

REVIEW ARTICLE

# The Qur'anic and Biblical Perspective on Muslim and Christian's Belief in the Return of Isa (as): An Analytical Study

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## Abstract

Islam and Christianity are among the most admired universal religions in the world. As known by many, these two religions have different origins, owing to the fact that both of them have initially been propagated in different geographical areas, different circumstances, as well as in different times, almost six centuries apart. However, both religions possess a number of significant similarities that have been confirmed by their own Holy Scriptures, namely the Quran and the Bible. The most significant similarities may include; belief in monotheistic religion, the sovereignty of God, prophets and prophecy, Judgment day, Heaven and Hell, the birth of Isa (as), the identity of Isa (as), the second coming of Isa (as), and many more. Hence, this article will focus on a particular similarity between these two religions, which is their beliefs in the second coming of Isa (as), according to their own perceptions, in reference to the necessary reliable sources. In addition, some misconceptions of Christians about the return of Isa (as) will be examined according to the Quranic perspective.

**Keywords:** Qur'anic, Biblical Perspective, Return of Isa (as), Muslim, Christian's Belief, Misconceptions of Christians.

## 1. Introduction

In both Islamic and Christian theology, the eschatological doctrines surrounding the return of Isa (as) (Jesus) are among the most important and hotly contested subjects. Not only do these ideas impact the religious perspectives of millions of followers, but they also have an impact on the interfaith relations between the two biggest religions globally. Christianity frequently views Jesus' return as a spectacular, climactic event that will mark the end of time and the installation of God's reign on earth, during which he will judge both the living and the dead. This narrative is portrayed as the realisation of biblical prophecies and is firmly ingrained in Christian eschatology. The idea that Jesus, as the son of God, would return to

establish his divine power and carry out judgement—as suggested by several New Testament passages—is fundamental to this belief (Christians, M., 2023).

On the other hand, Islamic eschatology offers a very distinct viewpoint on Isa's (as) return. The function and identity of Jesus are viewed within the framework of Islamic theology, which firmly emphasises monotheism and the finality of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) prophet hood, even if Muslims also believe in his second coming. Islamic tradition states that Isa (as) would return as an adherent of Islamic teachings, upholding Shari'ah (Islamic law) and dispelling myths regarding his identity and mission rather than as a judge or a heavenly figure. His predicted return is described in great length in the Quran and

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Hadith literature, which also emphasises his part in overthrowing the Antichrist (Dajjal), doing away with erroneous religious traditions, and ushering in a time of justice and monotheism (Cuciniello, A., 2022).

The differing perspectives about the return of Isa (as) have significant theological ramifications since they mirror the wider doctrinal divisions between Christianity and Islam. Christians believe that Jesus will return because they uphold the major doctrines of his crucifixion, resurrection, and divine sonship—all of which are categorically denied by Islamic theology (Alma'itah, Q. S., & Ul Haq, Z., 2022). Muslims adamantly maintain that Isa (as) was revived by Allah rather than crucified or murdered, and that his reappearance will serve as evidence of the survival and primacy of Islamic monotheism. This essential difference highlights the two religions' divergent eschatological outlooks and theological underpinnings (Paul, K. O., 2022).

It is essential to comprehend these distinctions in order to promote mutual respect and communication between Muslims and Christians, as well as theological clarity. The divergent accounts of Isa's (as) return offer a prism through which to consider more general themes of divine justice, prophecy, and humanity's ultimate fate. This research attempts to shed light on the complex and sometimes misinterpreted facets of this important eschatological event by exploring the scriptural and doctrinal roots of both religions. By examining the similarities and variations in how Isa (as) has been portrayed, the study also aims to shed light on how these ideas have influenced religious identity and interfaith interactions over the course of centuries. The aim of this study is to further the scholarly conversation by providing a thorough examination of the return of Isa (as) from both Islamic and Christian viewpoints. The research will clarify each viewpoint's theological foundations and ramifications by closely examining major religious scriptures and reputable commentaries. The research attempts to enhance comprehension of this crucial facet of eschatological religion by highlighting aspects of convergence and divergence through the use of a comparative perspective. In the end, our investigation aims to foster courteous and knowledgeable discourse, closing gaps between the two religious traditions and enhancing the larger discussion on religious eschatology.

