

The Promised Savior of All Religions

Zahra Sabouhi

Abstract: *The holy Qur'an speaks about the Divine survivors who help people while suffering cruelty. Of those are Messiah and Mahdi (p.b.u.h.) whom the article discusses about. Especially it talks more about Mahdi, the only one who cares for humanity and justice on the earth, and different beliefs about the time and place of Minor occultation, (Mahdi's advent reappearance), Messiah's return and some facts about their moral personality in view of some religious sects throughout the world such as Judaism and Islam (both Shia's and Sunnis) by citing and stating some quotations from the scholars and reporting from some Qur'anic verses and Hadiths narrated by Shi'a and Sunni scholars and writers.*

Key words: *Messiah, Jesus Christ, Mahdi, Cellar, Sardab Ul-Ghaybah, Minor occultation, Major occultation, Mahdi's advent, Divine survivor*

In the long history of the messengers who were sent to warn people, they faced many difficulties and obstacles .But after their departure, some people followed their own selfish manners and thus moved away from religious morality.

The holy Qur'an speaks of the oppressed nations, who while suffering hardship, tyranny, and cruelty, expect a savior who will deliver them from their troubles. The verses of Qur'an talk about this belief that is a Divine Survivor and a common core among all religions throughout the history and the world, such as Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam (both Shi'as and Sunnis).

Jewish people expect a savior and the Old Testament contains a great deal of materials on the Messiah's Second Coming. Mainmonides (1135-1204) the famous Jewish writer who lived in Andulucia (Muslim Spain), specified an article of faith out of his thirteen principles for the coming of Messiah. It reads:

"I believe with complete faith in the coming of the Messiah, and though it may tarry, I should wait for him every day."

Some parts of the Old Testament frequently refer to this savior and reveal the righteousness, justice, and happiness that will prevail when his time comes. For instance, the Book of Isaiah reveals the Messiah's great sense of justice, fear of the Lord, and insight, as well as the happiness that will bring to the Children of Israel:

"A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse, from his roots a branch will bear fruit, the spirit of the Lord will rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and of power, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of

the Lord, and he will do light in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears, but with righteousness, he will judge the needy with justice, he will give decisions for the poor of the Earth. He will strike the Earth with the red of his mouth, with the breath of his lips, he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt. The wolf will live with the lamb; the leopard will lie down with the goat; the calf, the lion, and the yearling (will lie down) peacefully next to each other, and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together; the lion will eat straw like the cow. The infant will play near the hole of cobra, and the young child will put his hand into viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the Earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, like the waters covers the sea (Isiah, 11:29)"

About the portents or the clear signs of the Messiah's return, the following phrases were also noted in the Bible as follow:

1. A rise in the number of the Earthquakes
2. Major wars breakout
3. People move away from the religion's moral values
4. The spread of epidemics
5. The appearance of portents in the Sun and the Moon
6. Extraordinary events take place in the sky
7. The degeneration of moral values
8. The emergence of corruption that true believers should avoid
9. The coming of Dajjal (anti-Christ)

10. Famine

11. Love is diminished and anger and hatred are increased

12. People exploit the religion for their personal interests

13. The oppression of true believers

14. Events that inflict pain and suffering

Likewise many verses of the Qur'an may have more than one meaning. They contain signs, and inform us of events that had taken place in our Prophet's time, and indicate events that will take place in the End Times, or The struggles carried out by the prophets and his true followers, and the knowledge which are needed by the people, and there are many Qur'anic verses and Hadiths reported by Shi'as and Sunnis, are pointing to this issue. In Qur'an, there are about 100 verses regarding this coming - the Divine Eminent's coming.

"God has promised those of you who believe and do righteous actions that will make them successors in the land, and he made those before them successors, and will firmly establish for them their religion with which he is pleased, and give them, in place of their fear, security. They worship Me, not associating anything with Me. Any who disbelieve after that, such people are deviators." (Qur'an; Nur: 55)

In addition, it seems necessary to bring some words and traditions by the holy Prophet, Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and his progeny), for more clarification:

Imam Mahdi (p.b.u.h.), just as Dhul Qar'anayn and Solomon, will rule the world.¹

¹ Ibn Hajar Haythami, al-Qawl al-mukhtasar fi alamat al-Mahdi al Montazar, P.29

Now let's move closely, to describe this issue in Sunni's beliefs. The Hadiths narrated in Bukhari and Moslem's Sahihs do not precisely mention the name of Mahdi, but due to the evidences and documents in the other "Sahihs" the content and the meaning have been quite clearly understood. Bukhari in his Sahih quoted from Abu-Horeyreh who narrated from the Holy Prophet which concerns Jesus Christ's descending:

"How could it be that Jesus, the son of Mary, will descend among you, but the leader is one of you, yourselves."

Abu-Dawood wrote in his book "Sonan" the same meaning.

Abu-Dawood in another Hadith (in the book of Mahdi vol.4), and Ibn-Majeh (chapter Khoroj-al Mahdi) narrated from the Holy Prophet, (p.b.u.h.): "Mahdi is from my family and one of the sons of Fatima (p.b.u.h.)."

