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Question 8: Who is the Mahdi of Muhammad's Progeny {Al Muhammad} and why are you waiting for his advent?

Reply: Among the issues on which the heavenly religions have consensus of opinion is the "Global Reformer" who shall appear at the end of time. Not only the Muslims but also the Jews and Christians are waiting for the advent of this man who will spread justice in the world. A survey of the Old and New Testaments will make this fact clear.¹

In this regard, *muhaddithun* narrate that the Holy Prophet (S) has said:

لو لم يبق من الدهر إلا يوم لبعث الله رجلاً من أهل بيتي يملأها عدلاً كما ملئت جوراً.

Even if only one day is to remain in this world, God will surely send a man from my *Ahl al-Bayt* who shall fill the world with justice and equity just as it has been filled with oppression.²

Therefore, as it has been mentioned earlier, the belief in the coming of such a reformer is commonly acknowledged by the authorities of the heavenly religions, and by many traditions regarding the Promised Mahdi presented in the *Sahih* and *Musnad* books of the Ahl as-Sunnah. The *muhaddithun* and scholars of the two Islamic sects (Shi'ah and Sunni) have written a good many books regarding him (a).³

The compendium of these traditions have specified his characteristics and salient features in such a manner that they are exactly applicable to the direct son of Imam Hasan al-'Askari (a),⁴ the 11th Imam followed by the Shi'ah. According to these traditions, his name is the same as that of the Holy Prophet

(S);⁵ he is the twelfth Imam,⁶ and he is from the progeny of Husayn ibn ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a).⁷

By Divine Command, the Promised Mahdi was born in 255 AH and he is now living like other people, though in a state of occultation {ghaybah}.

It is necessary to note that such a long life is incongruent neither with science and learning, nor with the logic of revelation. Today science is at the threshold of increasing man’s longevity, believing that man has the ability to live for ages and ages, and if one remains safe from defects and vulnerabilities, the prospect for a long life will be brighter. History has also recorded the names of those who had lived to a very great age.

Concerning Prophet Nuh (Noah) (‘a), the Glorious Qur’an says:

فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ عَامًا.

“And he remained with them (his people) for a thousand-less-fifty years.”⁸

And regarding Hadrat Yunus (Jonah) (‘a), it says:

فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ لَلَبِثَ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ.

“And had he not been one of those who celebrate Allah’s glory, he would have surely remained in its belly till the day they will be resurrected.”⁹

Similarly, from a Qur’anic viewpoint and in the view of all Muslims of the world, Hadrat Khidr (‘a) and Hadrat ‘Isa (Jesus) (‘a) are still alive and they will continue to live.

1. Psalms of David, Songs 96–97; Book of Daniel, chap. 12 of the Old Testament; Gospel of Matthew, chap. 24; Gospel of Mark, chap. 13; Gospel of Luke, chap. 21 of the New Testament are narrating about the Promised One for whose advent the world is waiting.

2. Sunan Abu Dawud (Egypt: Taziyyah Press, n.d.), vol. 2, p. 207; Yanabi‘ al-Mawaddah, p. 432; Nur al-Absar, bab 2, p. 154.

3. See, for example, Muhammad ibn Yusuf ibn al-Kanji ash-Shafi‘i, Al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib az-Zaman; ‘Ali ibn Husam ad-Din known as Muttaqi al-Hindi, Al-Burhan fi ‘Alamat Mahdi Akhir az-Zaman; Ahmad Amin Misri, Al-Mahdi wa’l-Mahdawiyyah. The Shi‘ah ‘ulama’ have written a lot of books in this regard which are too many to enumerate such as Al-Malahim wa’l-Fitan, etc.

4. Yanabi‘ al-Mawaddah, part 76, on “virtues”, from Jabir ibn ‘Abd Allah al-Ansari.

5. Sahih Tirmidhi (New Delhi, 1342 AH), vol. 2, p. 46; Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal (Egypt, 1313 AH), vol. 1, p. 376.

6. Yanabi‘ al-Mawaddah, p. 443.

7. Ibid., p. 432.

8. Surah al-‘Ankabut 29: 14.

9. Surah as-Saffat 37: 143–144.

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