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

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

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

Fatwa starts from here:
APPENDIX 4

ARABIC TEXT & DISCUSSION OF MAHMUD SHALTUT’S LETTER

رفع عيسى
ورد إلى مسجية الأزهر الجليلة من حضرة عبد الكريم:
"هل (عيسى) حي أو ميت في نظر القرآن الكريم والسنة للطهرة؟ وما حكم للعلم الذي ينكر أنه حي؟ وما حكم من لا يؤمن به إذا فرض أنه ماد إلى الدنيا مرة أخرى؟" ....
وقد حول هذا السؤال إلىنا فأجبنا بالقول التالي إلى نشرهما مجلة الرسالة في سنينها الماشية بعدد 262492 2000...
القرآن الكريم ومنهاج عيسى:

أما بعد، فإن القرآن الكريم قد عرض لعيسى عليه السلام فنا أنصل

بناية شأنه مع قوله في ثلاث سور:

1- في سورة آل عمران قوله تعالى: "فلما أحس عيسى منهم الكفر قال من أنصروا إلى الله قال الحوراءين عن أنصاره، أنت فاعشته، نحن أمرت ذاتينما الرسول فآتىهم بعذابهم. والب_aff مغشوشون. يا أنت لمن أشرت. إنتما الرسول أن تكنما من الذين كفر فجعل الله تعالى إلى متوهك. ورافع إليه مطرقة من الذين كفروا. أتلى من الذين أتّباع فوق الذين كفروا إلى يوم القيامة. ثم إلى مرجعكم فأحكم بينكم فيا أنتم فيا تغلبون (1)

(1) الآية من سورة آل عمران.

2- وفي سورة الدهاء قوله تعالى: "فأزورهم إني أفتح إلإ للنبي عيسى ابن مريم رسول الله هما فلعلما تكلمو هما صليبيه دلكن سبها لهم، فإن الدين اختنعوا فيه لسألك منه، ما لاهيم من علم إلا انباح الأزق، واما فكلوها بقيبا، بل رفعه الله إليه، فإن الله عنرا حكيما" (2)
وفي سورة المائدة فوالله تعالى: "إذ قال الله: "لا عيني إلا عبداً في يوم القيامة. "أنت فتحت الناس ليبتُوا وامتنعت عيني من دون أن ترى". سُبِحان الله ما يكون لي أن أقول ما ليس لي يجب إذ كنت فتحت فعلى الله جلّ جلاله".

قلت: "ما في نفسي ولا أعلم ما في نفسي". إن كنت عالم النفس ما أقول. قال: "أنك عذبنا الله ربي قرطبكم وكتبت عليهم شهيداً ما دامت عليهم فلما توفيتم كنتم الأقرب عليهم". دار إلى كل غيور شهيداً.

هذه هي الآيات التي عرض القرآن فيها لنهبابة شأن عيسى مع فوته.

والآية الأخيرة (آية المسأدة) تذكر لنا غناءاً آخر وهو يتعلق بعبادته فوته له ولامرأته الدنيا وقد سألته الله عنها. وهي تزق على زمن عيسى عليه السلام أنه لم يقل إلا ما أمره الله به: "اعبدوا الله وربكم ورسولكم". وأنه كان شهيداً عليهم مدة إقامة بينهم، وأنه لا يعلم ما حدث منهم بعد أن توفى الله.

معنى الترقيق:

وكلمة (توفي) قد وردت في القرآن كثيراً بمعنى الموت حتى صار هذا المعنى هو الغالب عليها المبادر منها، ولم نتعلم في غير هذا المعنى إلا رجاءً.

(1) الأذنابل 1067. (2) الأذنابل 1116. 117
ما يصرف عنا هذا المعنى المبادر: قَلْ يَتَوَفَّأْكُمْ تِلَّاَبِكَ الْجَانَّةِ وَكِلَّكُمْ (1)، دَيْنَ الْكُفَّارِ كَفَّارَ الْكَلَِّابِيَةِ ظَالِمَيْنِ أَصِيبُوهَا (2)، وَكُلُّهُمْ تَرَى إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الْقُرْءَانُ كَفَّارَ الْكَلَِّابِيَةِ (3)، وَنَزَّلَهُ رَبُّكَ عَلَى نَاسٍ (4)، وَمَنْ كَمَّ مِنْ يَتَوَفَّى (5)، خَيْرُ يَتَوَفَّى لِلَّذِينَ يَتَوَفَّى (6).