## 2. Isa (as) in the Quran and Bible

Allah SWT has drawn our attention regarding Isa (as), who has been considered as a very anomalous man

compared to all other men on the earth, throughout his entire life. The Quran has also confirmed on his virgin birth; a type of creation with which we are not familiar (Yahya, 2001). In this regard, Allah has stated that Isa (as) is His word, as He says: "*The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, was but a messenger of Allah and His word which He directed to Mary and a soul [created at a command] from Him*" (Surah an-Nisa: 171).

Indeed, there is no doubt that the birth of Isa (as) was a miracle. Although he was born to a virgin, however, he is not entitled to any kind of worship. To relate, If Isa (as) deserves any worship due of his miraculous birth, then Prophet Adam would have deserved it more than him as He was created without a father or mother (al-Sheha, n.d.). This clearly indicates that Isa (as) does not deserve worship. Not even that, it is also a well-known fact that delivering a baby without having any kind of assistance from an experienced person such as doctor, nurse, or midwife is not easy. However, if we recall the story of Maryam, the mother of Isa (as), she was alone during the delivery and Allah showered His Mercy upon her while she was feeling the severe labour pains. In fact, Allah has inspired her and instructed her in each and every step and she gave birth to her baby Jesus painlessly; in the best circumstances. Allah has mentioned this wonderful story in the Quran and discussed the great favours granted to Maryam, He says: "*The pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm tree. She said, "Oh, I wish I had died before this and was in oblivion, forgotten." But he called her from below her, "Do not grieve; your Lord has provided beneath you a stream. And shake toward you the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop upon you ripe, fresh dates. So eat and drink and be contented. And if you see from among humanity anyone, say, 'Indeed, I have vowed to the Most Merciful abstention, so I will not speak today to [any] man*" (Surah Maryam: 23-26).

The event of the coming of Isa (as) to the earth is undeniably an absolute miracle. In fact, Allah has tested Maryam and her people by that phenomenal incident (Yahya, 2001). Besides his birth, another miracle has also happened; which is about Isa (as)' speaking while he was still in the cradle. As stated in the Qur'an: "*Then she brought him to her people, carrying him. They said, "O Mary, you have certainly done a thing unprecedented". O sister of Aaron, your father was not a man of evil, nor was your mother unchaste". So she pointed to him. They said, "How can we speak to one who is in the cradle as a child? [Jesus] said, "Indeed, I am the servant of Allah. He*

*has given me the Scripture and made me a prophet*" (Surah Maryam: 27-30).

Here, the 30th verse has shown a conclusive evidence that Isa (as) is among the Messengers of Allah and not His son. Allah has chosen him to convey to the people the message of faith in His oneness, as He says: "*The Messiah, son of Mary, was not but a messenger; [other] messengers have passed on before him. And his mother was a supporter of truth. They both used to eat food. Look how we make clear to them the signs; then look at how they are deluded*" (Surah ma'idah:75).

In order to assure people for believing in the revealed message from Allah and following His prophets, the Almighty has granted them tangible miracles to prove His permission, as what has been highlighted in the Qur'an: "*And We have already sent messengers before you and assigned to them, wives and descendants. And it was not for a messenger to come with a sign except by permission of Allah. For every term is a decree*" (Surah al- Ra'd:38).

To explain, Isa (as) had exhibited incredible miracles to his people with the permission of the Almighty. The most significant miracles of Isa (as) include; his speaking while still in the cradle (as mentioned above precisely), designing birds from clay, breathing life into it by the will of Allah, healing the lepers and a man born blind and bringing the dead back to life by the permission of Allah (al-Sheha, n.d). As the Almighty has stated in the Qur'an:

*"The Day when Allah will say, "O Jesus, Son of Mary, remember My favour upon you and upon your mother when I supported you with the Pure Spirit and you spoke to the people in the cradle and in maturity; and [remember] when I taught you writing and wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel; and when you designed from clay [what was] like the form of a bird with My permission, then you breathed into it, and it became a bird with My permission; and you healed the blind and the leper with My permission; and when you brought forth the dead with My permission; and when I restrained the Children of Israel from [killing] you when you came to them with clear proofs and those who disbelieved among them said, "This is not but obvious magic"* (Surah Ma'idah:110).

In this context, Muslims strongly believe that Prophet Isa (as) was not killed by the Jews, but rather Allah raised him up to Himself. The holy Quran has also directly stated that Isa (as) was neither dead nor murdered (Yahya, 2001): "*And [for] their saying,*

*"Indeed, we have killed the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, the messenger of Allah." And they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him; but [another] was made to resemble him to them. And indeed, those who differ over it are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge of it except the following assumption. And they did not kill him, for certain". Rather, Allah raised him to Himself. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise*" (Surah an- Nisa: 157-158).

