

DEATH OF PROPHET JESUS (AS)

–30 verses From H.Q.

The following is an excerpt from the book *Izala-e Auham*

by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad,

Mujaddid of the fourteenth century (AH), *Mahdi*, and Promised Messiah in which he gives 30 verses from the Holy Qur'an establishing the death of Prophet Jesus (as).



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Translated by

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1st verse: *“When Allah said: O Jesus, I will cause thee to die and exalt thee in My presence and clear thee of those who disbelieve and make those who follow thee above those who disbelieve to the day of Resurrection. Then to Me is your return, so I shall decide between you concerning that wherein you differ”* (3:55).

2nd verse: *“And if you die or you are slain, to Allah you are gathered”* (3:158).

That is, Prophet Jesus (*as*) was not killed, neither did he die on the Cross nor did he suffer an accused death as both the Jews and the Christians think. On the contrary, Allah, Most High, exalted him to Himself with honour and dignity. We must understand here that *rafa‘a* means to die an honourable death as is substantiated in another verse of the Holy Qur’an which says, *“And We raised him (rafa‘ahu) to an elevated state”* (19:57). This verse relates to the Prophet Idris (*as*) and there is no doubt that it means that Allah caused him to die and then elevated him to an honourable position, for if he had ascended to heaven without first experiencing death, then as man cannot escape death, we will be forced to put two interpretations to that verse: either that he will die at some future time in heaven, or that he will return to earth once again and then die. However, both these eventualities are forbidden for the Holy Qur’an says clearly that this earthly body of ours is returned to earth after death and becomes dust again and from dust we shall rise again. *“And there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time. He said: Therein*

shall you live, therein shall you die, and therefrom shall you be raised” (7:24-25).

As regards Prophet Idris’ return to earth again from heaven, we find no authority for such a belief either in the Holy Qur’an or the *Hadith*.

This proves conclusively that here *rafa‘a* means to die. However, it does not signify an ordinary death but an honourable one which those close to Allah experience for their souls are transported after death to the highest places (*‘illiyin*) – Holy Qur’an: 83:19 – and as the Holy Qur’an says elsewhere: *“In the seat of truth, with a most powerful King” (54:55).*

The third verse which proves beyond the shadow of a doubt the death of Prophet Jesus (*as*) is the following: *“And when Allah will say: O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah? He will say: Glory be to Thee! it was not for me to say what I had no right to (say). If I had said it, Thou wouldst indeed have known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. Surely Thou art the great Knower of the unseen. I said to them naught save as Thou didst command me: Serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord; and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die (tawaffaitani)...” (5:116-117).*

I have proven before that wherever the word *tawaffa* has been used in the Holy Qur’an it means to take away the soul and to leave the body lifeless, as Allah, Most High, says in the following verses:

1. *“Say: The angel of death, who is given charge of you,*

- will cause you to die (yatawaffakum), then to your Lord you will be returned” (32:11).*
2. ... *“but I serve Allah, Who causes you to die (yatawaffakum)” (10:104).*
 3. ... *“until death takes them away (hatta yatawaffahunnal mautu)” (4:15).*
 4. ... *“until Our messengers come to them causing them to die (yatawaffahum)” (7:37).*
 5. ... *“Our messengers cause him to die (tawaffathu rusulna)” (6:61).*

In this regard, there are indeed twenty-three places in the Holy Qur’an where the word *tawaffa* is used with the unambiguous meaning of death or seizure of the soul. Sad to say, though, that many learned, religious leaders (*‘ulama*), either through heresy or distortion of the truth, have taken *taqwaffaitani* (You caused me to die) to mean *rafa‘tani* (You took me up bodily) without the slightest thought that not only is this meaning not found in dictionaries but is also contrary to the Holy Qur’an itself. Thus, such is the heresy that the special meanings that the Holy Qur’an has set down for its words from beginning to end have been altered without any justification whatsoever.

