajran ʿazīmā* (We will soon give them a great reward) mention the eventual outcome for those from the People of the Book during the Prophet's time who believe

in the Qur'an as a book from Allah. This style suggests that the eventual outcome for those from the People of the Book who do not believe in the Qur'an as a divine book should also be mentioned. Accordingly, their end is described in verse 159, stating that eventually they will have to believe in the Qur'an as Allah's book, a belief they are currently denying. This event will occur in their lifetime once the argument has been conclusively established through the Messenger, and the claims of the Qur'an are demonstrated as undeniable and testifiable realities. Clarifying this aspect, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi writes:

It should also be noted that this is a sentence of threat and warning. It means that the matters being explained to them by means of reason will become a reality in the coming days. They should think about what they will do at that time. They would have no choice other than believing it. (Al-Bayan 1/574)

This is Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's position regarding the interpretation of verse 159 from Surah An-Nisa. In his opinion, the subject, sequence, and arrangement of the statements, and the context of the verse accepts only one interpretation discussed above.

After clarifying Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's position, it is also necessary to understand the mistake found in the position held by traditional scholars.

The general stance of our scholars regarding the interpretation of verse 159 of An-Nisa is that both objective pronouns in the phrase *Layu'minanna bihi qabla mawtihī* refer to Jesus (PBUH). Accordingly, the meaning of the verse would be: 'Every person from the People of the Book will necessarily believe in Jesus before his death.'

The reason for the error in this interpretation lies in the following words of the verses 157-158:

...وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ^ط وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ

مِنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا . بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ .
...neither did they kill him nor did they crucify him; in fact, the matter was muddled up for them. Those who are disagreeing in this are inflicted with doubts about it; they have no knowledge about it; they are only following conjectures. They certainly did not slay him; in fact, God had lifted him up to Him... (4:157-158)

This passage is part of the parenthetical statement that begins with *Faqad sa' alū Mūsā akbara min dhālika*. and mentions the indictment against the Israelites as a rebuke. This parenthetical statement ends with the words *azīzan Hakīman*. The sentence from *wa mā qatalūhu* to *azīzan Hakīman* is another parenthetical statement within the one containing the threat. Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi explains the need for this additional parenthetical statement as follows:

The Qur'anic verse denies the claim of the Jews to have killed Jesus. There are two aspects to this immediate denial. One is that God's messengers are under His protection and that the plots of their enemies against them are not allowed to succeed by God. Hence, the Jewish claim of killing or crucifying Jesus is completely baseless. They have utterly failed in their mischief but have become permanently detested and cursed for carrying the burden of a false claim. The second aspect is that nowhere did an event of killing or crucifixion of Jesus occur, but Paul's followers, the Christians, concocted this imaginary tale into a complete mythology and thus cut their own noses to spite others' face. (Tadabbur-e-Qur'an 2/420)

When this second parenthetical statement is considered within the context of the threatening tone of the discourse, it becomes evident that it pertains to the list of crimes, some of which are mentioned before and others after it. Verse 159 bears no connection to this context.

From this detail, it is evident that the interpretation by the majority of scholars does not match the text therefore, it cannot be considered

correct.

Nevertheless, for the sake of argument, even if we consider it correct, its application and relevance cannot be determined. As a result, it creates an impossible situation, and the content of the verse no longer remains applicable or feasible.

It is fairly visible that the scholars' position is that both objective pronouns in the phrase *Layu'minanna bibi qabla mawtibī* refer to Jesus. In that case, the meaning of the verse would be as follows: Every Jew and Christian will necessarily believe in Jesus before Jesus's death, meaning every Jew and Christian will face death only after believing in Jesus.

There are five possible avenues for applying this statement:

1. It could be assumed that it applies to all Jews and Christians throughout the history of mankind. That is, all Jews and Christians until the Day of Judgment will come to believe in Jesus (PBUH) before Jesus's death. This interpretation is against reality. The reason is that millions of Jews have already left the world without embracing faith in Jesus since his ascension.
2. It could refer to the Jews and Christians during the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This application is also against reality because the Jews of that era were born centuries after the ascension of Jesus (PBUH) and died without having believed in him.
3. It could refer to the Jews and Christians of Jesus's time. This application is also against reality because the Israelites, who were his audience, were the ones seeking his death, and from whom God protected Jesus (PBUH) by taking him away.
4. Assuming the concept of Jesus's second coming to be true, it could refer to the Jews and Christians who will exist in the world at the time of or after the descent. This application is also not correct, for in adopting this interpretation, the indication within the text that specifies the phrase 'the People of the Book' as referring to the people of the book during the time of

Jesus's descent would need to be presented.

5. One might interpret that only Christians are meant by the phrase 'the People of the Book.' This interpretation is incorrect as well, first, because they already have faith in Jesus, and second, because the list of crimes mentioned in the context of the verse is related to the crimes of the Jews.



6. Is the Concept of the Descent of Jesus Included in the Articles of Faith?

Our scholars include the concept of the descent of Jesus (PBUH) in articles of faith. In their view, this is an article of faith, just like the belief in the oneness of God (Monotheism), Messengership, and the Hereafter, and it is obligatory for every believer to adopt it. Their intention is to force Muslims to believe that Jesus (PBUH) was taken up alive to the heavens and that he will descend directly from the heavens near the Day of Judgment, will kill the *Dajjal*, establish the dominance of Islam in the world, and then pass away.

According to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, even if the narratives of the ascension, descent, life, and death of Jesus (PBUH) are considered authentic, it is correct to mention them as signs of the Day of Judgment or as predictions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and on that basis, believing in them can also be considered a demand of faith in the Prophet. However, it cannot be deemed as the essence of belief and faith. Doing so is against the well-established conventions of the religion.