The above verses have clarified that the Jews' claim of killing Isa (as) is just an assumption. In fact, Allah has revealed the truth that Jews have failed to kill Jesus. He was rather raised up to the presence of Allah (al-Zuhaili, 1418 AH). However, the word "him" in the above two verses is undeniably used for the Prophet 'Isa (as) (Yahya, 2001). To elucidate, we should have a close look at the next verse in Surah an-Nisa: "*There is not one of the people of the book who will believe in him before he dies; and on the Day of Rising he will be a witness against them*" (Surah an-Nisa: 159). This verse has clearly indicated that the word "him" is only used for Isa (as) (Yahya, 2001). To relate, the holy Bible has also described about Isa (as) in a similar way as the Quran. The event of the birth of Isa (as) has great significance to Christians, in which this event is considered as unusual and they believe in Isa (as) as the son of God. Indeed, with His might, it is far from impossible for God to send someone to the earth without a father, leaving His sign. Similarly, He has also created angels, Adam, and also Eve "*Hawwa*". Though it is strange and impossible for men to create miraculous events, however, it is not difficult for God to bring innumerable creations into existence with only one word, as "*He says 'Be' and it is*" (Surah al-Baqarah: 117).

Besides, there is also a statement of the New Testament that has described the story of the birth of Isa (as), as Luke says:

*"And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth. To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her; and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the*

*Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom, there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, how shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*" (Luke 1:26-35). In this sense, the statement has explained that Gabriel went to Mary in Nazareth and saluted her, spoke to her and said: Thou hast found favour with God; for which Gabriel has illuminated the term "favour" because Mary is going to conceive and deliver a baby, while guiding her to the name of the baby as Isa (as) (Niazi, 1981).

In order to show people the right path, the Almighty Allah has sent down an enormous number of prophets to all nations. All the prophets have preached the same religion of truth, although the legislations varied according to different conditions of life. However, the fundamental message is the same, which include: worshiping the only one God, following prophets, etc. Similarly, Isa (as) has conveyed the same fundamental message to his people and taught them to follow the right path. He also has taught his people that there is only one God and the Bible has confirmed it with many verses (Niazi, 1981). For instance, the Bible says: "*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*" (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). "*For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone*" (Psalms 86:10). "*O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord*" (Mark 12:29). All of these verses have clearly stated that there is only one God and it has been a significant fundamental message of all Prophets, which is part of the teachings of Isa (as).

Another core teaching of Isa (as) was telling the people to have faith in the Hereafter. As mentioned in the Holy Bible: "*Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment*" (Job 19:29). "*And he shall judge the world in righteousness; he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness*" (Psalms 9:8).

This is one of the significant similarities between Muslims and Christians, in which both religions have agreed upon believing in the Hereafter. Not even that, the holy Bible also has described the miracles of Isa (as). For example, walking on water is among the miracles of Isa (as) that is stated in the New Testament.

When Isa (as) fed about five thousand people, they were amazed by his kindness and had made Isa (as) to be their king. Then, he obliged his followers to get into the boat in order to reach the other side of the sea (Booth, 2005). After he convinced his followers, Isa (as) went up the mountain to pray. The night got dark and the strong wave and storm caught the boat of the followers. Then Isa (as) came down from the hill and started walking on the sea. The verse which has described the miracle is: "*And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit, and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid*" (Matthew 14:26-27).

Furthermore, Allah has also bestowed him with the ministry of healing, which is one of the significant miracles of Isa (as). As he says: "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised*" (Luke 4:18).

To elucidate, there is a number of stories of healing of the sick that include; the afflicted women (Mark, 5:25-34), the Leper (Matt, 8:14), the centurion's servant (Matt, 8:5-13), the blind and mute demoniac (Mark, 3:19-30) two blind men and mute demoniac (Matt, 9:27-34), and so on (Booth, 2005). In line with this, raising the dead alive was also a distinguished miracle of Isa (as), which was a bestowed authority from the Almighty God; as he raised a widow's son after he died of an unknown cause (Dowler, 2008). It is found in Luke: "*And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother*" (Luke 7:13-15). Both the Quran and the Bible have highlighted the miracles of Isa (as) and indicated that Isa (as) had been bestowed with miracles, just like the other Prophets. However, it is obvious that though Isa (as)' miracles are undeniable; he should not be ascribed as equated with God.