Furthermore, not only in the Holy Qur’an but wherever the word *tawaffa* has been mentioned in the sayings of the Holy Prophet (*sas*) it always carries the significance of death or taking away of the soul. Thus, whenever I have perused the six authentic *Hadith (Sahih Sittah)* I have observed that whenever our Holy Prophet (*sas*) or his companions have used this word (*tawaffa*) it has always been restricted to the above meanings and I can claim, without fear of contradiction, that nowhere in the authentic sayings of the Holy Prophet (*sas*) is the word used except in the meanings given above.

I am very much aware that in Islam this word has been employed in a figurative sense to refer to the seizure of the soul in order to prove the everlasting nature of the soul. It is unfortunate that even though some ‘*ulama* (religious leaders) know that the real meaning of *tawaffa* is to die, they yet put forward another interpretation to the following verse – “*but when You caused me to die* (tawaffaitani)” – claiming that this death will take place after the second advent of the Prophet Jesus (*as*). What is amazing is that they evince not the slightest feeling of shame in proffering such a disgraceful interpretation. They do not bother to consider that before this statement of Prophet Jesus (*as*) – (“*but when You caused me to die*”) – the verse states: “*When* (*idh*) *Allah* will say (*qala*): *O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah? He will say: Glory be to Thee! it was not for me to say what I had no right to (say). If I had said it, Thou wouldst indeed have known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. Surely Thou art the great Knower of the unseen. I said to them naught save as Thou didst command me: Serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord; and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die Thou wast the Watcher over them. And Thou art Witness of all things*” (5:116-117).

It is obvious that *qala* (he said) is the past tense of the verb and before this there is the particle *idh* (when) which further emphasises the fact that reference is made to the past. From this, we can deduce that this matter obviously pertains to the time of a former descent and not to a future one. So, too, the reply of Prophet Jesus (*as*) – “*but when You caused me to die*” – is the past tense as well as several other matters which precede this one in the Holy Qur’an and are described in the same way and these also support the point as, for example,

the following verse: “*And when thy Lord said to the angles: I am going to place a ruler on the earth ...*” (2:30).

Should we construe this to mean that Allah, Most High, will be asking the angels such a question (that follows this announcement) at some future time? Moreover, the Holy Qur’an and the *Hadith* are replete with corroborative testimony proving that after death there will be questioning of the souls even before the day of Resurrection.

All Jews and Christians believe in the death of Jesus

The fourth verse that proves the death of Prophet Jesus (*as*) is: “*And there is none of the People of the Book but will believe in this before his death; and on the day of Resurrection he will be a witness against them*” (4:159).

The meaning is not, as some think, that when the Messiah comes back to earth he will find all the Christians and Jews already believing in him, for the Holy Qur’an tells us (of Prophet Jesus): “*... and (I will make) those who follow thee above those who disbelieve (in thee) to the day of Resurrection*” (3:54).

What it means is that both the Jews and the Christians have made the death of Prophet Jesus (*as*) the main tenet of their religion. For example, if the Jews should admit that he did not die on the cross, then they will have, of necessity, to agree that he was a true servant of God and that thought is anathema to them. On the other hand, if the Christians should disavow belief in his death on the cross, then the whole tenuous edifice of their religion (death, resurrection, return) would crumble to pieces. So, as the Holy Qur’an says, both parties, for

different reasons, are forced to uphold the belief in his supposed death on the cross.

Prophet Jesus and Lady Mary ate food as human beings do

The fifth verse is: *“The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a messenger; messengers before him had indeed passed away. And his mother was a truthful woman. They both used to eat food. See how We make the messages clear to them! then behold, how they are turned away!”* (5:75).