Faith means to believe in something with complete certainty of heart. Its foundation is belief in Allah, but in terms of specifics, it comprises the following five things:

1. Faith in Allah, meaning we completely surrender ourselves to our Lord without any hint of associating partners with Him.
2. Faith in angels, meaning we believe that angels are Allah's pure

and infallibly obedient creatures, they convey His guidance to humans, are completely trustworthy, and that the divine decree is implemented through them.

3. Faith in prophets, meaning we accept that prophets are divinely appointed guides whom we must obey; their knowledge is infallible, their actions are an example for life, and obedience, following, and love for them are obligatory for everyone.
4. Faith in scriptures, meaning we believe in the scriptures that prophets present as the word of God, which He has revealed as a criterion to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and has sent so that people can abide by true justice in matters of religion.
5. Faith in the Day of Resurrection, meaning we accept that we will certainly be resurrected after death, that nothing but faith and righteous actions will benefit us there, we will be accountable to God for all our words and deeds, and without divine permission, no one will have the chance to speak a word in our favor¹²⁰.

Allah Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an:

أَمِنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ
وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نَفَرَقَ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا
وَالْيَكِ الْمَصِيرُ.

Our Messenger has professed faith in what has been revealed to him by His Lord, and so have his followers. All these professed faith in God and His angels and His books and His messengers. [They affirm:] 'We do not discriminate between any of God's messengers,' and they have said: 'We listened and obeyed. Lord! We seek Your forgiveness, and [know that] to You shall we return' (2:285)

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) included a branch of faith in Allah

¹²⁰ Derived from al-Bayan 1/178-181

— the belief in the good and bad of destiny — and explained it in the following manner:

الإيمان أن تؤمن بالله، وملأئكته، وكتبه، ورسله، واليوم الآخر، و تؤمن
بالقدر خيره وشره.

Faith implies that you believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Day of Judgment, and that every good and evil is from your Lord¹²¹. (Sahih Muslim, 102)

It is clear from the above verse and the narrative that in religion, only the above five things are deemed articles of faith. It is not correct to describe other parts of the religion as articles of faith. When Allah and His Messenger have determined the subjects of the articles of faith, we have no right to change or add anything to them.

Hence, for instance, we will include prayers, alms-giving, fasting, pilgrimage, and animal sacrifice within the category of worship; adopt interpretations of the law and Shariah for jihad and penalties; consider the destruction of *Aad* and *Thamud*, the companions of the cave, and the events of *Dhul-Qarnayn* as accounts of the past; consider the victory of Mecca and the victories of the Romans as prophecies; and call the emergence of Gog and Magog as signs of the Day of Judgment. All of these are realities, their attribution to the Prophet is beyond doubt. We will accept them and consider their denial to be against faith, but we will not use the term ‘articles of faith’ for them.

Another important aspect associated with this issue is that the teachings of the Qur’an requiring contemplation and leaving room for difference of opinion should not be included in the category of articles of faith as they may lead to two academic complications.

From one perspective, the scope of articles of faith (*Īmānīyāt*) becomes a matter of debate because they are the foundations of the faith, and allowing room for discussion and disagreement in these matters is akin to placing the very foundations of religion in a state of

¹²¹ Meezan 76

contention. Hence, if differing reports and narratives are included within the domain of articles of faith, it would essentially open the door to disputes and controversies on the core tenets of faith. For instance, the concept of the Finality of Prophethood is an integral part of belief in Prophethood. It is obligatory to accept this without any reservations. To deviate from it is to deviate from faith itself. There is no room for debate or dispute on this matter while maintaining one's faith. However, if, for example, the signs of the Day of Judgment—such as a slave girl giving birth to her mistress, Arabs competing in constructing tall buildings, the sun rising from the west, or a particular creature emerging from the earth—are included in the list of articles of faith, which are subject to interpretation, then essential doctrinal beliefs like Prophethood and the Finality of Prophethood would also start being considered open to interpretation.

On the other hand, if viewed from another perspective, elevating the status of reports and narratives to that of *Īmānīyāt* would eliminate the possibility of reflection and difference of opinion regarding them. Consequently, if a hadith scholar or commentator does not accept them or offers a different interpretation, it would cast doubt on his belief and faith.

Conversely, giving the status of article of faith to debatable issues will cease the possibility of deliberation and difference of opinion about them. It means that if a hadith expert or an exegete does not accept them or offers a different interpretation of such issues, he will make his faith questionable.

It can be understood with the help of a few examples. The question of who are the *ghayril-maghdūbi 'alayhim wa lā ad-dāllīn* in the Qur'an or which tree is meant by the *shajaratun* from which Prophet Adam (PBUH) was prohibited can be subject to discussion and examination. Such questionable issues lead to differences of opinion among scholars. The same is the case of *Dhul-Qarnayn* and *Khidr*. The word *Dhul-Qarnayn* semantically means 'the one with two horns,' but the Qur'an is silent on who this term refers to. Some scholars interpret it as Alexander the Great, some think he was a king

from Yemen, and others believe he was the Persian King Khosrow. Regarding *Khidr*, there are three prominent opinions: some believe he was an angel, others think he was a prophet, and some view him as a saint. Such scholarly differences clearly do not affect articles of faith, but if we classify these kinds of reports among articles of faith, then in the first case, discussion about them will be closed off, and in the second case, interpreters and commentators with differing views might face accusations of denying articles of faith. Consequently, this could lead to a situation where separate lists of articles of faith by learned individuals start to emerge, compromising the acknowledged status and rank of agreed-upon articles of faith.

Therefore, it is essential that articles of faith be kept entirely above such debates and disputes.