وَكُنْتُمْ سَلَّمًا وَلِمْبَقِيَ الْعَالَمَيْنِ (7). 

وَمِنْ حَقِّ كِتَابِيْنِ قَلْتُ تَوَفَّيْنِي فِي الآبِ أَنْ أَجْعَلَ هَذَا المعنى المبادر وهو الإيمان المادي إلى مورثنا النبي وبدكراً من الفضاعة والسيال الناطقون بالضاد. وإنما الناكية لم يقبل بها غيرها، فعفى نهياً على إшли مقول بأن عيسى حي لم يمت. ولا سبيل إلى القول بأن الوثاقة هنا مراد بها وفاة عيسى بعد نزوله من السماء بناءً على زعم من أبي أنه حي في الليلة، وأبو ميسل من آخر الزمان، لأن الآية ظاهرة في عدد علاقته بمعمة هو لا بالقول الذين يكونون آخر الزمان
وم قوم محمد باتفاق لا قوم عني.

معنى رفع القدر شيء رفع على الحر، والجزء من الفائدة، وقول فرع إلى السماء.

أما آية الناس فإنها تقول دل رنه الله إليه، وقد ضربها بعض المفسرين بالجحيم بالرفع إلى السماء، وينقولون إن الله أنى شبيه عليه، ورضه يجعله إلى السماء، فهو فيها وسدنزلا منها آخر الزمان، يقول:

أطلزرب وكسر الصليب، ويشهدون في ذلك:

أولاً: على روایات سفيه نزل عني سد الدجال، وهي روایات مضطربة متناقضة في أفعالها وسانيها اختلافًا لا مجال منه للجمع بينها، وقد نص على ذلك

1. الآية 44 من سورة النجم.
2. الآية 41 من سورة الإخلاص.
3. الآية 39 من سورة الكوثر.
4. الآية 37 من سورة النحل.
5. الآية 36 من سورة الفاتحة.
6. الآية 35 من سورة البقرة.
علماء الحديث، وهي فوق ذلك من رواية وذهب بن منبه وكتب الأخبار وإلى
من أهل الكتب الذين اعترفوا الإسلام، وقد عرفت درجتها في الحديث
عند علماء الجرح والتعديل.

كأنما: على حديث مروى عن أبي هريرة أن قرر فيه على الإخبار بجزول
عببي، وإذا صح هذا الحديث فهو حديث أحادٍ، وقد أجمع العلماء على أن
أحاديث الإحاد لا تنبيع عقيبة ولا يصح الاعتقاد عليها في شأن المبيب.

قالما: على ما جاء في حديث المراج من أن محمدًا صلى الله عليه وسلم-
كأنه صلى إلى النبي، وأخذ بترميدها واحدة بعد واحدة فتنجب له ويدخل،

وأتي عبي على السلام هو وابن خالته يحيى في السنة الثانية. وعكفنا
في توهين هذا المسته ما فرره كثير من شراح الحديث في شأن المراج وفي شأن
اجماع محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم بالأئمة، وأنه كان اجتاع روحيا لا جسديا

انظر فتح البراري وزاد المداد وغيرها.