### 3. Muslim's Belief in the Return of Isa (as)

Muslims believe that Jesus was not dead but he was raised up to the heaven. In addition, they also believe in the descent of Jesus at the end of time, which He would rule the earth according to the Islamic Shari'ah; but just as a ruler, not God or Prophet, as has been

recorded by Sahih Muslim: *“By the One in whose hand is my soul, the son of Mary will descend among you as a just judge”* (Muslim, Hadith no. 155). At the end of time, ignorance would be rampant and widespread, for which people would be detached from the belief (al-Sheha, n.d.). Yet, there is no direct verse in the Quran that ensures the return of Isa (as) in honor or glory. Still, the Quran has mentioned this issue very explicitly (Yahya, 2001).

A number of verses of the Quran have highlighted on the second coming of Jesus, as follows: The Almighty has stated: *[Mention] when Allah said, “O Jesus, indeed I will take you and raise you to Myself and purify you from those who disbelieve and make those who follow you [in submission to Allah alone] superior to those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me is your return, and I will judge between you concerning that in which you used to differ.* (Al-Imran: 55).

To elucidate, a beautiful interpretation of the statement *“raise you to Myself”* in the verse is that Allah has lifted Jesus to the Heaven alive with his body and soul, and would descend him at the end of time. After that, Jesus would rule the earth according to the Islamic legislation, and Allah would take away his life (az-zuhaili, 1418 AH). In this regard, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has also illustrated about this matter in a hadith: *“Verily, ‘Isa did not die and surely he will return to you before the Day of Judgment”* (al-Tabari M. i., 2000). He also has said: *“Jesus will descend to Damascus, by the white minaret”* (Sunan Abu Dawood, 4:117).

In line with this, Allah has also mentioned that: *“There is not one of the people of the Book who will not believe in him before he dies; and on the Day of Raising he will be a witness against them”* (surah al-Nisa: 159). To emphasize, the statement *“who will not believe in him before he dies”* should be noted here. A number of exegetes have stated that, referring to the two previous verses (157-158) in the same chapter, the pronoun *“him”* in verse 159 is used only to refer to Isa (as) (Yahya, 2001). This leads to the fact that all people of the Book would have faith in Isa (as) when he comes down again to defeat the Antichrist *‘Dajjal’*; this is the religion of Islam, the absolutely true religion of Abraham (peace be upon him). To relate, Abu Malik has stated that *“it will happen during the descent of Isa (as), all people of the Book will believe in him”* (al-Tabari, 2000). Hence, it could be observed that the afore-mentioned verse has indicated the return of Isa (as).

Furthermore, the Almighty has also informed us about the return of Jesus in another verse of Surah al-zukhruf, which is: *“He is a Sign of the Hour. This is a straight path”* (Surah al-zukhruf: 61). To explain, Ibn Juzayy has made a very wonderful interpretation for this verse, which he has asserted that Jesus is one of the signs of the Last Day (Yahya, 2001). A narration from Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, and Qatadah also has stated that the pronoun *“He”* is referring to Jesus and it is interpreted that the descent of Jesus is a sign of the Last Day (‘Ashur, 1984). Therefore, it is very obvious that the verse has evidently indicated Jesus’s return at the end of time. In relation, some other verses also have indicated the return of Isa (as), as follows:

The Holy Quran has declared: *“He will teach him the Book and wisdom, and the Torah and the Injil”* (Surah Al-Imran: 48). However, the word *“Book”* in this verse is highly questionable, as to which Book that is being referred to; is it referring to the Quran or any other books? In order to have a clear answer for this question, we should have a close look at some verses; for instance, Allah has stated: *“And when I taught you the Book and Wisdom, and the Torah and the Injil; and when you created a bird-shape out of clay by My permission”* (Surah al-Ma’idah: 110).

In this sense, scholars have asserted that the same word *“Book”* in both of the following verses may indicate the Quran. This is due to the fact that there is only one divine book on the earth apart from the Torah, Zabur, and Injil. In another verse, the word *“Book”* is used next to the Torah and Injil, to indicate the Quran; as Allah has said: *“He has sent down the Book to you with truth, confirming what was there before it. And He sent down the Torah and the Injil, previously, as guidance for mankind, and He has sent down the Furqan”* (Surah al-Imran: 3-4). Therefore, based on the available evidence, it is logical to assume that that the third book that would be taught to Jesus is the Quran, strengthening the possibility of his return to the earth towards the end of time (Yahya, 2001).