This verse conclusively and categorically establishes the death of Prophet Jesus (*as*) for it elucidates the fact that the prophet and his mother, Mary, do not now eat food. Indeed, there was a time when they both used to do so for the past tense of the verb (*kaanaa*) tells us that there was a time when they used to eat food. Now, everyone can understand that Lady Mary has ceased to eat because she has died. However, as the verb is used in the dual form (*kaanaa*), Prophet Jesus (*as*) is also included in it and both of them are subject to the same law. As a result, we are forced to accept the fact that Lady Mary as well as Prophet Jesus (*as*) also died, for the verse under discussion in no way says that Lady Mary ceased eating because of death and that Prophet Jesus (*as*) did so for another reason. Furthermore, when we read this verse (5:75) in conjunction with this other verse of the Holy Qur’an: *“Nor did We give them bodies not eating food, nor did they abide (forever)”* (21:8), we can draw a definite and irrefutable conclusion that Prophet Jesus (*as*) certainly died, for the former verse (5:75) proves beyond the shadow of doubt that now neither Lady Mary nor Prophet Jesus (*as*) is eating food whilst this one (21:8) states that once this earthly body is alive it has

to eat. From this, we can conclusively deduce that Prophet Jesus (*as*) is not alive.

Every human body needs sustenance to live

The sixth verse states: “*And We sent not before thee any but men to whom We sent revelation; so ask the followers of the Reminder if you know not. Nor did We give them bodies not eating food, nor did they abide*” (21:7-8).

This reference was already explained above with the first one (5:75) and if there is one categorical verse sufficient enough to confirm the death of Prophet Jesus (*as*), it is this one, for since it is the way of Allah, Most High, that no earthly body can exist without food, how can the Prophet Jesus (*as*) still be alive without physical sustenance? Further, Allah, Most High, clearly states: “*That was the way of Allah concerning those who have gone before; and thou wilt find no change in the way of Allah.*” (33:62).

If someone should argue that the Companions of the Cave are still alive without food, then I affirm that their life is not like that of this world as the *hadith* from *Muslim* limiting a person’s life to one hundred years in this world has proven their physical death. Of course, we believe the Companions of the Cave are also alive like the martyrs and their life, too, is a complete one, but they have received deliverance from the impure and imperfect existence of this world. For what is the life of this world and what is its essence?

An ignorant person may put a high value on it and is thus continually be dragged into all kinds of abominable behaviour mentioned in the Holy Qur’an. He cares not that the life of

this world is a low level of existence from the despicable clutches of which the Holy Prophet (*sas*) himself, the most pre-eminent of the prophets, used to seek refuge and which is attended by extremely loathsome and filthy associations. If man should escape this base worldly life and gain a better one without contravening the way of the Almighty, then what can be more beautiful than that?

All prophets passed away

The seventh verse is: “*And Muhammad is but a messenger — messengers have already passed away before him. If then he dies or is killed, will you turn back upon your heels? And he who turns back upon his heels will do no harm at all to Allah. And Allah will reward the grateful*” (3:143).

The sum and substance of this verse is that if it was essential for a prophet to remain alive forever, then the proponents of such a view should name from those who have gone just one prophet who is still alive at the present time. It is quite evident that if Prophet Jesus (*as*) is still alive, then it will disprove the evidence that is put forward in this verse.

All human beings are mortals

The eighth verse is: “*And We granted abiding forever to no mortal before thee. If thou diest, will they abide?*” (21:34).

The aim of this verse is to establish the fact that all people are subject to the law of Allah, Most High, and that no one can escape death now or in the future. According to the dictionaries, one significance of the word *khulud* is to remain in the same condition (without deterioration), for change is the precursor of death and decay. Thus, a negation of *khulud*

proves that under the influence of time, every person is moving towards old age and eventually death and this is a clear testimony that Prophet Jesus (*as*) suffered the ravages of time and old age and finally succumbed to death.

All human beings are bound to die and are accountable to Allah

The ninth verse says: *“Those are a people that have passed away; for them is what they earned and for you what you earn; and you will not be asked of what they did”* (2:134).

The tenth verse reads: *“And He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and He has enjoined on me prayer and poor-rate so long as I live: And to be kind to my mother; and He has not made me insolent, unblessed”* (19:31, 32).

Of Prophet John (*as*) the same words are also used in verse 15 of this chapter. It is clear from this, also, that Prophet Jesus (*as*) was taught to pray according to the Gospels and so would be praying in heaven like the Christians. However, as he alone is alive and not Prophet John (*as*), he will be praying whilst Prophet John (*as*) will not be doing so, for he will just be lying there as he is dead. However, when Prophet Jesus (*as*) returns to earth he will have to go against his former way of praying (like the Christians) and become a follower of Islam and so perform his prayer (*salah*) as Muslims do.