"The companions of the Cave will be Mahdi's helpers"¹

"The number of Mahdi's helpers will be as many as the number of those who crossed the river with Saul"²

One of the verses in Qur'an,

"Do they then wait for anything other than that the angels should come to them, or some of the miracles of your God should come to them? The day that some of the signs of your God come to them, no good will it do to a person to believe them ,if he did not believe before, nor he did deeds of righteousness through his faith, say, wait, verily, we too will be waiting." (Qur'an; An'am:158)

¹ Al -Muttagi al-Hindi, Al-Burhan fi Alamat -al -Mahdi Akhir Az-zaman, p.59

²same,p.57

In Mosnad of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal it is stated from Abu Saeed Khodri who narrated, from the holy Prophet that:

"The Doom's day will not occur until the Sun rises from the west."

After Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, in Bukhari's Sahih is quoted from Abu-Hurayreh, that holy Prophet expostulated, "That the Resurrection will not occur unless the Sun rises from the west, and then all people will embrace the faith."

We also see the same quotation in Ahmad Nesaie's interpretation. Another Sunni scholar, Abd-ul-Rahman Ibn Khaldoon, in the first chapter of his book, *Al-Ebar Val Divan-al-Mobtada val-Khabar* stated:

"On the case of this Fatima's command and whatever the Muslim people believe concerning it and divulge the secret of the command throughout the history in the End Times by an offspring of the holy Prophet and his rising is inevitable. He promotes the religion, expands the justice; and the Muslims will follow him. His sovereignty will dominate all over the Muslim realms, and He is called Mahdi."

A Shi'a scholar, Shaykh Al-Saduq has quoted, in his books ("Al-Tawhid" and "Kamal-ul-Din va Tamam-ul-Nemat") the same meaning from Imam Ali (p.b.u.h) and the other infallible leader, Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.).

A true understanding and contemplation on it clearly shows that how it can be possible in the universe that the rotation of Sun is altered within one day. In one of the creeds by Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.), he defines the concept of "Rising Sun" for the Awaited Divine Savior.

Shaykh Al-Saduq in his book Yanabi-ul-Mavada in the 12th century quoted from Sadr-ibn-Koofi from Imam Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, that Jesus Christ, in his second coming, will follow and perform his prayer after a person who is the killer of anti-Christ (Dajjal).

In another tradition by Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.) we read, "After the Sun rises from the West, Jesus Christ will follow, in his prayer, the twelfth son of the holy Prophet Muhammad, The 9th offspring of Imam Husain (p.b.u.h.) will stand between the main pillar of Ka'ba and the station of Abraham, in the holy mosque in Mecca and purifies the Earth. Under his sovereignty no one will be oppressed."

The holy Mahdi (p.b.u.h.) in one of his edicts quotes "I am to conclude the Testament, and God will protect my believers by me."

In another epistle Imam Mahdi (p.b.u.h.) states:

"But the quality of individuals" profits from the time of my occultation is like benefiting from the Sun beams."

One of the main points that Shi'a Muslims and followers should be concerned about, is the time and place of Minor Occultation. According to the grand Shi'a scholars marked in the history, the place of the minor is the Cellar (or Sardab ul-Gheybah), which was a residential place and the place for the disappearance for a period that Abbasid agents invaded to capture Him, but failed. Although his holiness has been seen in other places afterwards.

The holy Mahdi (may God hasten his Advent) in his last edict to his last deputy, Ali Ibn Muhammad Samouri stated:

"May God compensate the grief of your brother for you, for you will die during the course of next six days? So prepare

yourself for death and make the will succeed you after the death, since my second and longer Occultation has taken place; and reappearance will not occur except by the order of the Almighty and Glorious God, which will be after a long time, when the hearts become hard, and the Earth will be full of cruelty and injustice. Thereafter, a person will come to my followers claiming to have seen me! Know that anyone who claims to have contact and relation with me, before the rising of Sofiani and the outcry from the sky, is a liar and calumniator. And there is no power and might except from the Almighty God, the Exalted and Great."

His reappearance will be beside the Ka'bba. His rising is beside it, too. He does not know the exact time of his Advent and appearance. His last words before Major Occultation were stated on the tenth of Zilhajj before Ka'bba "O, my Lord! Please perform what you promised me, O' Lord take my revenge from my enemies!"¹

His last words that were uttered by his holiness concluded a Qur'anic verse, which reveals his great suffering and expresses that he is the major one who cares for humanity and justice on the earth:

"Is He who answer supplication when one calls on Him desperately and removes the disaster from him, and the One Who will make you governors on the Earth". (Qur'an; Naml: 62)

¹ Narrated by Saeed ibn Uthman Amri, the second envoy of Imam Mahdi (p.b.u.h.)

References:

1. Abu Dawood Sonan (*Traditions*),
2. Ahmad Nesaie Sonan (*Traditions*)
3. *Al-e bar va Divan-ul-mobtada val-khabar*
4. *Al-Muttayi al-Hindi, Al-Burhan Fi Alamat Mahdi, Akhir az-zaman*
5. *Al-Qawl-al-mukhtasar fi Alamat-Mahdi al-Montazar*
6. *Al-Tawhid and Kamal-ul-Din va Tamam-ul-Nemat*,
(Shaykh Sadoogh)
7. *Bible*
8. Ibn-Majeh Sonan (*Traditions*)
9. *Imam Mahdi's Creeds*
10. *Qu'ran*
11. *Sahih-e Bokhari*
12. *Sahih-e Moslem*