#### 4. Christian's Belief in the Return of Isa (as)

The resurgence of Jesus in the world is one of the fundamental parts of Christian faith. Since the beginning of time, Christians have believed that Jesus would return soon to the earth; though it did not happen during that time. Still, the belief in the second coming of Jesus at the end of time remains in their doctrine (Robinson, 1991). In this matter, many

verses of the Bible have confirmed the return of Jesus at the end of the Last Hour, as follows:

Jesus Christ has made a pledge that he would return to the earth (hilltopth.org., n.d.). His promise was: *“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also”* (John 14:1-3). In this sense, the statement “I will come again” in this following verse has certified the return of Jesus, which his promise would be fulfilled by God’s will.

Besides, the Bible has assured the return of Jesus, and stated that he would come again to release and rescue the people who believe in God from the satanic rule, as mentioned in the Hebrews: *“And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation”* (Hebrews 9:28). Indeed, this amazing return will build a new world and change the lives of people who are still alive during that time. However, the exact time of his return remains unknown; God alone possesses the knowledge on this matter (Christadelphian Bible Mission, n.d.). In this regard, Isa (as) has stated that: *“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only”* (Matthew 24:36).

In relation, Garry Wills has discussed this fact in his book, and he has mentioned a verse from John, to prove the resurrection of Jesus (Viking, 2006). To explain, Isa (as) has said that: *“I have the power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again”* (John 10:18). Moreover, the Bible has also described the manner of Isa (as)’ return, in which He would return as he went back to the heaven. The biblical statement that has indicated this matter is: *“this same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven”* (Acts 1:11).

It explains that Isa (as) would return to the earth in a visible form and everyone would be able to see him, as mentioned in the Revelation: *“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen”* (Revelation 1:7). When Isa (as) will come to the world again, he would have great power and glory, as highlighted in Matthew: *“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of*

*the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory”* (Matthew 24:30).

## 5. Christian’s Misconceptions and Response from the Islamic Perspective

### 5.1 Isa (as) would Return to Judge

Modern Christians believe that Isa (as) would return to judge the world at the end of the time, for which they have asserted that: *“Because he has appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he has ordained; whereof he has given assurance unto all men, in that he has raised him from the dead”* (Acts 17:31). On the other hand, according to the Quranic perspective, judgement only belongs to the Almighty Allah (Philips, 1996). As Allah says: *“All authority on that Day is for Allah alone, He will judge between them”* (Surah Al-Hajj: 56).

In this regard, when the Last Hour takes place, the authority and kingship would belong to Allah alone and nobody would get a chance to dispute. Then, He would separate polytheists from believers, judging between them (al-Tabari M. i., 2000). There is a hadith which has mentioned the purposes of Isa (as)’ return, but it does not indicate that Isa (as) would return to judge the world. As the Prophet (ﷺ) has said: *“There is no prophet between me and him, that is, Jesus (ﷺ). He will return (to the earth). When you see him, recognise him: a man of medium height, reddish fair; wearing two light yellow garments, looking as if drops were falling down from his head though it will not be wet. He will fight the people for the cause of Islam. He will break the cross, kill swine, and abolish jizyah. Allah will perish all religions except Islam. He will destroy the Antichrist and will live on the earth for forty years and then he will die. The Muslims will pray over him”* (Abu Dawood, Hadith no. 4324).

According to this authentic hadith, the purposes of Isa (as)’ return include fighting for establishing Islam, breaking the cross, killing swine, abolishing jizyah, and destroying the antichrist; not judging the world. To relate, there is also a Hadith that says: *“Surely (Jesus) the son of Mary will soon descend amongst you and will judge mankind justly”* (Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith no. 3448). In this matter, the word ‘judge’ has invited uncertainty among Muslims; what does ‘judging’ mean here? Will he be judge as God or son of God? Or, will he judge as a just ruler? Muslim commentators have asserted that the actual meaning of ‘judging’ here is; Isa (as) would be sent down to

the earth and he would rule according to the Islamic Shari'ah as it would never be abrogated. Therefore, Isa (as) would be one of the rulers of this Islamic Shari'ah (Al-'asqalani, I. H., 1379).

