

Ruling Regarding the One Who Denies the Return of

عليه السلام 'Esā

Darulifta Ahlesunnat (Dawateislami)

Question

What do the noble scholars and jurists of Islamic law say about the following: What is the ruling regarding the person who denies that 'Esā عليه السلام will return? Is he a kāfir (disbeliever)?

Answer

The belief of Ahl al-Sunnah is that 'Esā عليه السلام is alive, he was raised to the heavens, and death did not occur to him. Near the day of judgment, He عليه السلام will descend back to earth and will live for many years before passing away. The return of 'Esā عليه السلام to the earth is one of the many signs of the day of judgment and a truth. Belief in this is from the Durūriyat (essential beliefs) of Ahl al-Sunnah because it is proven through Mutawātir aḥādīth. Whoever denies this is out of the folds of Ahl al-Sunnah and is gravely mistaken and misguided. However, they will not be declared a kāfir.

Allāh Almighty states:

﴿وَإِنَّهُ لَعَلْمٌ لِلسَّاعَةِ﴾

Translation (Kanz al-'Irfān): And say, "Indeed he is news of the Hour". (Part 25, Sūrah al-Zukhruf 43, Verse 61)

'Allāmah Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl Bin 'Umar Ibn Kasīr Dimishqī رحمه الله تعالى عليه (d. 774 AH/1373 CE) writes in the commentary of this verse:

قال مجاهد: "وَإِنَّهُ لَعَلْمٌ لِلسَّاعَةِ" أي: آية للساعة خروج عيسى ابن مريم قبل يوم القيامة، وهكذا روي عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه وابن عباس وأبي العالية وأبي مالك وعكرمة والحسن وقتادة والضحاك وغيرهم، وقد تواترت الأحاديث عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه أخبر بنزول عيسى ابن مريم عليه السلام قبل يوم القيامة إماما عادلا وحكما مقسطا

Translation: Mujāhid has stated: "Indeed he is news of the Hour" means that the descending of 'Esā Ibn Maryam عليه السلام before the day of judgment is a sign of the day of judgment. This has been narrated by Abū Hurairah and Ibn 'Abbās, Abū 'Āliyah, Abū Mālik, 'Ikramah, al-Ḥasan, Qatadah, and Dahḥāk. Mutawātir aḥādīth have been narrated from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ in which he informed that 'Esā Ibn Maryam عليه السلام will descend as a just Imām and ruler before the day of judgment. (Tafsīr Ibn Kasīr, Tafsīr Surah al-Zukhruf, Vol. 07, p. 236, Publ. Dār Taibah) The famous exegete of the Qur'ān, Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān Na'imī رحمه الله تعالى عليه (d. 1391 AH/1971 CE) writes in the commentary of the above-mentioned verse:

معلوم ہوا کہ عیسیٰ علیہ السلام کا قریب قیامت اترنا برحق ہے؛ کیونکہ وہ علامت قیامت ہے۔

Translation: We learn that the descending of 'Esā علیہ السلام close to the day of judgment is a truth, as this is a sign of the day of judgment. (Tafsīr Nūr al-'Irfān, p. 787, Publ. Farīd Book Depot Limited, Delhi)

There is a ḥadīth narrated in Sahīh al-Bukhārī, Sahīh Muslim, Jāmi' Tirmizi, Musnad Aḥmad, etc.:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: والذي نفسي بيده، ليوشكن أن ينزل فيكم ابن مريم حكماً مقسطاً فيكسر الصليب ويقتل الخنزير ويضع الجزية ويفيض المال حتى لا يقبله أحد

Translation: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ stated: I swear by the one in whose control is my soul, Ibn Maryam will soon descend amongst you as a just ruler. He will break the cross, he will kill swine, he will abolish Jizyah, and there will be such an abundance of wealth that there will be no one who will accept it. (Sahīh al-Bukhārī, Book of Trading, Chapter of Killing pigs, Vol. 02, p. 774, Ḥadīth No. 2109, Publ. Dār Ibn Kasīr, Damascus)

The Imām of Ahl al-Sunnah, Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān رحمه الله تعالى عليه (d. 1340AH / 1921 CE) writes:

وعقيدة نزوله من ضروريات مذهب أهل السنة نطقت به الأحاديث المتواترة، فمن أنكرها أو أولها بخروج رجل يماثل عيسى فهو ضال مضل، والصحيح الثابت بالدلائل: أنه عليه الصلوة والسلام رفع حياً ولم يطرأ عليه الموت إلى أن ينزل فيحكم الدين ثم يتوفى فيدفن مع رسول الله صلى الله تعالى عليه وسلم، وهذا قول الجمهور والمخالف فيه من المخطئين

Translation: The belief about the descending of 'Esā علیہ السلام is from the essential beliefs of Ahl al-Sunnah. Mutawatir aḥādīth mention this. Hence, whoever denies this or makes interpretations to the fact that a person was made to resemble 'Esā علیہ السلام is misguided himself and a cause of misguidance. The correct opinion that is established through evidence is that He علیہ السلام was ascended alive and death did not befall him. Then he will descend, and he will strengthen the religion. Then he will pass away and be buried with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. This is the opinion of the majority of scholars. The one who differs in this is mistaken. (Al-Mu'tamad al-Mustanad 'Alā al-Mu'taqad al-Muntaqad, Chapter 3 about Sam'iyāt, p. 305, Publ. Dār Ahl al-Sunnah, Karachi)

He رحمه الله تعالى عليه also states:

جمہور ائمہ کرام کا مذہب یہی ہے کہ سیدنا عیسیٰ علیہ الصلوٰۃ والسلام نے ابھی انتقال نہ فرمایا، قریب قیامت نزول فرمائیں گے، دجال کو قتل کریں گے، برسوں رہ کر انتقال فرمائیں گے، روضہ پاک حضور سید عالم صلی اللہ تعالیٰ علیہ وسلم میں ایک مزار کی جگہ خالی ہے، وہاں دفن ہوں گے۔

Translation: The opinion of the majority of the scholars is that 'Esā علیہ الصلوٰۃ والسلام has not yet passed away. He will descend near the day of judgment. He will kill Dajjal. He will pass away after living for several years. There is one space left for a grave in the rawḍah of the Noble Rasūl ﷺ; he will be buried there. (Fatāwā Razawiyah, Vol. 29, p. 547, Publ. Razā Foundation, Lahore)

Faqīh-E-Millat, Muftī Jalāl-Uddīn Aḥmad Amjadi رحمه الله تعالى عليه (d. 1423 AH/2001 CE) was asked:

قیامت کے آثار میں سے یہ بھی ہے کہ حضرت عیسیٰ علیہ السلام دمشق کی جامع مسجد کے مینارے پر اتریں گے اور امام مہدی رضی اللہ عنہ کے پیچھے نماز ادا فرمائیں گے اور شادی بھی فرمائیں گے اور اولاد بھی ہوگی اور پھر حضور صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کے روضۃ انور میں دفن ہوں گے۔ زید کہتا ہے کہ اس پر میرا ایمان ہے، اور بکر کہتا ہے کہ میں ان باتوں کو نہیں مانتا، تو زید کا قول احادیث کریمہ سے ثابت ہے یا نہیں؟ اور بکر کے بارے میں شریعت کا کیا حکم ہے؟

Translation: A sign of the day of judgment is that 'Esā علیہ السلام will descend onto the minaret of the Grand Mosque of Damascus. Then he will offer salah in congregation with Imām Mahdī رضی اللہ تعالیٰ عنہ. He will also marry and have children and will later be buried in the rawḍah of the Prophet ﷺ. Zaid states: I believe this, and Bakr states: I do not believe these things. The question is, are Zaid's statements proven from the aḥādīth or not? Furthermore, what is the ruling of Sharī'ah about Bakr?

To this, he replied:

زید کا قول احادیث کریمہ معتبرہ سے ثابت ہے، اور بکر جو مذکورہ باتوں کو نہیں مانتا وہ گمراہ ہے، اس پر توبہ لازم ہے۔

Translation: Zaid's statements are proven from the blessed aḥādīth. Bakr, who does not believe these things, is misguided, and he must repent. (Fatāwā Faiz-Ur-Rasūl, Vol. 01, p. 78, Publ. Akbar Book Sellers, Lahore)

وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَرَسُوْلُهُ اَعْلَمُ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَاٰلِهٖ وَسَلَّمَ

(Allah Almighty knows best and His Messenger ﷺ knows best.)

Answered By: Mufti Muhammad Qasim Attari

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