Summary of Discussions

In our academic tradition, the concept of the second coming of Prophet Jesus (PBUH) is referred to under the title of ‘Descent of Jesus.’ It signifies that he is alive in the heavens and will personally descend to Earth just before the Day of Judgment.

Scholars’ Reasoning

According to the scholars, this concept is supported by both the Qur’an and the prophetic Hadiths. The main points of reasoning are:

1. It is deduced from verses 54-55 of Surah Aale Imran that Prophet Jesus (PBUH) was taken up alive by Allah, thus he has not yet died. The evidence lies in the words *Innī mutawaffika wa rafi’uka ilayya* meaning "I have decided that you will die [or "I will take you"] and I will raise you to Myself." The term *Innī mutawaffika* (I will grant you death) does not mean to cause death but to take in possession, and *rafi’uka ilayya* (I will raise you to Myself) signifies the whole existence of Jesus (PBUH) including both his body and soul.
2. From the words of Surah An-Nisa, verse 159 *wa in min abli al-kitābi illā layu’minanna bihi qabla mawtibī* ("And there is none from the People of the Book but will surely believe in him (Jesus) before his (Jesus) death"), it is concluded that Jesus (PBUH) is alive with Allah and will descend to Earth before the Day of Judgment. This is possible only after his descent, that every person among the People of the Book will believe in him.
3. The Descent of Jesus has been mentioned in several hadith reports. The narratives on this topic have been transmitted in most books of hadith with authentic and valid chains of narration. They report that Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will

descend with angels at a minaret of a mosque in Damascus and will lead the army of Muslims. He will then slay the Dajjal and his Jewish followers. Through his prayers, Gog and Magog will also be destroyed. The world will become a cradle of peace and harmony, and no religion other than Islam will remain on Earth. He will rule the world for forty years as a just leader. After this, he will pass away; Muslims will perform his funeral prayers and bury him. Soon after his death, the Day of Judgment will occur.

Objections to the Concept of Descent by Javed Ahmed Ghamidi

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi considers the concept of the Descent of Jesus as subject to review because of the objections that arise when examining this concept in light of the Qur'an and assessing the related hadith based on the principles of narration and understanding. These objections are as follows:

1. The personality of Jesus (PBUH) has been discussed in the Qur'an from multiple angles. The Qur'an has commented on his message and personality at various places. The commotion of the Day of Judgment is also a special subject of the Qur'an. The event of a revered Messenger descending alive from the heavens is not of minor significance. Despite the context that demands explanation, there is not even a slight hint to this event anywhere in the plain text of the Qur'an. Can reason and knowledge be satisfied with this silence? It is not easy to accept this.
2. Verses 116-119 of Surah Al-Maidah narrate a dialogue that Allah will have with Jesus (PBUH) on the Day of Judgment. Allah will ask him about the primary cause of the Christians' misguidance, whether he instructed them to take him and his mother as gods besides Allah. In response, among other things, he will say that he only said to them what Allah had commanded, and as long as he was among them, he observed

what they were doing. But when Allah took him up, he did not know how they followed or abandoned his teachings, and after his ascension, Allah was their overseer. In this context, the last sentence does not warrant Jesus's descent to the world before the Day of Judgment. Had he returned, he ought to say that he witnessed their ignorance and warned them recently.

3. Verse 55 of Surah Aale Imran outlines the plan of action for Jesus (PBUH) until the Day of Judgment. While describing the plan for Jesus and his followers until the Day of Judgment, Allah could have stated explicitly that He would send Jesus (PBUH) to the world again before the Day of Judgment. However, the Almighty did not do so. If Jesus (PBUH) were to return, why is there silence on this issue? There is no reasonable explanation.
4. The earliest available book of hadith is *Sabifah Hammam ibn Munabbih*, compiled around 58 AH. It does not include the narrative of the Descent of Jesus. It contains 138 hadiths in total, all narrated by Abu Huraira (RA), an important narrator of the hadiths concerning the descent of Jesus. It is surprising that when he dictated hadith to his direct student, Hammam ibn Munabbih, he did not include the narrative of the Descent, though he has narrated it elsewhere. Moreover, this *Sabifah* includes some other hadith reports relating to Jesus (PBUH) and the *Dajjal* but not the more significant narration about the Descent of Jesus and the killing of *Dajjal*. It also mentions five narratives about the signs of the approaching Day of Judgment, but the prominent sign of the Descent of Jesus is not mentioned in them.
5. The *Muwatta* is the first formal compilation of hadith. It also does not include the narrative of the Descent of Jesus. Compiled by Imam Malik after 40 years of effort and completed in 140 AH, it was compiled in Medina - the city of the Prophet. Imam Malik lived for about 40 years after its compilation - teaching and reviewing it. If no record as

extraordinary as the narration of the Descent of Jesus reached him during the lengthy period of compilation and review, and given such proximity to the original narrators, the Companions, it raises questions. If it did reach him and he chose not to accept it, that too is problematic. It is even more surprising that a dedicated chapter related to Jesus (PBUH) and *Dajjal* was recorded in *Muwatta*, titled ‘Chapter on the Description of Jesus son of Mary, and *Dajjal*.’ In that chapter, only one narrative is included that describes a dream of the Prophet in which he saw Jesus and *Dajjal*.