Further, Allah laid down the obligation of *zakah* (compulsory charity) on him but there is no means of earning it in heaven for there is no toil nor labour there, and even so, there is no one to whom to distribute it, whilst as for *salah* (prayer), he has no group with whom to pray – a serious drawback – for

prayer is not complete until it is read in congregation. In addition, verse 32 says that he was also enjoined to be kind to his mother as long as he lived but then He separated her from him, unless they believe that she, too, is alive with him in Heaven. So all these obligations of the *Shari'ah* (Law) enjoined on him by the Gospels either stand in abeyance in Paradise or have been falsely ascribed to him or in the final analysis he is no longer alive.

To continue, the Holy Qur'an says that no human can exist without eating, and if he eats and drinks, he will be subject to calls of nature and will also be in need of all human necessities like clothing, utensils and so on. If it is insisted that his body will be different and not in need of human essentials, then can our religious leaders (*maulvis*) nimbly slip around the following verse: "*Nor did We give them (the prophets) bodies not eating food nor did they abide (forever)*" (21:8).

These and a host of other problems arise to place the proponents of this erroneous view in an inextricable quandary.

Gradual development, decay and death of all human beings

The Eleventh Verse: "*And peace on me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I am raised to life*" (19:33).

This verse highlights the momentous events of Prophet Jesus' life and only three things are mentioned: his birth, death, and resurrection. However, if his physical ascension to heaven (*raf'a*) and his second advent are authentic occurrences, then mention of them should have been made. Or, may Allah forbid, is it that his time and place of descent are not deserving of the

peace of Allah, Most High? Thus, the fact that Allah, Most High, has ignored mention of the supposed physical ascension and second coming of Prophet Jesus (*as*) – a belief that has found root in the hearts of Muslims – is adequate testimony that such a conviction is false and contrary to facts. On the other hand, that elevation (*rafa‘*) to the next life (*yauma amootu* – the day I die) and his alleged descent from the heavens at a later date is completely spurious.

The Twelfth Verse: *“And of you is he who is caused to die, and of you is he who is brought back to the worst part of life, so that after knowledge he knows nothing”* (22:5).

In this verse, Allah, Most High, says His way operates in two ways in relation to human beings: some die early in life, whilst others complete a full span of life until they reach the worst part of existence so much so that after knowledge they have nothing and become like mere infants. This, too, serves as proof of Prophet Jesus’ death, for it establishes the fact that if man is blessed with a very long life, then day by day he undergoes deterioration until he regresses to the stage of childhood after which death inevitably follows.

The Thirteenth Verse: *“But the devil made them slip from it, and caused them to depart from the state in which they were. And We said: Go forth, some of you are the enemies of others. And there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time”* (2:36).

In this verse, ascension to heaven with a physical body is debarred, for here the conjunction *lakin* (but) which lends special signification to the statement clearly proves the point

that an earthly body can never go to heaven for it originates from the earth, lives on earth, and will be returned to the earth.

The Fourteenth Verse: *“And whomsoever We cause to live long, We reduce to an abject state in creation. Do they not understand?”* (36:68).

In other words, man’s strength and powers begin to forsake him – his senses suffer deterioration and his intellect declines. If we were to assume that Prophet Jesus (*as*) is still alive in his physical body, then we will have to accept the reality that after a long period his human capacities will degenerate to such an extent as will necessitate death. Thus, we will definitely have to conclude that he must have died a long time ago.

The Fifteenth Verse: *“Allah is He Who created you from a state of weakness, then He gave strength after weakness, then ordained weakness and hoary hair after strength. He creates what He pleases, and He is the Knowing, the Powerful”* (30:54), also provides clear evidence that no human being is exempt from this Divine law and that every creation is subject to the decree that time takes a toll on it to the point where it is made useless and decrepit and finally dies.

