

Prophet Isa Ibn Maryam (as) was raised up alive and that he will come back again. The prophet (saw) stated clearly that Isa Ibn Maryam (as) will come again before the hour. [bayhaqi]

"And (remember) when Allah said: "O `Isa! I will take you and raise you to Myself and purify you from those who disbelieve, and I will make those who follow you superior to those who disbelieve till the Day of Resurrection." [3:55]

Al Hasan reports that Ibn mas'ud (ra) said "Allah raised `Isa while he was asleep." [Tafsir Ibn kathir and Ibn abi hatim]

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The Miraculous Ascent of Jesus to the Skies

The Quran mentions the ascent of Jesus to the skies, in the following verse:

"Remember when Allah said, "O Jesus! I shall take you and raise you to Myself and clear you of the falsehood of those who rejected faith and I shall make those who followed you superior to those who rejected faith, until the day of resurrection. Then you shall all return to Me and I will judge between you of the matters upon which you disputed." 3/55.

Imam Qurtubi has explained this verse saying that the *waw*, meaning *and*, does not require *tartib* (the order of occurrence), thus the import of the verse will be, "I shall raise you to Me and clear you from those who rejected faith and I shall take you to myself after your descent from the skies."

The first is that the word '*Mutawaffiyka*' means "*I shall take you, I shall take you away from those people towards Myself, by raising you to Me,*" as the word *tawaffi* is used for taking and collecting, it is said in the context of *Tawaffaytu Mali* i.e. "*I took back my belongings.*"

The second view is that '*Mutawaffiyka*' means "*I shall send you to sleep,*" in the following verse also:

"He is the One who takes your soul by night and has knowledge of all that you do in the day."
Quran, 6/60.

"And because of their saying, "We killed Al-Masih `Isa, son of Maryam, the Messenger of Allah," but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it appeared as that to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely; they killed him not.) (158. But Allah raised him up unto Himself. And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise.) (159. And there is none of the People of the Scripture, but must believe in him, before his death. And on the Day of Resurrection, he will be a witness against them." [4:157 - 159]

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas (ra) reported that the prophet (saw) said, "Just before Allah raised `Isa to the heavens, `Isa went to his companions, who were twelve inside the house. When he arrived, his hair was dripping water and he said, `There are those among you who will disbelieve in me twelve times after he had believed in me.' He then asked, `Who volunteers that his image appear

as mine, and be killed in my place. He will be with me (in Paradise)' One of the youngest ones among them volunteered and `Isa asked him to sit down. `Isa again asked for a volunteer, and the young man kept volunteering and `Isa asking him to sit down. Then the young man volunteered again and `Isa said, `You will be that man,' and the resemblance of `Isa was cast over that man while `Isa ascended to heaven from a hole in the house. When the Jews came looking for `Isa, they found that young man and crucified him. Some of `Isa's followers disbelieved in him twelve times after they had believed in him. They then divided into three groups. One group, Al-Ya`qubiyah (Jacobites), said, `Allah remained with us as long as He willed and then ascended to heaven.' Another group, An-Nasturiyyah (Nestorians), said, `The son of Allah was with us as long as he willed and Allah took him to heaven.' Another group, Muslims, said, `The servant and Messenger of Allah remained with us as long as Allah willed, and Allah then took him to Him.' The two disbelieving groups cooperated against the Muslim group and they killed them. Ever since that happened, Islam was then veiled until Allah sent Muhammad." This statement has an authentic chain of narration leading to Ibn `Abbas, and An-Nasa'i narrated it through Abu Kurayb who reported it from Abu Mu`awiyah. [Tafsir ibn kathir]

1- Raghib Isfahani writes;

الرفع يقال تارة في الاجسام الموضوعه إذا أعليتها عن مقرها

“Raf’a is sometimes used for corporeal things to mean raising or elevating it from its resting place.” (Mufradat Al-Qur’an 1/200)

2- Al-Feyumi writes;

فَالرَّفْعُ فِي الْأَجْسَامِ حَقِيقَةٌ فِي الْحَرَكَةِ وَالْإِنْتِقَالِ وَفِي الْمَعَانِي مَحْمُولٌ عَلَى مَا يَفْتَضِيهِ الْمَقَامُ

“So Raf’a in relation to corporeal things is used properly to denote motion and removal and in relation to ideal things it is accorded in meaning to what the case requires.” (Al-Misbah Al-Munir 3/443)