6. The number of *Marfu* hadiths (a hadith that goes back to the Prophet) about the Descent of Jesus exceeds 80, which have been narrated by roughly 30 Honored Companions. Imam Bukhari has selected only three narrations from among these, all of which are reported from the same companion, Abu Huraira (RA). Of these three narrations, two are such that they are two different chains of the same narration. Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri is the primary narrator in these hadiths. This means that he has relied on the narrations of al-Zuhri in this context. Imam Bukhari’s approach highlights his hesitation regarding all the narrations about Jesus’s descent.
7. In Muslim, No. 7460, the event of Jesus’s descent is described in detail. It is clear that Jesus will descend at the exact moment when, after conquering Constantinople, the Muslim army turns back towards Medina upon hearing the news of the appearance of the *Dajjal*. However, the reality is that Constantinople was conquered on May 29, 1453 corresponding to 20 Jumada al-Awwal 857 AH. Since then, it has remained in the possession of Muslims; in fact, it is Istanbul, the capital of the Islamic state of Turkey. This means that the time determined by the hadith of Muslim for the Descent of Jesus is immediately after the conquest of Constantinople. This time has already passed in June/July 1453. Constantinople has been conquered, but neither has the *Dajjal* appeared, nor has Jesus (PBUH) descended. Following this account, one of the two points must

be deemed correct and the other assigned to be an error or an addition of the narrator: either one has to accept that the narrative regarding the Descent of Jesus is correct but the mention of the conquest of Constantinople and its victorious army is an addition or admit that the mention of the conquest of Constantinople and its victorious army is correct but the detail regarding the Descent of Jesus is an addition. Both these interconnected events cannot be accepted simultaneously because one of them has already occurred 570 years ago.

If one of these two events is accepted and the other rejected, the entire narration becomes ambiguous because, if the prophecy of the Prophet (PBUH) has been transmitted correctly, then it cannot have the slightest change or alteration. His word is a decree of destiny, unfolding exactly as it has been pronounced by his blessed tongue. It should be noted that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, has given glad tidings of Paradise to the Muslims who would undertake the campaign against Constantinople.

To resolve this issue, our scholars, instead of preferring one of the two aforementioned possibilities or delaying judgment on the narration, have presented an interpretation. According to that interpretation, the conquest of Constantinople that took place in 1453 is not the one mentioned in the narration. According to them, the event of the conquest of Constantinople will happen again. At that time, Jesus (PBUH) will descend, and the events mentioned in the said narration will transpire.

Several logical objections arise regarding this interpretation. Firstly, considering the extraordinary historical context of Constantinople and how Muslims strived for centuries to conquer it, keeping in mind the prophecy and glad tidings of the Messenger of Allah, it is evident that if Constantinople is to be conquered again, the second conquest will not be as remarkable and extraordinary as the first.

Secondly, to adopt this interpretation, we would have to turn

back the wheel of civilization and culture; one would have to assume that the era will return when wars will be fought with lances and swords instead of gunpowder, atomic, and chemical weapons, and the structured order of modern armies, where soldiers are salaried employees of the state, will be abandoned. The old practice will return when the spoils of war were distributed among soldiers after victory.

Thirdly, it must be assumed that Istanbul (Constantinople), the capital of Turkey, will once again fall into the hands of the Romans and regain the same extraordinary religious and political significance it held in the fifteenth century CE or before.

Fourthly, adopting this interpretation implies nullifying the status of the prophecy for the aforementioned narrative or collection of narratives. This is because a prophecy is only deemed a prophecy when it informs about a specific and timed future event. If we cannot determine the number of times the Muslims will conquer Constantinople, and which conquest will be followed by Jesus's descent - it is not decided which conquest of Constantinople has been referred to in the prophecy - then how can this narration be characterized as a prophecy?

Lastly, if the meaning and reference to one event in the narration, i.e., the conquest of Constantinople, is ambiguous, then how can the meanings and references to the other events, i.e., the Descent of Jesus and the emergence of the *Dajjal*, be deemed free from ambiguity?

8. It is clear from the hadith narrations that the Descent of Jesus is one of the signs of the nearness of the Day of Judgment. Among the hadith reports that mention the signs of the approach of the Day of Judgment, some count and list these signs. Some of them mention three signs, some four, some six, and some ten signs. When all of these are combined, a total of fifteen to twenty signs emerge: the Descent of Jesus, the *Dajjal*,

Gog and Magog, smoke, the beast of the earth, the sun rising from the West, the sinking of the earth in the East, the sinking of the earth in the West, the sinking of the land in the Arabian Peninsula, a slave girl giving birth to her mistress, a fire that will emerge from Yemen and drive people out, a wind that will lift people and throw them into the sea, death, the emergence of 30 Dajjals, Christian majority ruling Rome, the competition in constructing tall buildings, etc. Among these, the most extraordinary sign is the Descent of Jesus. Compared to the other signs, it is also the most prominent, extremely supernatural, and its meaning and application are crystal clear. Therefore, it is naturally expected that if any tradition counts the signs of the nearness of the Day of Judgment, the sign of the Descent of Jesus should certainly be included. It is against human reason and experience to omit the most prominent matter and instead mention comparatively less important things. Now the reality is that in many narrations mentioning the signs of the Day of Judgment, the Descent of Jesus is not mentioned. In a narration recorded in Sahih Muslim, No. 7584, six signs of the Day of Judgment are mentioned, but the Descent of Jesus is not included. Similarly, in a narration recorded in Sahih Bukhari, No. 7121, 11 signs of the Day of Judgment are detailed, including the sign of the *Dajjal*, but the sign of the Descent of Jesus is not included. The narration in Sunan al-Tirmidhi, No. 3072, mentions three signs but does not include the Descent of Jesus. The narration in Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal, No. 23996, lists six signs of the Day of Judgment but does not include the Descent of Jesus. There are other such examples in the books of hadith.