The Sixteenth Verse: *“The likeness of this world’s life is only as water which We send down from the clouds, then the herbage of the earth, of which men and cattle eat, grows luxuriantly thereby; until when the earth puts on its golden raiment and it becomes adorned, and its people think that they are masters of it, Our command comes to it, by night or by day, so We render it as reaped seed-produce, as though it*

had not flourished yesterday. Thus do We make clear the messages for a people who reflect” (10:24). It discloses to us that man’s creation resembles that of land and its vegetation: first, it advances towards maturity, then it begins to decline. Is the Messiah, son of Mary, immune from this universal Divine law?

The Seventeenth Verse: *“And certainly We create man of an extract of clay, Then We make him a small life-germ in a firm resting-place, then We make the life-germ a clot, then We make the clot a lump of flesh, then We make (in) the lump of flesh bones, then We clothe the bones with flesh, then We cause it to grow into another creation. So blessed be Allah, the Best of creators! Then after that you certainly die” (23:12-15).*

That is, Allah, Most High, first causes us to advance step by step to the fullness of life after which decay sets in until death overtakes us. In other words, that is the way the Creator has ordained for all of us and no human is excluded from it. How is it that that an exception to the all-encompassing law has been made in the case of Prophet Jesus (*as*)?

The Eighteenth Verse: *“Seest thou not that Allah sends down water from the clouds, then makes it go down into the earth in springs, then brings forth therewith herbage of various hues; then it withers so that thou seest it turn yellow, then He makes it chaff? Surely there is a reminder in this for men of understanding” (39:21). It also draws a visible analogy between man and the earth’s vegetation which fulfils its existence by slow degrees until it finally dies.*

All prophets were human beings, they lived and died as

human beings

The Nineteenth Verse: *“And We did not send before thee any messengers but they surely ate food and went about in the markets. And We make some of you a trial for others. Will you bear patiently? And thy Lord is ever Seeing” (25:20).*

I have already produced ample Qur’anic evidence to prove that one of the essential ingredients of earthly existence is food. So the fact that all the prophets no longer eat food proves that they are all dead and the Messiah is, of course, included among them – a reality which the Holy Qur’an has greatly emphasised.

The Twentieth Verse: *“And those whom they call on besides Allah created naught, while they are themselves created. Dead (are they), not living. And they know not when they will be raised” (16:20-21).*

See how clearly these verses establish the death of Prophet Jesus (*as*) as well as of all those human beings whom the Jews and the Christians and several Arab sects consider as their gods and to whom they make petition (*du‘a*). If Muslims should still cling to the belief that Prophet Jesus (*as*) is alive, why do they not come out in the open and proclaim that they have a doubt in their belief in the Qur’anic verses? Is it the practice of people of devout faith to listen to the verses of the Holy Qur’an and yet fail to stand firm to them?

No prophet after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sas*)

The Twenty-first Verse *“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets. And Allah is ever Knower of all things” (33:40).*

This verse, too, provides conclusive evidence that after our Holy Prophet (*sas*) no prophet will come into the world. It is thus confirmed with perfect clarity that the Messiah, son of Mary, cannot return to earth as a prophet for the simple reason that he was a prophet, and embedded in the nature and essence of a messenger is the fact that he has to receive divine knowledge through the agency of Angel Gabriel. However, it has been proven that now prophetic revelation to a messenger has been cut off even unto the day of Resurrection. Thus, we have no choice but to accept that the Messiah, son of Mary, will never return to earth and this necessarily leads to the conclusion that he has died. To rebut this with the view that he will return to life after death is of no value, for, even if he comes alive again, the fact that he is a messenger, and this rank is intricably bound up with him, precludes a second advent – except of course, as I have been explaining all along, that the coming alive of the Messiah after death is not like what the people commonly believe, but instead it is in accordance with how the martyrs receive a new life through which they attain higher grades of perfection and closeness to Allah, Most High. The Holy Qur'an speaks of this kind of life in several places, as, for example, the words of the Prophet Abraham (*as*) in 26:81: “*And Who will cause me to die, then give me life.*”