3- Edward William Lane says the same; infact he quotes the above two statements in his Arabic-English Lexicon part.3 p.287

Raf’a in relation to Eisa (A.S.) refers to both his body and soul and not just soul:

1- A careful but honest look into the wording of the Qur’an shows that *Raf’a* is used for the body of Eisa (A.S.) as well and not just his soul;

We see that in Qur’an 3:55;

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنِي مَتَوَقَّفِكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ

“When Allah said: .O Eisa , I am to take you in full and to raise you towards Myself, and to cleanse you of those who disbelieve, and to place those who follow you above those who disbelieve up to the Day of Doom. Then to Me is your return, whereupon I shall judge between you in that over which you have differed.”

Just as *مُطَهِّرُكَ* (cleanse you) and *اتَّبَعُوكَ* (follow you) refer to the whole person, body as well as soul, *رَافِعُكَ* (raise you) also refers to both body and soul. There is no basis to maintain the difference

between reference of pronouns of **مُطَهَّرُكَ**, **اَتَّبِعُوكَ** and **رَافِعُكَ**. And as body is a corporeal thing so in the light of actual meaning of the word it most certainly denotes its displacement. This also leads us to the True Islamic belief that even **مُتَوَفِّيكَ** (take you) refers to the whole person, body as well as soul and not merely the soul.

All the classical scholars have taken *Raf'a* about Eisa (A.S.) in the meaning of physical ascent. See Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Al-Kabir of Al-Raazi, Aalusi, Shaukani's Fath Al-Qadir, Jalalain, Durr Manthur, Baidhawi, Khazin etc.

Al-Raazi, Shaukani and Jalaluddin Suyuti have all been recognized as Mujaddids .

Even Al-Zamakhshari takes the word *Raf'a* to mean physical ascension of Eisa (A.S.). See his Tafsir Kashshaf 1/280 under 3:55)

Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said, "By Him in Whose Hands my soul is, the son of Maryam (`Isa) will shortly descend among you as a just ruler, and will break the cross." Abu Hurayrah then said, "Read if you will (And there is none of the People of the Scripture, but must believe in him, before his death. And on the Day of Resurrection, he will be a witness against them.)" Muslim also recorded this Hadith.

Also a hadith in musnad ahmad reported by ibn mas'ud that clearly proves that isa was raised up alive into the heaven. the prophet (saw) met isa during the ascension and isa said that he will go return to earth to kill the dajjal and preach Islam.

Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

"How will you be when Al-Masih, son of Maryam (`Isa) descends among you while your Imam is from among yourselves." Imam Ahmad and Muslim also recorded this Hadith.

Imam Ahmad and abu dawud recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said; "The Prophets are paternal brothers; their mothers are different, but their religion is one. I, more than any of mankind, have more right to `Isa, son of Maryam, for there was no Prophet between him and I. He will descend, and if you see him, know him. He is a well-built man, (the colour of his skin) between red and white. He will descend while wearing two long, light yellow garments. His head appears to be dripping water, even though no moisture touched it. He will break the cross, kill the dajjal in Palestine, perform hajj and preach Islam. Isa will remain for forty years and then will die, and Muslims will offer the funeral prayer for him. "

Explicit narrations from Ibn Abbas (RA) about ascension, life & return of Eisa (AS):

عن ابن عباس قال: لما أراد الله أن يرفع عيسى إلى السماء خرج على أصحابه... ورفعه عيسى من رَوْزَنَةَ في البيت إلى السماء

Ibn Abbas said, “When Allah intended to raise Eisa (AS) to the heavens, he went to his companions...and Eisa (AS) ascended to the Heavens through an opening in the top of the house.” (Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2/449, Tafsir Ibn Abi Hatim 4/431 Hadith 6266. Ibn Kathir classified it as Sahih)

What explicit evidence is required after this?

عن سعيد بن جبيرة، عن ابن عباس: “وإن من أهل الكتاب إلا ليؤمنن به قبل موته”، قال: قبل موت عيسى ابن مريم

It is narrated from Sa’id bin Jubair from Ibn Abbas [about]; “No one will remain from among the People of the Book but will certainly believe in him before he dies.” He said; “Before the death of Eisa ibn Maryam.” (Tafsir Al-Tabari 9/380 Narration 10794-5 under Qur’an 4:159. Classified as Sahih by Hafiz Ibn Hajr in Fath Al-Bari 10/250, *Kitab Ahadith Al-Anbiya*, Chapter on the Descent of Eisa ibn Maryam)

Simple implication of this narration is that Ibn Abbas (RA) believed in the return of Eisa ibn Maryam (AS). Hafiz Ibn Hajr who authenticated this narration has been recognized as *Mujaddid*.