9. The statements of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, cannot contain contradiction or inconsistency. Whatever he conveyed about religion is from Allah, and therefore it is free from errors like forgetfulness, contradictions, and inconsistencies. This is both a factual reality and an established principle of hadith sciences. Thus, when any such

situation arises within our scholarly tradition, preference is given to hadiths more aligned with the Qur'an and the Sunnah, as well as with knowledge and reason. If this preference is not possible, then an explanation is sought considering the circumstances, time, and audience. If the ambiguity persists, such hadiths are left aside, and cannot be used as a basis for argument or evidence. Some internal and external aspects in the narratives concerning the Descent of Jesus carry contradictions and inconsistencies. One significant example of this contradiction is that, according to traditions about the Descent of Jesus, Jesus (PBUH) will eliminate all Christians and Jews from the world. Consequently, the Day of Judgment will occur when only Muslims remain in the world, with no existence of Christians. However, a tradition in Sahih Muslim, No. 2898, presents a different report, stating that the Day of Judgment will occur when there is a majority of Christians in the world.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Stance Resulting from These Objections

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi believes that the issues identified above prevent the narratives about the Descent of Jesus and the related events from being accepted as defined, tangible, and observed incidents. It is not permissible to attribute such a concept to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, with its current understanding because attributing an unreliable and dubious matter to the noble person of the Prophet is contrary to religion and faith.

The question then arises, if Javed Ahmed Ghamidi does not consider the well-known concept of the Descent of Jesus attributable to the Prophet (PBUH), does he reject all the numerous narratives on this topic? The answer is negative. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi indeed accepts all the narratives on this subject; however, he interprets them in the light of the narrative attributed to Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (RA) No. 4081 in Sunan Ibn Majah. From this narrative, it is clear that the matter of the Descent of Jesus and the killing of the *Dajjal* was discussed by

Jesus (PBUH) himself in the presence of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) during the event of Prophet Muhammad's ascension (*Isra*). According to the narration, when the Prophet (PBUH) met the various prophets during the dream of the *Isra* and *Mi'raj*, the issue of the Day of Judgment was also discussed. Jesus (PBUH) informed them that he would descend before the Day of Judgment and kill the *Dajjal*.

According to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, the words *fa'anzala* and *faqtulahu* in this narration (I will descend and I will kill him) cannot be interpreted literally to accept that Jesus (PBUH) will personally descend from the heavens. There are two fundamental reasons for this:

Firstly, the Holy Qur'an rejects this interpretation.

Secondly, the specific time mentioned in the narrations for the Descent of Jesus has already passed, and the event of the Descent of Jesus has not occurred. This predetermined time was the year 857 Hijri, corresponding to 1453 AD, which passed 570 years ago. If the words about the Descent of Jesus were to be taken literally, then the *Dajjal* would have appeared at that time, and Jesus (PBUH) would have descended and killed him. However, historical evidence carries no hint to any such incident.

The only way to accept the Descent of Jesus now is to interpret it allegorically and metaphorically. The reason is that sometimes Allah shows realities to His Prophets through true dreams. Some of those dreams need interpretation as they may not always correspond directly with reality. Typically, the future circumstances and events shown in the world of dreams employ allegory and metaphor. The nature of these dreams is such that forthcoming events appear as examples. Thus, an example takes on a physical form, sometimes representing the event and sometimes narrated as the event's story. In both cases, the relationship between the event and the example is metaphorical.

Some of the interpretive realities of different types of dreams narrated in the Qur'an and hadith have been described in the Qur'an itself. Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH) saw in a dream that he was sacrificing his

son, Prophet Ismail (PBUH). Obviously, the interpretation was that he had to dedicate his son to the service of the sanctuary for Allah. Prophet Joseph (PBUH) saw the sun, the moon, and eleven stars prostrating before him in a dream. The interpretation was not that these celestial bodies would physically prostrate before him, but rather that his parents and eleven brothers would bow down to him out of respect.

Based on this reasoning, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has deemed the statement of the Descent (second coming) of Jesus to be symbolic and has identified its interpretative reality in the light of parallels from the Qur'an, the Bible, and Hadiths. Thus, his stance is that the mention of the Descent of Jesus does not refer to his personal return, but a metaphoric descent. Meaning, when Jesus (PBUH) said that he would descend, it did not mean that he would return in person but rather indicated the re-emergence of his guidance – which Christians have completely eliminated.

In his view, this metaphor is the same as the one Jesus (PBUH) mentioned concerning his judgment. As it is clear from the Gospel of Matthew that he, as a messenger, likened the establishment of his judgment to his coming and stated, 'As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man (Jesus). For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up till the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.' (Matthew 24:37-39)

It is evident that Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's position on the matter of Jesus's descent is an analogy based on the words and applications of hadith and the identified excerpt from the Gospel. That is, he has drawn a parallel between the words of hadith, 'I (Jesus, son of Mary) will descend,' with the words of the Gospel, 'the Son of Man (Jesus, son of Mary) will come,' and interpreted both in the same manner as a metaphorical coming, just as the metaphorical reality of the Gospel's prophecy is established in the pages of history. So, just as there, his

‘coming’ refers to the ‘coming of his judgment,’ similarly in the hadith, his ‘coming’ refers to the ‘coming of his guidance.’

The question then arises that if Jesus’s guidance had already arrived two thousand years ago, what is the nature of its re-emergence and why is it necessary?

The answer is that this refers to the revival and renewal of his guidance - the second appearance of his guidance. This recurrence is necessary because his original guidance has completely vanished from the thoughts and practices of his followers. Instead, they have adopted a religion which is the opposite of his original guidance. Such an extraordinary event has not occurred with the guidance of any other Messenger. There are three extraordinary aspects of this event: Firstly, the guidance of Jesus (PBUH) was deprived of the foundation of monotheism. Secondly, the *Sharia* given by him was entirely abrogated. And thirdly, it has been accepted that Jesus (PBUH) by crucifixion has paid the atonement for the sins of all humans.