This death and life is not restricted merely to physical death and life, but from this death and life there are signs which the spiritual pilgrim experiences as he travels along the diverse stations and stages of his spiritual journey. For example, his innate love for created things dies and a personal love for the real Creator is born in him; again, his natural love for his near and dear ones suffers a demise and the natural love for his

true Friend on high comes alive; further, inherent love for his own self dies and is replaced by a deep, personal love for his true Beloved. In this way, he tastes many deaths and enjoys many lives until he reaches the stage of perfect life. Thus, that perfect life of bliss which he receives after leaving this base and contemptible world is not a physical one but is one of surpassing honour and glory, as Allah, Most High, says: “*And the home of the Hereafter, that surely is the life, did they but know*” (29:64).

Examine the scriptures of “The People of the Book”

The Twenty-second Verse: “*And We sent not before thee any but men to whom We sent revelation — so ask the followers of the Reminder if you know not—*” (16:43).

It invites Muslims to examine the writings of the People of the Book. That is, if Muslims are ignorant of certain matters which have arisen among themselves, they should turn to the People of the Book and consult their scriptures so that the truth may be disclosed to them. So, according to the command of this verse, I turned to the books of the People of the Book, that is, the Jews and the Christians, in order to ascertain whether that same prophet came back or whether there was some other meaning to those passages in their scriptures. I then discovered that there was a case similar to the one under discussion in which the Messiah, Prophet Jesus (*as*), son of Mary, himself gave a clear verdict which is in complete agreement with mine. For further reference, Muslims can read these two books of the Bible – *Kings* and *Malachi* – and read for themselves the explanation given in the Gospel by Prophet Jesus (*as*) about the return of Prophet Elias (*as*) and his descent from the heavens.

The Jews held the belief, like Muslims of Prophet Jesus (*as*), that Prophet Elias (*as*) was taken up alive to heaven and would one day return in person to restore their former glory. Prophet Jesus (*as*) explained that Prophet Elias (*as*) had indeed come but in the person of Prophet John (*as*) who was his spiritual likeness (just as Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement has claimed that he was the spiritual counterpart of the first Messiah, Prophet Jesus). The following are the words of Prophet Jesus (*as*): “For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come” (Matthew 11: 13-14).

Spiritual elevation only after physical death

The Twenty-third Verse: “*O soul that art at rest, Return to thy Lord, well-pleased, well-pleasing, so enter among My servants, And enter My Garden!*” (89:27-30).

It is crystal clear from this verse that unless a person has experienced death he cannot enter into the company of those who have departed this earthly sojourn. Moreover, a detailed *hadith* about the *Mi‘raj* (Ascension) in the *Sahih al-Bukhari* verifies the fact that the Messiah, son of Mary, was present among the group of former prophets. Therefore, in the face of this decisive and categorical evidence, we have no choice but to accept the Messiah, son of Mary, as dead. We believe in the Holy Qur’an and reject everything that contradicts it. Indeed, Muslims would do well to heed the exhortation of the Holy Book given in the following verses:

1. “*Follow what has been revealed to you from your Lord and follow not besides Him any guardians; little do you mind!*” (7:3).

2. *“O man, there has come to you indeed an admonition from your Lord and a healing for what is in the breasts; and a guidance and a mercy for the believers” (10:57).*
3. *“And (know) that this is My path, the right one, so follow it, and follow not (other) ways, for they will lead you away from His way” (6:154).*

Divine Law of creation and consequential death ordained

The Twenty-fourth Verse: *“Allah is He Who created you, then He sustains you, then He causes you to die, then brings you to life. Is there any of your associate-gods who does aught of it? Glory be to Him, and exalted be He above what they associate (with Him)!” (30:40).*

In this verse, Allah, Most High, discloses His natural law stating that there are only four outstanding events in the life of man: first, there is his birth, then he receives his share of physical and spiritual nourishment for his upbringing and the consummation of this life, then death comes to him, after which he is raised to life again. It is evident from these verses that there is no word indicating an exception here from this general rule which can lead us to infer that the incidents of the Messiah’s life are specially excluded despite the fact from beginning to end it is the style and method of the Holy Qur’an that when it mentions a particular incident, and if a human being does not fall under the ambit of that circumstance, it immediately excludes him from the universal law, or failing that, it explains the special circumstances of his case.