We find a narration in Musnad Ahmad which says that Abu Yahya, the freed slave of Ibn Aqil Ansari, asked Ibn Abbas about the verse;

{ وَإِنَّهُ لَعَلَّمٌ لِلسَّاعَةِ }

“And he is the sign of the Hour (the Day of Judgment)” (43:61)

قَالَ هُوَ خُرُوجُ عِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ

Ibn Abbas said: “That is the descent of Eisa ibn Maryam, on whom be peace, before the Doomsday.” (Musnad Ahmad 3/284 Hadith 2921. Classified as Sahih by Ahmad Shakir)

Many more narrations to this effect are found in Tafsir Al-Tabari under this Ayah.

Narrated from Ibn Abbas, he said: “... and verily Allah raised him [Eisa ibn Maryam] with his body while he was alive and he will soon return to this world and will be a ruler therein. Then he will die as other people die.” (Ibn S’ad’ Tabaqat Al-Kubra 1/53)

Abu Abdullah al-Hafiz (i.e. Imam Hakim) – Abu Bakr bin Ishaq – Ahmad bin Ibrahim – Ibn Bukayr – Laith – Yunus – Ibn Shihab – Nafi’ the freed-slave of Abu Qadadah al-Ansari — Abu Huraira, may Allah be pleased with him – Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him, said: **“What will be your condition when the son of Maryam (i.e. ‘Eisa) will descend amongst you from the heavens and your Imam will be from amongst you?”** Bukhari narrated it in al-Sahih from Yahya bin Bukayr. And Muslim also narrated it through another chain from Yunus (bin Yazid). And they (also) meant his descent from the Heavens after his ascension towards it. (Asma’ wa Sifaat 2/331 Hadith 895. Shaykh Abdullah bin Muhammad al-Hashidi has classified the narration as Sahih)

Ibn Abbas narrated: the Messenger of Allah, on whom be the blessings of Allah, said: ‘And near it (Bait al-Maqdis) will descend from the Heavens my brother ‘Eisa ibn Maryam on Mt. Afiq as a guided leader and a just ruler.’ (Kanzul Ummal 14/619 Hadith 39726)

Other hadith about the literal ascension of the messiah and his return;

Hadith 1

عن ابن عباس قال: لما أراد الله أن يرفع عيسى إلى السماء خرج على أصحابه... ورفعه عيسى من رُوْرَنَة في البيت إلى السماء

Ibn Abbas said, **“When Allah intended to raise ‘Eisa to the heavens, he went to his companions ... and ‘Eisa ascended to the Heavens through an opening in the top of the house.”**

(Ibn Abi Hatim 4/431 Hadith 6266, Ibn Kathir 2/449. Ibn Kathir graded it Sahih)

Hadith 2

عن صفية أم المؤمنين رضي الله عنها أنها كانت إذا زارت بيت المقدس ، وفرغت من الصلاة في المسجد الأقصى صعدت على جبل زيتا فصلت عليه وقالت : هذا الجبل هو الذي رفع منه عيسى عليه السلام إلى السماء

It is narrated from Ummul Momineen Safiya, may Allah be pleased with her, that when she visited Bait Al-Maqdis (i.e. Jerusalem) and finished prayers in Al-Aqsa Mosque she climbed up to Mt. Olives and prayed there as well and said: ‘This is the mountain from where ‘Eisa, may Allah bless him, was raised up to the Heavens.’ (Al-Tasrih bima Tawatar fi Nuzul Al-Masih Hadith 74 cf. Tafsir Fath Al-Aziz Surah 95)

Hadith 3

إن أبا هريرة رضي الله عنه قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم « :كيف أنتم إذا نزل ابن مريم من السماء فيكم

Narrated Abu Huraira, may Allah be pleased with him: Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him, said **“What will be your condition when the son of Maryam (i.e. ‘Eisa) will descend amongst you from the heavens...?”** (Baihaqi’s Asmaa wal Sifaat 2/432 Hadith 855)

Baihaqi (RA) was recognized as a *Mujaddid* of 4th century A.H.