In this context, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s analogy is that before the Day of Judgment, the guidance of Jesus (PBUH) will be restored in its original form. The likely scenario is that a movement for religious renewal and revival will arise among the Christians, which will terminate the religion established by Saint Paul and re-establish the original religion of Jesus (PBUH). As a result, the cross will be broken, meaning it will be utterly destroyed along with all its associated concepts. The pig will be killed, implying the law prohibiting pork consumption will be restored. Animosity between Muslims and Christians will cease, meaning when Christians return to the original guidance and abandon the doctrine of Trinity and accept monotheism, the foundation for war and argument between the Christians and Muslims will no longer exist.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s Position on the Interpretation of *Innī mutawaffika wa rāfi’uka ilayya*

In the phrase of Surah Aale Imran (3:55), *Innī mutawaffika wa rāfi’uka ilayya* (I have decided to take your soul and lift you towards

me), it is inferred that Allah Almighty had lifted Jesus (PBUH) alive, hence Jesus has not yet died and is still alive in the heavens. The argument is that in *Innī mutawaffika* (I will take your soul), the meaning of death is not to cause death but to take into custody, and in *rāfi'uka ilayya* (I will raise you towards me), the pronoun refers to the entire existence of Jesus, which includes both body and soul.

According to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, the word *tawaffā* clearly means death, and it is incorrect to interpret it as full possession. His arguments are as follows:

Firstly, the accepted convention of language is that the meaning of words and styles is determined by their known and commonly used meanings. Likewise, the decision as to whether a word is used in its literal or figurative meaning at a particular place is also made by common convention. Therefore, the meaning of *tawaffā* should not be determined by looking at its various meanings in the dictionary but by observing its use in the sentence. Whatever verdict the convention of language arrives at regarding its use will be accepted.

Secondly, it is an established fact in language that the meaning of a verb used in a sentence is not determined solely based on that verb, but rather it is determined based on the relations to which that verb is attributed. The verb *tawaffā* carries different meanings in diverse situations. The author of Aqrab al-Mawarid has described four prominent relations for it. If any object in the form of a matter accompanies it, it implies the completion of that matter. If the word 'period' is its object, it means reaching the completion of that period. If the object is 'counting people', it implies counting people thoroughly. If Allah is the subject and the object is a human, then it means the seizure of the soul, i.e., Allah has seized his soul and given him death. In the phrase *Innī mutawaffika*, the subject of *tawaffā* is the pronoun 'I' referring to Allah, and the object is 'you' (*ka*) referring to Jesus (PBUH). Thus, the verb *tawaffā* is emanating from Allah and is applied to a human, Jesus. In this case, it definitively means the seizure of the soul, which necessarily results in death. Thus, considering the rules of the Arabic language, the phrase cannot imply anything other

than the death of Jesus (PBUH). Examples from the Qur'an and hadith also testify that when *tawaffā* is used in the context of Allah and a human, it means the seizure of life. There is not a single example in the Qur'an and hadith that differs from this rule of language and expression.

As far as the interpretation of *rāfi'uka ilayya* (I will raise you to Myself) with regard to the notion of Jesus (PBUH) being taken up alive is considered, it is against the principles of language and articulation. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's stance is that neither the meaning of 'raising' can be determined independently from the composition of the sentence, nor can the interpretation of the following and preceding parts be based on that isolated meaning. The meanings of the two parts *Rāfi'uka ilayya wa mutahhiruka mina alladhina kafarū* will be determined based on their coordination with *Innī mutawaffika*. Hence, if the meaning of *tawaffā* definitively is the seizure of the soul, meaning death, there is no room to extract such a meaning from the subsequent words that contradict or differ from death. On this basis, the esteemed scholar has applied the pronoun of 'raising you' to the body of Jesus (PBUH), from which the soul was seized. According to him, this particular treatment with Jesus (PBUH) was done in order to protect his pure body from any tampering or desecration.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Interpretation of *layu'minanna bihī qabla mawtibī*

In the interpretation of *layu'minanna bihī qabla mawtibī* most scholars and commentators believe that the words of Surah An-Nisa, verse 159, *wa in min abli al-kitābi illā layu'minanna bihī qabla mawtibī wa yawma al-qiyāmati yakūnu 'alayhim shahīdan* refer to Jesus (PBUH) and mean that 'there will be none from the People of the Book who will not believe in him (Jesus) before his death and on the Day of Resurrection, he (Jesus) will be a witness against them.' The meaning is that every person from the People of the Book will necessarily believe in Jesus (PBUH) before his death. This interpretation is used to affirm the life of Jesus, and thus, according to some scholars, this verse corroborates the narrations about the second

coming of Jesus. When the two prospects are combined, the idea of Jesus being alive and his descent is deemed correct.

However, according to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, Surah An-Nisa was revealed after the Hijra, at a time when a Muslim state had been established in Medina and the Prophet Muhammad was completing his argument of religion over the People of the Book and purifying the Muslims. This surah contains 176 verses, but its subject matter is completed at verse 126. From there on till the end, there is an appendix, which comments on the questions and objections of the addressees. Among these is the demand of the People of the Book included in verse 153, stated as *Yas'aluka ablu al-kitab an tunazzila 'alayhim kitāban mina as-samāi* meaning, 'The People of the Book are demanding from you (Prophet Muhammad) to bring down a book other than the Qur'an directly from the heavens.' Before addressing this demand, Allah in a very stern tone, listed the gravest crimes of the Jews, then while responding to the demand, He decreed *wa in min ahli al-kitābi illā layu'minanna bihī qabla mawtibī wa yawma al-qiyāmati yakūnu 'alayhim shahīdan* meaning, 'Every one of them is bound to believe in it (the Qur'an) before his own death, and on the Day of Resurrection, it (the Qur'an) will be a witness against them.' Ghamidi sees the referent of *layu'minanna bihī* as the Holy Qur'an and the pronoun in *qabla mawtibī* as every individual from the People of the Book who was a direct addressee of the Prophet. He considers this the only acceptable interpretation given the theme of the discourse, the arrangement of sentences, and the context of the verse. In his view, the context of the discourse rejects the interpretation of the scholars. However, even if one were to accept the scholar's interpretation for the sake of argument, there is no defined way to apply or realize it. As a result, it leads to a situation of impossibility, and the contents of the verse no longer remain relevant or plausible.