However, there are numbers of Hadith that have regarded the return of Isa (as) as one of the ten major signs of the coming of the Day of Judgement. As Prophet (PBUH) has said in a hadith: *"It will not come until you see ten signs before and (in this connection) he made a mention of the smoke, Dajjal, the beast, the rising of the sun from the west, the descent of Jesus son of Mary (Allah be pleased with him), the Gog and Magog-, and land-slides in three places, one in the east, one in the west and one in Arabia at the end of which fire would burn forth from the Yemen, and would drive people to the place of their assembly"* (Muslim, Hadith no. 2901).

Therefore, it is evident that Isa (as) would return at the end of the time, fulfilling the major sign of the Day of Judgment, not as a judge of the world. In fact, Isa (as) would be judged by the Almighty Allah just like how the other prophets would be judged on the Day of Judgement. There is a novel verse of the Quran testifying that Allah would ask the prophets about their duties on the earth: *"Then We will surely question those to whom (a message) was sent, and We will surely question the Messengers"* (Al-A'raf: 6). To explain, Ibn Abbas (ra) has commented on this verse: Allah will ask the people how they responded to the Messengers and their messages, and He will ask the Messengers about what they conveyed (al-Tabari M. i., 2000).

## 5.2 Isa (as) will Appear with Holy Cross

One of the beliefs of Christianity regarding Isa (as)' return is that there would be a sign of him, which is the holy cross; showing that he was crucified and he is Christ. As mentioned in Matthew: *"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky"* (Matthew, 24:30). In which it is a well-known fact among Christians that a universal interpretation of the word "Sign" in this verse is the Holy Cross (Santi, 2019). To compare, this totally contradicts with the Quranic perspective, because according to the Christian perspective, the holy cross refers to the instrument of Isa (as)' crucifixion and he would return with this cross to show that he was crucified. Conversely, Muslims firmly believe that Isa (as) was not crucified, but was taken up to the heaven bodily by the Almighty. As the Quran says: *" they said (in boast): We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah; but*

*they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surely they killed him not:- Nay, Allah raised him up to Himself; and Allah is Exalted in Power; Wise"* (An-Nisaa, 4:157-158).

Therefore, it is very clear that neither Isa (as) was crucified and the cross refers to crucifixion nor he would appear with the cross during the time of his return. In fact, he would be the one who breaks the cross, as the Prophet (pbuh) has mentioned: *"He will break the cross"* (Abu Dawood, Hadith no. 4324), manifesting that they have been living in falsehood with his veneration, instead of acting as a symbol of crucifixion (Ahmed, 1323H). In this sense, Ibn Hajar has explained that: *"He will invalidate the religion of Christianity, and for that, he will really break the cross to nullify their claim of veneration for Jesus"* (Hawwa, S., 1992).

## 5.3 Religion at the end

Christians believe that Isa (as) would rule according to the everlasting Gospel and Christianity would be the only one religion at the end of time. As recorded in Matthew: *"This gospel will be preached in the entire world; then the end will come"* (Matthew, 24:14), and likewise in the Revelation: *"The everlasting gospel will be preached in every nation and tongue"* (Revelation, 14:6) (Finley, 2017). Notwithstanding that, Muslims believe that Isa (as) would rule the world by upholding the Islamic shari'ah, and all true believers would become Muslims because Allah would destroy all religions, except Islam (Philips, 1996). As recorded in Sunan E- Abu Dawood: *"He will fight people to establish Islam and he will break the cross, kill the pig, and cancel the Jizyah. During his time, Allah will destroy all religions except Islam and the false Christ (Dajjal) will be killed"* (Sunan Abu Dawood, Hadith no. 4310). In relation, Imam al-Tabari has made a beautiful interpretation of a verse in the Quran: *"It is He who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to manifest it over all religion"* (al-Fath, 48:28), in which he has asserted that Allah has sent prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to propagate the true religion, which is Islam; removing all other religions. Not even that, Isa (as) would also return and defeat Dajjal, and then all religions would be invalidated and become void, except Islam (al-Tabari M. i., 2000).

Hence, it is undeniable that God has sent down Messengers with Books, and the new Books have

always invalidated the precedents. For example; people of both religions believe that the "Torah" (as a new Holy Book) invalidated "Zabur" (as a precedent one), and then "Injil" invalidated the "Torah". Likewise; Allah has sent down Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) with the final revelation, "the Quran", which has invalidated all the previous Holy Books and would remain until the Day of Judgment. Consequently, it is evident that Isa (as) would follow the Islamic Shari'ah and guide people according to the Quranic legislation, not according to the Gospel. This is due to the fact that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has been appointed as the last Messenger, thus; there would be no divine scripture after the Quran, as the Prophet has said: "*I am the last prophet and there is no prophet after me*" (Sunan al-Tirmidhi: 2202).