Hadith 4

عن أبي هريرة قال سمعت أبا القاسم الصادق المصدوق يقول ... ثم ينزل عيسى بن مريم عليه وسلم من السماء فيؤم الناس

Abu Huraira said: I heard Abul Qasim the Truthful and Trustworthy (i.e. Holy Prophet) say: **‘... then ‘Eisa ibn Maryam, on him be the peace, will descend from the heavens.’**

(Majma’ Al-Zawaid 7/349. Haithmi said, Bazzar has narrated it and all its narrators are those of the Sahih [i.e. Sahih Bukhari] except Ali bin Munzar and he is also trustworthy)

Hadith 5

قال ابن عباس :قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم :فبعد ذلك ينزل أخي عيسى ابن مريم من السماء

Ibn Abbas narrated: the Messenger of Allah, on whom be the blessings of Allah, said: **‘And near it (Bait al-Maqdis) will descend from the Heavens my brother ‘Eisa ibn Maryam.’**

(Kanzul Ummal 14/619 Hadith 39726)

Compiler of Kanzul Ummal, Ali Muttaqi Al-Hindi (RA) was recognized as a *Mujaddid* of 10th century A.H.

Hadith 6

عن ابن عباس {إن تعذبهم فإنهم عبادك} يقول :عبيدك قد استوجبوا العذاب بمقاتلتهم {وإن تغفر لهم} أي من تركت منهم ومد في عمره حتى أهبط من السماء إلى الأرض يقتل الدجال ، فنزلوا عن مقاتلتهم ووحدهم

About the verse, ‘If you punish them they are your servants’ Ibn Abbas said, he [‘Eisa] will say: ‘These slaves of yours have invited your chastisement by what they said [and believed]’. **‘And if you forgive them’ i.e. ‘those whom I left behind me and those who were there when I came down from the Heavens to Earth to kill al-Dajjal and they turned back from what they said [i.e. Trinity] and believed in your Oneness...’**

(Durr Manthur 4/27 Under Surah 5 Ayah 118)s

The writer of Durr Manthur, Jalaluddin Suyuti (RA) was recognized as a *Mujaddid* of 9th century A.H.

In the 1,435 years since the blessed Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and his noble Companions *radhiallahu ‘anhum* made Hijra, the *ummah* has been blessed with esteemed personalities whom were strengthened by Allah to rejuvenate Islam beginning with the century after the Companions *radhiallahu ‘anhum*. This belief is sound and found in the following *hadith* narrated by Abu Hurayrah *radhiallahu ‘anhu*:

“Surely, Allah will send for this Ummah at the advent of every one hundred years a person (or persons) who will *tajdeed* [renew, revive, restore] for it its *deen* [religion].” (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 37: Kitab al-Malahim [Battles], #4278

The great Imam Jalaluddin Al-Suyuti in his *Mirqat al-Saud* in the marginal notes of *Sunan Abu Dawud* records, “It is a consensus of the *Muhadditheen* (Hadith Masters) that this *Hadith* is *Sahih*.” The word “*tajdeed*” means the restoration of the original beliefs and practices after their being changed, distorted or forgotten. The person who carries out this exemplary and praiseworthy task is referred to as a *mujaddid* [reformer]. The definition of *mujaddid* is given as:

“**Mujaddid:** (Renewer) Muslim scholar who initiates *tajdid* (renewal). According to *hadith*, a *mujaddid* is to come at the beginning of each century to renew the faith and correct the practice of Muslims... back to the Islam of the early community as they interpret it, rejecting as innovations any later added practices or customs.” [ibn taymiya]

1st century Ibn Abbas (ra) or Umar Bin Abdul Aziz

2nd century Imam Shafi’i; Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal

3rd century Muhammad Al-Bukhari or Abū Al-Hasan Alī Ibn Ismā’īl Al-Ash’arī

4th century Muhammad ibn Abd-Allah al-Hakim al-Nishaburi or Qazi Abu Bakr Baqilani
5th century Imam Al-Ghazali
6th century Ibn Qudamah or Al-Sayyid Abdul Qadir Jeelani
7th century Imam Ibn Taimiyyah
8th century Ibn Hajar Asqalani & Saleh Bin Umar
9th century Imam Suyuti
10th century Muhammad Tahir Gujrati
11th century Al-Sheikh Ahmad of Sirhand; Mujaddid Alf Thani
12th century Shah Wali Allah Muhaddath Dehlavi
13th century Muhammad Shawkani
14th century Muhammad Shanqati or Ahmad Shakir