The Twenty-fifth Verse: *“Everyone on it passes away — and there endures forever the person of thy Lord, the Lord of glory and honour” (55:26-27).*

In other words, everything that is present on earth and comes out of it is subject to destruction. That is, with every breath it travels towards decay. The meaning is that every earthly body follows a path leading towards non-existence – a path, moreover, that is inexorable. This is the impetus that pushes a person from childhood to youth and adulthood, thence to old age, and finally to the grave, and no one is exempt from this law of nature.

Allah, Most High, uses the present participle *faanin* instead of the present tense *yafni* to make us comprehend that destruction (*fana*) is not something that will take place once sometime in the future, but instead the chain of decay and decomposition is a continuous one. Nevertheless, our religious scholars (*maulvis*) continue to entertain the belief that the Messiah, son of Mary, despite having a physical body which, according to this patent and irrefutable evidence, is subject to the relentless process of degeneration, has gone up to the heavens without any change or alteration to his body and without time having any deleterious effect on him. This, in spite of the fact that in this verse Allah, Most High, has not excluded the Messiah from the status of an earthly human being

Entry into Heaven presupposes physical death

The Twenty-sixth Verse: “*Surely the dutiful will be among Gardens and rivers, in the seat of truth, with a most Powerful King*” (54:54-55).

Now, from the point of view of these verses, it becomes quite obvious that Allah, Most High, has made entry into Heaven and occupation of a seat of truth mutually contemporaneous. That is, He has made coming into His presence and reaching

Paradise interdependent. So if the verse, “*I shall raise you to Me* (raafiu‘ka ilaiyya) means that the Messiah has been lifted towards Allah, then of a certainty he has entered Paradise just as another verse, “*Return to thy Lord* (Irji‘i ilaa Rabbiki)” which has the same meaning as: *I shall raise you to Me*, is standing proof of this very same point.

From this, we can see quite clearly that these three events – being raised towards Allah, Most High, joining the company of those drawn close to Him, and entering Paradise – all take place at one and the same time. Thus, these verses, also, establish conclusively the death of Prophet Jesus (*as*).....

The Twenty-seventh Verse: “*Those for whom the good has already gone forth from Us, they will be kept far off from it— they will not hear the faintest sound of it and they will abide in that which their souls desire*” (21:101-102).

The reference here is to Prophet Ezra (*as*) and the Messiah, Prophet Jesus (*as*) whose entry into Paradise is substantiated by this verse which also serves as an indisputable verification of their death.

The Twenty-eighth Verse: “*Wherever you are, death will overtake you, though you are in towers, raised high. And if good befalls them, they say: This is from Allah; and if a misfortune befalls them, they say: This is from thee. Say: All is from Allah. But what is the matter with these people that they make no effort to understand anything*” (4:78).

This verse, also, furnishes conclusive proof that death and its accompaniment pursue an earthly body no matter where it may be. This is the law of the Almighty and here, too, there is no indication of an exception to the rule. Indeed, there is not

a single word in this verse that puts the Messiah, son of Mary, outside the ambit of this law. As a result, this categorical statement stands as incontestable proof of the death of Prophet Jesus (*as*).

To be pursued by death means to experience the ravages of time, *as*, for example, weakness and old age or illnesses and calamities which lead a person to death. And from this, no created being is spared.

Limited time period for all human beings

The Twenty-ninth Verse: “*And whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and whatever he forbids you, abstain (therefrom)*” (59:7).

In the light of this verse, we shall turn our attention to what our Holy Prophet (*sas*) has spoken in relation to this affair. From *Mishkat al-Masabih* comes the first *hadith* which is narrated by Abu Hurairah as follows: “Some people in my community will live for sixty to seventy years and there will be few who will exceed this age.”