ومن الطرق أنهما يمتلكان على أن سنغ الرفع في الآية هو رفع عبي
بجده إلى السما بحديث المراج، بينما نرى فرقًا منهما يستند على أن اجتاع
محمد صلى في المراج كان اجتاعا جسديا بدلاً منه فنال: «قال رفعه الله إلَّهِه»،
وهكنا يتبعون الآية دليلا على ما يفهمه من الحديث حين يكونون في تفسير
الحديث، ويتبعون الحديث دليلا على ما يفهمه من الآية حين يكونون
في تفسير الآية.
مرفع في آيات عمان:

وَمَنَأَ رَجَعَ إِلَى قَوْلِهِ نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا مَنْ ثَمَّ فَذَهَبَ وَرَكَّزَهُ إِلَى هَمَّةٍ وَكَذَٰلِكَ إِلَى هَمَّةٍ

فِي كِتَابِ عَمَّان ۡيَلِّي رَقَعَةَ آيٓهَنِّ ۡيَلِّي نَسَاةً وَجَدَهَا

الثانية إِخْبَارًا عَنْ تَحْقِيقِ الْوَعْدِ الَّذِي نَظَمَهَا الْأَوَّلِ، وَفَدْكَ هُذَا الْوَعْدُ

بِالتَّوْفِيقِ وَالرَّفعِ وَالتَّطَبِيرِ مِنِّ الْذِّينَ كَفَرُوا، وَإِذَا كَانَتِ الْآيةَ الْثَّانِيَةَ قَدْ جَاءت

خَالِفَةً مِنَ الْتَوْفِيقِ وَالتَّطَبِيرِ، وَأَقْنَعَتْ عَلَى ذِكْرِ الرَّفعِ إِلَى آيٓهَنِّ يُبْدِنَ أن

يَلَوَّحُ فِيهَا مَا ذَكَرَهَا الْأَوَّلِ جَمِيعًا مِنَ الْآيَاتِ.

وَالْعَلِيْنِ أَنَّ آيٓهَنِّ عَلِيٓ وَرَفَعَهُ إِلَى وَطَهِرَهُ مِنِّ الْذِّينَ كَفَرُوا.

وَقَدْ فَرَعَ الأُوْلِيّ قَوْلُهُ نَسَاةَ فَإِنْ تَوْفِيقُكُمْ عَبْدُ آيٓهَنِّ، وَهُوَ

أَظْهَرَهَا إِلَى مُشْتَهِرِ أُجُلِّكَ وَمِمَّكَ حَسَنُ أَنفُكَ لَا أَسِطُّعُ عَلَيْكَ مِن

يَقْتَلُكَ، وَهُوَ كَنَّاءٌ عَن عَصْمَتِهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ، وَمَا هُوَ بَصِيرًةَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ بِعَلَيْهِ

السَّلَامُ لَهُ أَنَّهُ يَلْزَمُ مِنْ اسْتِفْقَاةِ آيٓهَنِّ أَجْلَهُ وَمَوْتُهُ حَسَنُ أَنفُكَ

وَقَدْ عَلِمَ أَنَّ الرَّفَعَ الَّذِي يُكَانُ بَعْدَ الْتَوْفِيقِ، وَهُوَ رَفَعُ السَّلَاطِينِ

مِنَ الْجَمِيعِ، وَقَدْ جَاءَ بِجَانِبِهِ قَوْلُهُ: ۡوَمَّطَكَ ۝ مِنَ الْذِّينَ كَفَرُوا،
ما يدل على أن الأمر أصى تشريف وتكريم.

ونحو الرفع في القرآن كثيراً بهذا المعنى: "في نبتك: أذكر الله
إن رفع،.. رفع درجات من نفاه،.. درفنا لك ذكرك،.. درفتناه مسكوناً علياً،.. يرفع الله الدين آمناً،.. إله

وإذن قال التميم بتوله ٔ ترافيك إلى، وقوله ٔ بل رنه الله إليه،

كانت تمر في قولهم مثققلان برفقة الأعلى رفيق إذ الله لنا، وفي عنه ملوك مقتدر، وكلها لا يدحم منها سوى سن الريعة والحفظ والدخول في الكشف الفي، فن أن تؤخذ كله الصفة من كلمة ٔ إليه، الله

إن هذا نظام التميم القرياني الواضح خصوصاً قصص وروايات لم يتم على الظن

بها - فضلًا عن البهين - يرمن ولاشب يرمن

الغهم الأبداع في الأديان:

وبعد. فا عيسى إلا رسول قد خلت من قبله الرسل، فاصف قومه المداوء، وظهرت على وجههم بوارد الشر بالنسبة إليه، فانجأ إلى الله - شأن الأنبياء والمرسلين- فألقنه الله بمرنه وحكمه وخيب مكر أعدائه. وهذا هو مانتصمه
الآيات: «فَلَنَا أَحَبَّ عَبْسِي مِنْهُمْ الْكَفَّارُ قَالُوا مِنْ أَخَاهِي إِلَى اللّهِ لِلآخِرَةِ، إِنَّهُ نُورٌ مِّنْ نُورِهِ وَخِزْيَةٌ مِّنْهُ، أَنَّهُ كَثِيرٌ كَثِيرٌ يُسْتَفْعَاهُ الْمُجَابِهُ، إِلَى مَدْنَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ كُفُّرْنَا، فَهُوَ هَيْبَةٌ إِلَى مَدْنَةٍ مِّنْ سَهَّلَهُ، وَرَكَّبَهُ فِي نَجُورِهِ، وَأَنَّهُ سَبْعَةً أَيْلَ مُضِيَّةُ أَنْتَ حَفِظَتْ، فَهُوَ هَيْبَةٌ إِلَى مَدْنَةٍ مِّنْهُ. وَلَا صَلبٌ، وَلَا يَوْمٌ يَدْخِلُهُ إِلَى اللّهِ.»

وهذا هو ما يفهمه القارئ، الآيات الواردة في شأن نهایة عبسي مع قومه. وقف على سنة الله مع أنبيائه حين يتألب عليهم خصومهم، ومنه خلا ذهنه من تلك الروايات التي لا ينبغي أن محكم في القرآن، ولست أدرى كيف يكون إنقاذ عبسي طريق انزاعه من بينهم، ورفعه بجسده إلى السماء مكرأ؟ وكيف يوصف بأنه خير من مكرم مع أنه شئ ليس في استنطاهم.

ألا إنه لا ينفق سكر في مقابلة سكر إلا إذا كان جاريا على أسلوبه غير خرج عن منطقية العادة فيه. وقد جاء مثل هذا في شأن محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم: «وَإِذْ بَيَّنَكَ بِلِدَنَّكَ كَفُّرُوا لِيَبْشَرُوا أَوْ يَنْفَعُكَ أَوْ يُفْتَلْكَ.»
رفع عيسى ليس هزيمة إنفراد منكرها:
والخلاصة من هذا البحث:

1- أنه ليس في القرآن الكريم، ولا في السنة المطهرة مستند يصلح لتكوين عقيدة يجعل منها الغلب بأن عيسى رفع يحبسه إلى السماء وأهله حي إلى الآن فيها وأنه سيزيل منها آخر الزمان إلى الأرض.

2- أن كل ما نفيه الآيات الورادة في هذا الآتي هو وعد الله عيسى بأنه سوف يجده ورائه إلى عاصمه من الذين كفروا، وأن هذا الوعد قد تحقق فلم يقتله أعداؤه ولم يصليوه، ولكن وفاء الله أخه ورضمه إليه.

3- أن من أنكر أن عيسى قد رفع يحبسه إلى السماء، وأنه فيها حي إلى الآن، وأنه سيزيل منها آخر الزمان، فإنه لا يكون بذلك منكرًا لما نبأ، بل هو حكم عين عن إسلامه وإيمانه، ولا ينبغي أن يخرج عن علمه بالرد.

4- وهو سلم مؤمن، إذا مات فهو من المؤمنين، يصل عليه كما يصل على المؤمنين، ويذهبن في مقابر المؤمنين، ولا شبه في إيمانه عنه الله، والله يعده خير بصير.
Islamic Fatwa from AL-AZHAR UNIVERSITY Egypt about the Ascend / Descend matter of Jesus (Eisa son of Mary) PBUH

Reputation of Al-Azhar University

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

EXALTATION OF JESUS

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

FATWA STARTS FROM HERE:

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

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

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

2. In the chapter The Women Allah says: “And for their saying: We have killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allâh, and they killed him not, nor did they cause his death on the cross, but was made to appear to them as such. And certainly those who differ therein are in doubt about it. They have no
knowledge about it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for certain: Nay, Allâh exalted him in His presence. And Allâh is ever Mighty, Wise”.3

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

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

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

The word tawaffâ is used in so many places of the Qur’an in the sense of death that it has become its foremost meaning. This word is used in a different sense only when there is a clear indication as to the other meaning: “Say: The angel of death, who is given charge of you, shall cause you to die;”2 “(As for) those whom the angels caused to die while they are unjust to
themselves;”3 “And if thou couldst see when the angels will cause to die those who disbelieve,”4 “Our messengers cause him to die”;5 “And of you is he who is caused to die;”6 “Until death takes them away;”7 “Make me die in submission and join me with the righteous.”8

The word tawaffaytani in this particular verse primarily means natural death which is known to everybody. The Arabic-speaking people understand this and only this meaning of the word with reference to the context. Therefore, had there been nothing else to indicate the end of Jesus in this verse even then it would have been improper and wrong to say that Prophet Jesus was alive, and not dead. There is no room for the view that the word wafåt here means the death of Jesus after his descent from the heavens—a view held by some who think that Jesus is still alive in the heavens and would come down from there in the latter days. For, this verse clearly denotes the relation of Jesus with his own people and not with any other people of the latter days. The people of the latter age would admittedly be the followers of Muhammad and not of Jesus.

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

Firstly, on those reports in which the descent of Jesus is mentioned after the (appearance of) Anti-Christ. But these reports are at variance with and contradictory to one another in their words and meanings. The difference is so great that there is no room for any reconciliation among them. The scholars of Hadith have plainly stated this fact. Moreover they are reported by Wahâb bin Munnabba and Ka‘b Akbar, who were converts from the People of the Book. And their status is well known to critics of Traditions.
Secondly, on a report by Abu Huraira that mentions the descent of Jesus. If this report is proved to be true, even then it is only an isolated report. And there is a consensus of opinion of the scholars of Hadith that such isolated reports can neither be made the basis of a doctrinal belief, nor can they be trusted with regard to things unseen.

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

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

Thus when these people interpret the Hadith they quote this verse to support their imaginary meaning of the Hadith; and while interpreting the verse they cite this Hadith to support their imaginary explanation of the verse. When we turn to the revealed words of God: “I will cause you to die and exalt you in My presence,” in the chapter The Family of ‘Imrân along with the words: “Nay! Allâh exalted him in His presence,” in the chapter The Women, we find that the latter verse fulfills the promise that was made in the former one. This promise was about the death and exaltation of Jesus Christ, and his exoneration from the false charges of the disbelievers. Thus even if the latter verse had mentioned just his rafa‘ towards God and had no reference to his death and exoneration from the false charges even then it should have been our duty to take note of all those matters that are referred to in the former verse; so that both the verses might be reconciled.
The actual meaning of the verse therefore is that Allah caused Jesus to die and exalted him and sanctified him against the charges of his enemies. Allâma Alwâsi has interpreted verse (inni mutawaffû ka) in many ways. The clearest of these interpretations is that “I will complete the lease of your life and will cause you to die and will not let those people dominate you who try to kill you.” For, completing the period of his life and causing him to die a natural death indicates that Jesus was saved from being slain and from the mischief of his enemies. Obviously rafa‘ after death cannot mean any physical ascension, but only exaltation in rank, especially when the words “I will clear you of those who disbelieve” are present along with it. This shows that it is a question of spiritual honour and exaltation.

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

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

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

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

To sum up:

1. There is nothing in the Holy Quran, nor in the sacred Traditions of the Prophet, which endorses the correctness of the belief to the contentment of heart that Jesus was taken up to heaven with his body and is alive there even now, and would descend therefrom in the latter days.
2. The Quranic verses about Jesus show that God had promised to cause him to die a natural death, then to exalt him and save him from the mischief of the disbelievers and this promise had certainly been fulfilled. His enemies could neither kill him nor crucify him, but God completed the span of his life and then caused him to die.

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

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This is end of fatwa