2nd Century: Imam Abu ‘Abdullah Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi’i (767/150 – 820/204 CE/AH)

“In the same way that the Prophet ‘Isa عليه السلام ascended to the heavens at Allah’s command, he will also return to Earth at Allah’s command and will enforce Islamic justice. People whose faith is weak may not regard this as possible. But it is an easy matter after recognizing the might of Allah.” (The Great Book of Scholarship of Shafi’i, Halil Günenç, expanded 2nd edition, p. 23)

3rd Century: Abū Al-Hasan Alī Ibn Ismā’īl Al-Ash’arī (874/260 – 936/324 CE/AH)

“There is a consensus among the community of the faithful [ijma' ummat] that Jesus عليه السلام was raised alive to the heavens.” (Al-Ash’ari, Al-Ash’ari’s al-Ibana ‘an Usul al-Diyana, (Cairo: 1986), 2:115)

4th Century: Abu Abd-Allah Muhammad ibn Abd-Allah al-Hakim al-Nishaburi (933/321 – 1012/403 CE/AH)

[He is the author of the ahadith collection Al-Mustadrak in which he states that] “...Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه said about the verse of the Holy Qur’an (4:159): “This verse is proof that Jesus عليه السلام, son of Mary, will appear... All of the People of the Book will believe in him before his death.”” (Al-Hakim, Al-Mustadrak, 2:309)

5th Century: Abū Hāmed Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ghazālī (1058 CE – 1111/505 CE/AH)

“...then the Qur’an would be erased from hearts and not a word of it would be remembered; and the people would return to the poetry, songs, and tales of the pre-Islamic period; then the Anti-Christ would go forth and ‘Isa, the blessings and peace of God upon him, would descend to kill him. The hour when all this occurs would be like the pregnant woman in travail, waiting for the moment of her delivery.” (The Secrets of Pilgrimage, p.17)

“Out of the Prophets, Jesus Christ عليه السلام did not marry but he will marry after his second advent.” (The Revival of the Religious Sciences, Ihya Ulum Uddin, Secret of Marriages, p.21)

6th Century: ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (1077 – 1166 CE)

“Jesus عليه السلام did not marry; he never took a wife. At the end of time, Allah (Exalted is He) will send him back down to the earth, and He will then marry him to a young woman of Quraish, who will bear him a son.” (Utterances of Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (Malfuzat): Collected Sayings from the Crown of Saints, translated by Muthar Holland, p.58)

7th Century: Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah (1263 – 1328 CE)

“The verse [4:158] “He raised him to His Presence” ... explains that Jesus عليه السلام was raised in both body and soul.” (Imam Ibn Taymiyya, Majmu’ Fatawa, trans. by Abdurrahman ibn Muhammad ibn Qasim al-Asimi an-Najdi, 4:323)

8th Century: Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani (1372/773 – 1448/852 CE/AH)

“The Mahdi is of this Ummah, and that Jesus عليه السلام will come down and pray behind him.” (Fath al-Baari, v.5, p.362)

“...there was no Prophet between Jesus عليه السلام and our Prophet [Muhammad], on whom peace and blessings of Allah and Jesus عليه السلام has no grave.” (Fath al-Baari 2/160, Kitabul Salaah)

9th Century: Jalaluddin Al-Suyuti (1445/849 – 1505/911 CE/AH)

“As-Suyuti says Jerusalem is specially honoured by Muslims... It was at Jerusalem that the prophets sacrificed; that Jesus was born and spoke in his cradle; and it was from Jerusalem that Jesus ascended to heaven; and it will be there that he will again descend.” (A Moslem Seeker After God, Samuel M. Zwemer, p.115)

In his commentary, al-Suyuti said, based on reliable hadith, that the Prophet Jesus (pbuh) did not die, and then continued: “In that case, Jesus عليه السلام was raised to the skies and will return before the Day of Judgment.” (Durr al-Manthur, 2:225-27)

“This word [kahlaan] expresses the fact that he (Jesus عليه السلام) will descend from the heavens before the Day of Judgment, because he was raised to the skies before attaining old age.” (Tafsir al-Jalalayn, Surah al-Ma’ida (5):110, 1:447)

11th Century: Rabbānī Shaykh Ahmad Al-Farūqī Al-Sirhindī Mujaddid Alf Thānī (1564 – 1624 CE)

“Jesus عليه السلام will descend from the sky and will be a member of Prophet Muhammad’s (may God bless him and grant him peace) community. In other words, he will be one of his people and will abide by the Divine law.” (Letters of Rabbani (Istanbul: 1977), 1:436, 545, 722, 820, 846)

12th Century: Shah Waliullah Dehlwi (1703 – 1762 CE)

“None of the People of the Book will remain without believing in him before he dies and Jesus will remain a witness unto them” [exegetical note] “The Jews present at the time of the descent of Jesus Christ will definitely believe in him.” (Fath ur Rahmaan Fee Tarjumatul Qura’an, 4:159)

Each one of these personalities, among them some of the most distinguished exemplars in Islam declared their belief in the ascension or descent of ‘Isa ibn Maryam عليه السلام.