It is undeniable that the Messiah, son of Mary, has been included in this community. So how can such a disparity exist between him and others in that other people will find it difficult to reach sixty or seventy years and his condition is such that he has lived for two thousand years and even now he has still not died? Instead, our religious leaders insist that he will return to earth and live for forty or forty-five years.

The second *hadith* is taken from the *Sahih Muslim* and the narrator is Jabir, who says: “I heard the Holy Prophet (*sas*) say, after taking an oath, that in no part of the earth is there any creature over whom a hundred years will pass and he will

still be found alive.”

The meaning of this *hadith* is that no created being on earth will live past one hundred years and saying that he is a prisoner of the earth is that he may be excluded from the category of heavenly beings. It is, of course, an accepted fact that the Messiah, son of Mary, is not a heavenly being (by creation) but an earthly one and belongs to all that exists on earth. The *hadith* does not mean that if a person with an earthly body lives on earth, he will die here, but if he should go up to heaven (in his earthly body) he will not suffer death if the Holy Qur’an has categorically ruled out the eventuality of an earthly body entering Paradise. Instead, the import of the *hadith* is that whoever is born on earth, having been created out of earth, cannot live beyond a hundred years.

The Thirtieth Verse: “*Or thou have a house of gold, or thou ascend into heaven. And we will not believe in thy ascending till thou bring down to us a book we can read. Say: Glory to my Lord! am I aught but a mortal messenger?*” (17:93).

It confirms the death of Prophet Jdsus (as). This verse also makes it abundantly clear that the unbelievers asked the Holy Prophet (*sas*) for a sign to prove his truth, namely by ascending (physically) to Heaven. He, however, replied that it was not the habit of Allah, Most High, to transport an earthly body to Paradise. Now, if we should accept as true the bodily ascension of Prophet Jesus (*as*) to Heaven as true, then the Holy Prophet’s response above would become open to objection and discrepancy and inconsistency will certainly creep into the word of Allah, Most High. Consequently, it is a decisive and absolute fact that Prophet Jesus (*as*) never ascended to Heaven in his physical body but he did so only after his death.

Indeed, I ask those who profess belief in his physical elevation, whether Prophets John (*as*), Adam (*as*), Idris (*as*), Abraham (*as*) Joseph (*as*) and others were carried up to Heaven or not. If not, then how did it happen that the Holy Prophet (*sas*) saw all of them in Heaven on the night of the *Mi'raj* (Ascension)? If, on the other hand, they were elevated to Paradise, why then do they unjustifiably give another meaning to Prophet Jesus' elevation? This is rather amazing since the word *tawaffa* (to die) which is a manifest proof of death, is used everywhere in relation to him and an example of what ascension really means has also been clearly manifested in that he joined those deceased people who had been elevated before him. (Remember that the Holy Prophet (*sas*) saw him with them on the night of the *Mi'raj*.) If it is denied that these people were elevated before, then I challenge them to explain how they arrived in Paradise. After all, they had to be elevated before they could enter Heaven. Did they not read this verse of the Holy Qur'an in relation to Prophet Idris (*as*)? "*And we raised him to an elevated state*" (19:57). Is this not the ascension that the Messiah explained? Is this not the true meaning of being raised aloft?

Conclusion

We hope and pray that the explanation of these verses will eradicate the unfortunate error concerning Prophet Jesus' supposedly physical ascension to Heaven from the minds of Muslims, for in studiously clinging to this false conception, they are unwittingly upholding the Christian religion. As Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, has said: "If Muslims were to declare with one voice that Prophet Jesus (*as*) is dead, Christianity will fall in the morning."

Furthermore, if Muslims should bolster the wrong tenets of any other religion, how will the following prophecy of the Holy Qur'an come to pass: "*He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of Truth that He may make it prevail over all religions, though the polytheists are averse*" (61:9)?

Finally, the promise of Allah, Most High, has been fulfilled: "*Nay, We hurl the Truth against falsehood, so it knocks out its brains, and lo! it vanishes. And woe to you for what you describe!*" (21:18).