Appendix

Scholars' Views Opposing the Second Coming of Jesus

Some modern scholars do not believe in the second coming of Jesus. They do not consider the stance of Jesus (PBUH) being taken alive to the heavens and then being kept alive thereafter as correct. In this regard, they interpret the relevant Qur'anic verses in various ways and deem the general interpretations contrary to language conventions. As far as hadiths are concerned, they do not accept the attribution of these narrations to Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. They call these hadiths fabrications by people and consider them the result of external ideas.

Representative Opinions of These Scholars

The well-known Hanafi scholar Maulana Mahmood Hassan believed in the death of Jesus. According to him, there is no clear foundation in the Holy Qur'an for the concept of the second coming of Jesus. Regarding the hadiths about the second coming of Jesus, he considers them to be based on Jewish sources. He writes:

This [belief] is derived from the statements of the Jews and the Sabians, which later became popular among Muslims. After the martyrdom of Uthman (RA), the Ansar of Banu Hashim—who were among the Sabians—spread this idea, and it was further propagated by the Jews who were among the supporters of Ali (RA). They did so not out of love for Islam or Ali, but due to their enmity towards Islam and the Muslims.

... these individuals accepted such narratives and were influenced by them. It is evident that the ultimate source and reference for all branches of Islamic knowledge is the Noble Qur'an. However, there is no verse in the Qur'an that explicitly states that Jesus (PBUH) has not passed away, that he is alive, or

that he will descend again—apart from certain inferred arguments and interpretations. These inferred arguments and interpretations, however, are not free from doubt or ambiguity.

How, then, can something so uncertain be used as the foundation for Islamic beliefs? (Translation of Tafsir Ilham al-Rahman, Part 2, Page 49, cited in Aqidah Khatm-e-Nubuwwat aur Nuzul-e-Masih by Qamar Usmani, Pages 53–54)

Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi, in his commentary *Ilham al-Rahman*, explained under verse 55 of Surah Aale Imran that the meaning of *Innī mutawaffika* is to give death. He writes:

The Divine command in verse 55 of Surah Aale Imran in the Glorious Qur'an that reads: At that time when God said: Jesus, I have decided to give you death and lift you up to Myself and I shall purify you from these who have disbelieved in you¹²², Innī mutawaffika, means that I will cause you to die. As for the common people's notion that Jesus is alive, it is actually a Jewish and Sabian concept that was spread among Muslims after the martyrdom of Uthman (RA) by Iranians and Jews who joined the followers of Ali (RA). The action of the Iranians and Jews was motivated by their hatred towards Islam and Muslims, not because of their love for Ali (RA). They did not want Muslims to continue paying attention to this great and noble verse of the Qur'an in which Allah Almighty has proclaimed that He sent the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) for the express purpose of making Islam prevail over all other religions¹²³. They did not wish for Muslims to act on this verse and spread across the entire globe, causing the extinction of Magian, Jewish, and all other non-Islamic religions. Therefore, they introduced the concept of the second coming of Jesus, suggesting that the task of making Islam dominate the whole world will actually be accomplished by Jesus upon his return. So, how can it be correct to work against

¹²² Surah Al Imran 3:55

¹²³ Surah As-Saff 61:9

this decreed fate and attempt to make Islam dominate the world today itself? The truth is that only those who are experts in the field of sociology and are aware of its depths can truly comprehend the meaning and purpose of this great and noble verse. Those who believe in the life and return of Jesus are unable to understand the meaning of this verse. It's undeniable that the primary source of all Islamic beliefs is the Glorious Qur'an. It does not contain any explicit verses regarding the second coming of Jesus. Whatever people present in this regard are their interpretations, explanations, and clarifications. In such a scenario, how can affirming the belief in the life and return of Jesus as an article of faith and making it the criterion of disbelief and belief be considered correct?

The renowned scholar from Egypt, Allama Mahmood Shaltout, has criticized the narratives related to the second coming of Jesus (PBUH) as confused and contradictory. He comments:

These confused narratives vary so greatly in their words and meanings that reconciling them is not possible. This has been made explicit by the scholars of hadith themselves. Moreover, these are the narratives of Wabb ibn Munabbih and Ka'b al-Ahbar, who were among the People of the Book and had converted to Islam. The status of these narrators in the eyes of the scholars of criticism and appraisal is not hidden from anyone. Another evidence cited by the exegetes is the tradition narrated by Abu Huraira (RA) in which he conveys the news of the descent of Jesus, peace be upon him. Even if this hadith is assumed as authentic, it still remains a solitary report, and there is consensus among the scholars of the Ummah that neither a belief can be established nor can one rightly place reliance on such a solitary report regarding matters of the unseen. (Aqidah Khatm-e-Nabuwwat aur Nazool-e-Masih, Qamar Usmani, pp. 13-15)

The well-known hadith scholar Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Azhar of

Meerut (1923-2005)¹²⁴ categorically rejects the narratives about the emergence of the *Dajjal* and the second coming of Jesus. According to him, these narratives are against the concept of the Finality of Prophethood and do not conform to the accepted standards of hadith scholarship. In his work *Ahadith-e-Dajjal ka Tehqeeqi Mutala* (Research Study of the hadiths of Dajjal)¹²⁵, he introduces the subject by writing:

During the era of the Successors (Tabi'īn) and their followers (Atba'-e-Tabi'īn), numerous fabricated narrations and fictional accounts by deceitful and false narrators of reports and hadith flooded the Muslim community with the aim of corrupting their beliefs and practices. Among these were the enemies of truth, the Rawafid, as well as some newly converted People of the Book who had become Muslims hypocritically. There were also those among the masses who sought fame and honor, desiring to be regarded as Imams and great scholars.