It means that Isa (as) would be one of the rulers of this Islamic Shari'ah (Al-'asqalani, I. H., 1379). To relate, Isa (as) has also predicted the final prophet and revelation: "*If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray for the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth*" (John 14:15-17). Therefore, it could be observed that Isa (as) would return as a follower of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the Quran, not as a prophet who upholds the previous legislation or the Gospel.

## 6. Methodology

In order to investigate the differing perspectives that Islam and Christianity have on the return of Isa (as), this study uses a qualitative and comparative technique. Primary religious scriptures and reputable commentaries from both faiths serve as the foundation for the investigation. The Christian perspective is drawn from the Bible and other theological books, while the Islamic perspective is explained through an analysis of the Quran and Hadith literature. Renowned Christian theologians and Islamic academics augment this textual research with an investigation of ancient and modern interpretations, offering a thorough comprehension of the theological stances within each faith.

Further, a comparative framework is used to methodically compare and contrast the Christian and Islamic eschatological stories. This entails recognising and evaluating major themes in the context of Isa's return, such as divine judgement, the cross's symbolic meaning, and the supreme religious authority. A historical analysis of the doctrinal development of these ideas is also included

in the paper, along with a path of their history and an analysis of their theological and sociocultural implications. The research endeavours to promote a deeper understanding and facilitate interfaith discourse between Muslims and Christians by synthesising ideas from these investigations and highlighting the theological subtleties and consequences of the various eschatological aspirations. This methodological approach adds to the scholarly conversation on comparative eschatology by guaranteeing a thorough and fair investigation of the subject at issue.

## 7. Discussion

In order to corroborate the explanation at the outset of this article, the author has made an effort to provide a clear understanding of Isa (as) as a person based on the two trustworthy Holy Books, the Bible and the Quran. However, the Quran presents the truth in an oblique manner rather than outright announcing this incredible occurrence. Muslims firmly believe in it, attributing it to the Quran's oblique hint on this miraculous occurrence, which has been interpreted in a variety of ways. Although the Quran does not specifically describe Isa's (as) second coming, it does include verses that many Islamic scholars have interpreted to point to his return. Isa (as) is central to the events leading up to the Day of Judgement in the Islamic eschatological framework, which is firmly rooted in this understanding. The hadith literature, which is a secondary source of Islamic law, affirms Muslims' unwavering trust in this occurrence. Isa (as) will undoubtedly return, according to comments given by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), such as "Verily, 'Isa did not die, and surely he will return to you before the Day of Judgement'" (al-Tabari). The Muslim community's trust in Isa's return has been strengthened by these prophetic traditions, which have integrated it within the larger framework of Islamic eschatology.

Islamic scholarship over the ages has offered much commentary and explanation on the return of Isa (as), in addition to the Quran and Hadith. The scholarly writings of esteemed scholars like al-Tabari and Ibn Kathir provide in-depth interpretations of pertinent hadith and verses from the Quran, highlighting the eschatological importance of Isa (as) in Islam. This academic heritage ensures that the story of Isa (as)'s return is a fundamental component of Islamic eschatological philosophy and continues to influence modern Muslim beliefs. However, the Bible gives a clearer description of Isa's return, with many chapters



specifically prophesying his second coming. “*I will come again*” is a promise made by Jesus to his disciples in John 14:1–3, and it has served as a pillar of Christian eschatological hope ever since. The New Testament makes several references to this promise, which together provide a coherent and persuasive story that is widely accepted by Christians. Christian belief is predicated on the expectation of Isa’s return, which represents the accomplishment of heavenly prophecy and the final salvation of humanity.

Moreover, both faiths agree that the Antichrist’s arrival will come before Jesus’ second coming. This person is referred to as the Dajjal in Islam, and one of the main indicators of the Last Day is his appearance. According to a hadith, “the false Christ (Dajjal) will be killed” (Sunan Abu Dawood), implying that Isa (as) will play a crucial part in defeating this deceitful figure. Similarly, prior to Isa’s return, the Bible forewarns of the advent of false prophets and deceivers. This is recorded in Matthew 24:5, “*For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many.*” This common story highlights how the eschatological frameworks of Islam and Christianity are similar, with Isa (as) emerging as a rescuer who would bring justice and truth back to the world.