Narrated Abu Huraira (RA) that Prophet, may Allah bless him, said: **“It is near that one who lives from amongst you shall meet ‘Eisa bin Maryam. He will be a rightly guided (imaman mahdiyyan) leader and a just ruler ...”**

MEANING OF 'MUTAWAFFEKA' & 'TAWAFFAITANI' IN QURAN 3:55 & 5:117

is said in the context of Tawaffaytu Mali i.e. "I took back my belongings."

The second view is that 'Mutawaffiyka' means "I shall send you to sleep," as sleep is the 'twin sister of death' and the word 'wafa`t' i.e. death, has been used for sleep in the following verse also:

"He is the One who takes your soul by night and hath knowledge of all that you do in the day."
Quran, 6/60.

Regarding the verse in surah al imran verse 55;

Ibn Abbas said, "When Allah intended to raise Eisa (AS) to the heavens, he went to his companions...and Eisa (AS) ascended to the Heavens through an opening in the top of the house." (Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2/449, Tafsir Ibn Abi Hatim 4/431 Hadith 6266. Ibn Kathir classified it as Sahih) Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Just before Allah raised `Isa to the heavens, `Isa went to his companions, who were twelve inside the house. When he arrived, his hair was dripping water and he said, 'There are those among you who will disbelieve in me twelve times after he had believed in me.' He then asked, 'Who volunteers that his image appear as mine, and be killed in my place. He will be with me (in Paradise)' One of the youngest ones among them volunteered and `Isa asked him to sit down. `Isa again asked for a volunteer, and the young man kept volunteering and `Isa asking him to sit down. Then the young man volunteered again and `Isa said, 'You will be that man,' and the resemblance of `Isa was cast over that man while `Isa ascended to heaven from a hole in the house. When the Jews came looking for `Isa, they found that young man and crucified him. Some of `Isa's followers disbelieved in him twelve times after they had believed in him. They then divided into three groups. One group, Al-Ya`qubiyah (Jacobites), said, 'Allah remained with us as long as He willed and then ascended to heaven.' Another group, An-Nasturiyyah (Nestorians), said, 'The son of Allah was with us as long as he willed and Allah took him to heaven.' Another group, Muslims, said, 'The servant and Messenger of Allah remained with us as long as Allah willed, and Allah then took him to Him.' The two disbelieving groups cooperated against the Muslim group and they killed them. Ever since that happened, Islam was then veiled until Allah sent Muhammad (saw)." This statement has an authentic chain of narration leading to Ibn `Abbas, and An-Nasa'i narrated it through Abu Kurayb who reported it from Abu Mu`awiyah. Many among the Salaf stated that `Isa asked if someone would volunteer for his appearance to be cast over him and that he will be killed instead of `Isa, for which he would be his companion in Paradise. [Sunan An-Nasa'I and Tafsir Ibn Kathir]

2-Quranic usage:

The Qur'an also reveals that taking a person's soul does not always imply death. For instance, another verse uses tawaffaa to refer not to a person's death, but to taking his or her soul while asleep:

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ جِئْنَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

"Allah fully takes away (yatawaffaa) the souls (of the people) at the time of their death (mawtiha), and (of) those who do not die (lam tamut), in their sleep. Then He withholds those on whom He had decreed death (al-mawt), and sends others back, up to an appointed term. Surely, in this, there are signs for a people who ponder." (Quran 39: 42)

The word here translated as "taking back" is the same as that used in Qur'an 3:55 and 5:117: tawaffaa.