The established rulings of Shariah that are proven through mutawatir evidence remained safe from the tampering of these narrators. Similarly, the verbal distortions they attempted to introduce into the Qur'an did not succeed. However, their interpretive distortions gained significant traction through the influence of certain hadith scholars. These wicked-hearted narrators spared no effort in fabricating lies and falsely attributing them to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and the noble Companions regarding matters such as Awaited Mahdi, Ibn-e-Sayyad, the emergence of the Dajjal, and the descent of Jesus.

This book scrutinizes every hadith related to Dajjal and the

¹²⁴ Shabbir Ahmad Azhar is a great scholar of hadith, a follower of Deobandi school of thought, and the interpreter of Muwatta Imam Malik and Musnad Ahmad bin Hambal.

¹²⁵ This book contains a detailed critical analysis of all the traditions about Dajjal and descent of Jesus. All of them have been declared mawdū (fabricated).

second coming of Jesus according to the established principles and criteria of traditional (riwayah) and rational (dirayah) analysis, so that people do not fall into and those who are already ensnared can free themselves from the misconception that among the signs of the Day of Judgment is the emergence of the one-eyed Dajjal. He will claim divinity, and in the end, Jesus, son of Mary, will descend from the heavens to slay him. Thereafter, he will rule justly in accordance with the Shariah of Muhammad for years before passing away and being buried.

All these notions are merely fanciful and nonsensical. The truth is that Muhammad (PBUH) is the Seal of the Prophets. He is Allah's final Prophet, and no prophet is to come after him until the Day of Judgment, neither originally nor as a representative. (p. 135)

According to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the concept of the second coming of Jesus could only be accepted if it were explicitly mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. Since no such mention exists in the Qur'an, he does not acknowledge it. He writes in one of his letters:

The matter of the second coming of Jesus is an extremely important issue, and had the salvation and felicity of Muslims at any time been contingent upon it, it would have been essential for the Qur'an to state it clearly, just as clearly as it has articulated all significant religious and doctrinal issues. However, it is evident that the Qur'an contains no such explicit statement, so there is no reason for us to be compelled to believe in it. Our belief is that no Messianic figure, neither actual nor metaphoric, is to come. With the arrival of the Qur'an, the religion has been perfected. If you are a seeker of truth, do not get involved in these disputes, nor should you ask questions concerning these superstitions. What we seek is salvation, and if the Qur'an is sufficient for salvation, then those beliefs that the Qur'an has conveyed to us are sufficient. Why should we involve ourselves in anything more? (Published in the daily newspaper Zamindar, Lahore, June 26, 1936)

Maulana Azad characterized the notion of the second coming of Jesus as a Christian belief that has appeared in our books, expressing disbelief in its origin:

It's astonishing that your unease regarding the second coming of Jesus persists. I had expressed my opinion earlier, but I had referred to the book for detailed reasons and arguments; explaining them without details is not possible. Unquestionably, it has to be admitted that this belief, in its essence, is entirely a Christian one and has appeared in an Islamic form, but how it has emerged is a matter for debate. (Nuqoosh Azad compiled by Ghulam Rasool Mehr, Letter 47, p. 99, Publisher: Kitab Manzil, Lahore)

Allama Iqbal considered this concept to be the result of a foreign conspiracy and did not accept the traditions concerning it. In a letter, he stated:

In my opinion, the hadiths related to Mahdi, Messianism, and the concept of renewal (Mujaddidiyat) are the result of Iranian and foreign imaginations. They have no connection with the Arab ethos or the true spirit of the Qur'an. (Kulliyat Makatib-e-Iqbal, Vol. 3, January 1929-December 1934, compiled by Syed Muzaffar Husain Burney, Publisher: Urdu Academy Delhi, Published: 1993)

The well-known Deobandi scholar Maulana Zafar Ahmad Usmani's son, Qamar Ahmad Usmani, states in his book *Aqidah Khatm-e-Nubuwwat aur Nazool-e-Masih* that the beliefs in the Finality of Prophethood and the life of Jesus are contradictory. He notes that many renowned scholars accepted the death of Jesus. He writes:

Abdullah ibn Abbas (RA) believed in the death of Jesus (PBUH) and among the early scholars, Imam Ibn Hazm and Imam Ibn Taymiyyah have declared the issue of the second coming of Jesus to be a matter of dispute. (Refer to: 'Maratib al-Ijma' by Ibn Hazm and 'Naqd Maratib al-Ijma' by Imam Ibn Taymiyyah.) In our times, scholars and intellectuals such as

Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Allama Tamanna Imadi Phulwarwi, Allama Maulana Musa Jarullah, Sheikh Noor Muhammad Murshid Al-Makki, Allama Shah Muhammad Jafar Nadwi, Allama Iqbal, Sheikh Mahmood Shaltout of Egypt, Allama Syed Rashid Raza of Egypt, and Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi do not acknowledge the authenticity of the beliefs in the second coming of Jesus and the appearance of Mahdi. (pp. 6-7)

He further adds:

With the belief in the Finality of Prophethood in place, the conceptions of the life and second coming of Jesus have always been troubling to the heart and mind as both notions cannot coexist. If the doctrine of the Finality of Prophethood is true, then there is no justification for the arrival of any prophet or for Islam to be granted true dominance by such a coming. (pp. 8-9)



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