One of the most important parallels between Islam and Christianity is the unshakeable belief in the second coming of Isa (as). These beliefs coincide. These two religions have different theologies, but they have something special in common: they both look forward to the return of Isa (as). This common idea has the ability to foster mutual understanding and interfaith conversation, encouraging a cooperative and respectful attitude between Christians and Muslims. Faithful followers of both religions might strive for a more peaceful cohabitation by recognising the shared eschatological themes, which are based on their mutual respect for Isa (as) and the great hope his return represents.

The role of Isa (as) in judgement can be examined to uncover important theological differences between Christianity and Islam. Islamic theology emphasises Allah’s absolute sovereignty on the Day of Judgement, as emphasised in Quranic verses such as Surah Al-Hajj: 56, while Christians frequently see Isa (as) as a heavenly judge. Isa (as) is portrayed in Islamic eschatological traditions as a prophetic person who upholds Islamic ideals, demonstrating how Islamic theology integrates divine sovereignty with prophetic tradition. This sophisticated view

emphasises how eschatological ideas are shaped by the interaction between divine sovereignty and ecclesiastical authority. The cross’s symbolism serves as another example of how Islam and Christianity have different theologies. Muslims reject the story of the crucifixion and believe that Isa (as) will come to nullify the reverence of the cross, whereas Christians understand the cross as a symbol of Isa’s sacrificial death and resurrection. This disparity emphasises how different people have interpreted the Bible and historical events, resulting in different stories about the reliability and accuracy of religion. In the end, the discussion of Isa’s return sheds light on the significant theological distinctions as well as the commonalities between Christian and Islamic eschatology, providing an understanding of the many viewpoints and beliefs surrounding this crucial eschatological event.

## 8. Conclusion

Since all faiths ultimately belong to one God and since all religions’ core teachings are essentially the same, true believers in God should have this view. This explains a great deal about why religions, including Islam and Christianity, have more things in common than differences. Thus, individuals should carefully consider the similarities and affinities across faiths rather than starting pointless discussions about how different they are from one another. Doing so may lead us down the correct road and enable us to realise the ultimate truth. The degree of parallels and divergences, however, differs throughout religions. As this article clarifies, while the belief in Isa’s return at the end of time is a major shared belief between Islam and Christianity, Christians’ and Muslims’ ideas on the specifics of this event differ significantly. Believers in Jesus Christ hold that He will make a reappearance in the form of God or the Son of God, judging the world, showing up bearing the cross, and establishing Christianity as the only true faith. On the other hand, Muslims think that rather than returning as God or the son of God, Isa (as) would return as a disciple of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He will establish Islam as the ultimate religion, shatter the cross, and arrive as a king under Islamic Shari’ah.

This study emphasises how critical it is to comprehend these theological distinctions in light of the specific religious settings in which they exist. Christians believe that Isa’s return is connected to his divinity and his function in divine judgement, which strengthens the central ideas of Christianity about the crucifixion, resurrection, and redemption. Isa (as) is a

highly esteemed prophet to Muslims, whose second coming heralds the Day of Judgement, and whose mission is to restore authentic monotheism and guide mankind in accordance with Islamic principles. Not only are there doctrinal distinctions between Islam and Christianity's eschatological ideas, but they also represent deeper theological and cosmological viewpoints. The Islamic viewpoint incorporates Isa (as) within a cyclical notion of prophetic missions, culminating in the finality of Muhammad's (PBUH) message. In contrast, the Christian narrative stresses a linear history that culminates in the return of Jesus as a divine judge. Muslims' and Christians' separate religious identities and behaviours are shaped by this basic difference.

Examining these eschatological views makes it clear that being respectful and acknowledging these deeply held ideas is necessary for interfaith communication. While acknowledging the differing specifics can promote mutual respect and deeper theological investigation, acknowledging the shared belief in Isa's return can act as a bridge for discussion. Instead of focusing on things that divide, these conversations need to seek to strengthen points of agreement while fostering understanding and peace. In the end, the theological analysis of Isa's homecoming provides important insights into the respective theological frameworks of Islam and Christianity. It emphasises how important it is to approach interfaith discussions with a sophisticated awareness and respect for the distinctive viewpoints of each religion. By doing this, we may foster a more peaceful and inclusive religious discourse that recognises the shared history and unique beliefs that characterise these two main global faiths. This method aids in a more sympathetic and knowledgeable interfaith dialogue, in addition to enhancing the academic study of eschatology.

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