3-Explanation from Hadith:

Another instance in which sleep is regarded as a kind of death, but which does not refer to biological death, is the following Hadith:

عَنْ حُدَيْفَةَ بْنِ الْيَمَانِ قَالَ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا أَوَى إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ قَالَ بِاسْمِكَ أَمُوتُ وَأَحْيَا وَإِذَا قَامَ قَالَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَ مَا أَمَاتَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

Narrated Huzaiifa: When the Holy Prophet (PBUH) moved to his bed (to sleep) he would say; 'All praise is for God, Who has made us alive after He made us die [sleep] (Al-hamdu li Allah illazi ahyana ba'da maa amatana; wa ilayhi al-nushoor).' (Sahih Bukhari Hadith 5837)

No doubt, he used these wise words not to refer to biological death when one is asleep, but rather to a sleeping person's soul being "taken."

4-Jesus (PBUH) was given a kind of sleep:

Ibn Kathir, the famous Islamic scholar and commentator, used the above Hadith, along with many other proofs in his commentary on Surah Al'-Imran, to explain that tawaffaa refers to sleep. In addition, he indicated the word's meaning in other verses where it appears.

Ibn Abbas (ra) said; "I shall cause you to sleep.' So, Allah raised Jesus (PBUH) to the heavens while he was asleep." (Ibn Kathir 2/47 and tafsir ibn abi hatim)

Infact there is a Hadith which clarifies beyond all doubt. It goes as;

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لليهود: "إن عيسى لم يمُتْ، وإنه راجع إليكم قبل يوم القيامة"

Hasan (RA) narrated: "The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said to the Jews, 'Jesus has not died, he will return to you before the Doomsday.'" (Al-Tabari H.7133)

5-Antonym of *Hayat* (Life) in the Quran?

Further we know that in the Holy Quran only the word *mawt* (death) is used in contrast to *hayat* (life) e.g. See Quran 67:2, 25:3, 2:260, 30:19, 2:164, 16:45, 45:5, 3:49, 42:9. But not even once has the Quran used *tawaffa* against *hayat*. This is strong evidence that to the Author of the Quran *tawaffa* is not the opposite of *hayat*.

6-Views of leading learned scholars:

Islamic scholars agree that *mutawaffeeka* means that Jesus (PBUH) did not die, but that he was raised to Allah's presence and will return to Earth. For example;

Ibn Jarir Al-Tabari, the famous commentator and scholar, stated that *mutawaffeeka* is used in the sense of "removing from Earth" and interpreted the verse in the following terms: **"To me the soundest opinion is to take this word in the sense of 'to take into one's possession', 'draw (away) from Earth.' In that case, the meaning of the verse is: 'I shall take you from Earth and into the heavens.' [This is] because of the multiple ways it has been narrated from the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) that Jesus son of Mary will descend, kill Anti-Christ (*Dajjal*)..."** (Al-Tabari 3/51)

7-Ibn Abbas's (RA) view on Mutawaffeeka:

Narrated Az-Zahaak from Ibn Abbas that the verse 'Inni Mutawaffeeka wa rafiuka' means: "I will raise you alive to myself then I'll cause you to die near the End of Times." (Durr Al-Manthur 2/347)

It is enough to show that even according to Ibn Abbas' (RA) view Jesus (PBUH) is alive yet and the verse to him refers only to his death in the End of Times after his descent.

TRUE MEANING OF 'QAD KHALAT' IN QURAN 3:144

Regarding the verse in surah al baqarah;

"Muhammad is not but a messenger. There have been messengers before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels [to unbelief]? And he who turns back on his heels will never harm Allah at all; but Allah will reward the grateful." [Quran 3:144] (Shaykh Taqi Usmani)

Transliteration of ch 3 vs 144

Wama muhammadun illa rasoolun qad khalat min qablihi alrrusulu afa-in mata aw qutila inqalabtum
AAala aAAaqabikum waman yanqalib AAala AAaqibayhi falan yadurra Allaha shay-an wasayajzee
Allahu alshshakireena

Here the actual Arabic word is 'qad khalat' which comes from the word 'khala'.

About 'khala' Raghیب Isfahani says:

والخلو يستعمل في الزمان والمكان لكن لما تصور في الزمان المضى فسر أهل اللغة خلا الزمان بقولهم مضى الزمان وذهب

"Al-Khallu (the root of khala) is used for for both time and space and but as there is a nuance of the past in (its usage of) time so linguists take it to refer to the past." (Mufradaat al-Quran 1/158) and then he gives Quran 3:144 and 13:6 as its examples.

Thus he makes it clear that the verse does not refer to the death of the Prophets before Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

khalat does not mean death as proven by the following verses;

'...and there never were a people, without a Warner having lived (khala) among them (in the past)'
(Quran 35: 24)

In Surah Aali Imran verse 137 Allah says:

Qad khalat min qablikum sunanun faseeroo fee alardi faonthuroo kayfa kana AAaqibatu
almukaththibeena.

"Surely, there have been many dispensations before you; so proceed throughout the earth and observe how the end of those who denied was." [3:137]

"And when they meet those who believe, they say, "We believe"; but when they are alone with their evil ones, they say, "Indeed, we are with you; we were only mockers." [2:14]

"Waitha laqoo allatheena amanoo qaloo amanna waitha khalaw ilashayateenihim qaloo inna maAAakum innama nahnu mustahzioona." [2:14]

In this verse we see the word khalaw, the plural of khalat. This verse says: wa idha khalaw ila alshayateen meaning and when [they] go to their devils. Again in this verse Allah (swt) uses the word Khalat to mean go away, not death.

Quran 5:75 goes as:

مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ

we know that while hazrat Isa Ibn Maryam (PBUH) walked this Earth Prophet Yahya (as) was alive. So the correct translation of this verse is:

"The Masih, son of Maryam, is no more than a Messenger. There have been messengers before him..." [5:75]

Isa Ibn Maryam (as) was a law bearing Prophet

"Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light. The prophets who submitted [to Allah] judged by it for the Jews, as did the rabbis and scholars by that with which they were entrusted of the Scripture of Allah, and they were witnesses thereto. So do not fear the people but fear Me, and do not exchange My verses for a small price. And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed - then it is those who are the disbelievers." [Quran 5:44]

It is true that the messiah Isa (as) came to confirm the Torah. But, consider Surah Ale 'Imraan verse 50, where Isa bin Maryam عليه السلام says:

وَمُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ مِنَ النُّورِ وَالْأَجَلَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا

“And I come fulfilling that which is before me, namely, the Torah; and to allow you some of that which was forbidden unto you, and I come to you with a Sign from your Lord; so fear Allah and obey me.”[Quran 3:50]

Some of the scholars of Islam, such as Ibn Kathir, comment that this means he allowed certain foods that were previously impermissible and made work permissible on their Sabbath. Either way, he was authorized to **modify** law. This would effectively make him a “law-bearing” prophet.

Also the above verse in chapter 3 indicates that `Isa (as) abrogated some of the Laws of the Tawrah and informed the Jews of the truth regarding some issues that they used to dispute about. [Tafsir Ibn Kathir]

Suyuti said regarding the verse [3:50]; “Thus Isa (as) made lawful some foods which were previously forbidden and Isa (as) allowed working on Sabbath.” [Tafsir Jalalayn]

Consider that in the Islamic legal system there are two sources of law: the Qur’an and the Sunnah of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, preserved through the books of hadith. The obligation to obey the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is outlined in dozens of verse, such as Surah Ale 'Imraan verse 133 where Allah says:

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

And obey Allah and the Messenger that you may be shown mercy.

Allah used the word أَطِيعُوا, the command form of the word *obey*, and from this one can gather that it is legally incumbent upon all Muslims to obey his commandments. Next, consider that this same root-word is used with regards to Isa bin Maryam عليه السلام. He tells the Bani Isra'eel to fear Allah and أَطِيعُونَ (*obey me*). The obligation upon Bani Isra'eel to obey Isa bin Maryam عليه السلام makes him a “law-bearing” prophet just as the obligation upon the Muslims to obey the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, in addition to the Qur’an, makes him a “law-bearing” prophet.

This analysis is not specific to Isa bin Maryam عليه السلام. Even if not all prophets were given revelatory scriptures, all prophets gave orders, and their commandments were incumbent upon their communities, thus making them all “law-bearing” prophets.

“And We have sent no Messenger but that he should be obeyed by the command of Allah. And if they had come to thee, when they had wronged their souls, and asked forgiveness of Allah, and the Messenger also had asked forgiveness for them, they would have surely found Allah Oft-Returning with compassion, and Merciful.”

- [Surah Nisa' Verse 64]

Allah (swt) revealed to the messiah Isa (as) a new kitab called Injeel.

“Then We sent following their footsteps Our messengers and followed [them] with Jesus, the son of Mary, and gave him the Gospel.” [57:27]

Thus Isa (as) received a divine book that supersedes the Tawrah. Therefore the messiah Isa (as) was indeed a messenger that modified some laws for the children of Israel.