

The Last Luminary

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

There is no doubt that the Holy Qur'an is the book of Allah and that all Muslims of the world are required to accept its teachings and instructions. When one opens Qur'an and casts a glance at its verses he will come across to what seems to be a clear landscape of an extraordinary, sensational, and exciting future and the end of the universe.

Qur'an indicates that the ultimate mission of the Prophet of Islam was to make this religion prevail over all other religions in the world; and one day this holy aspiration will finally be fulfilled. Allah stated in Qur'an:

"It is He who has sent His messenger (Muhammad) with the guidance and the Religion of truth, to prevail over all religions, even though the idolaters may detest." (Qur'an 9:33)

The Holy book of the last Messenger of Allah gives the glad tidings that the rule over the earth shall finally belong to the righteous and virtuous servants of Allah:

"The earth is Allah's. He gives it as a heritage to whom He wills, and the good end is for the righteous people." (Qur'an 7: 128)

إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ يُورِثُهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

And He, Exalted, also said:

"And We wrote in Psalm (Zabur) after the Reminder that surely My righteous servants will inherit the earth." (Qur'an 21: 105)

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ
الصَّالِحُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

The earth which will be full of corruption destruction and ignorance, like a lifeless body, will be revived with the glowing light of justice as indicated in His book:

"Know that Allah gives life to earth after its death!"(Qur'an 57: 17)

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ...

We also read in Qur'an:

"Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good deeds that He will surely make them succeed (the present rulers) in the earth as he caused those who were before them to succeed others and that He will surely establish for them religion which He has approved for them and will give them safety after their fear to worship Me and not to associate anything with Me."(Qur'an 24:55)

Allah also stated:

"They intend to put out the light of Allah with their mouths but Allah will complete His Light even though the unbelievers may detest."(Qur'an 61:8)

He, Exalted He is, also said:

"And We desired to show favor unto those who were oppressed in the earth to make them symbols and to make them inheritors."(Qur'an 28:5)

These were some short examples of the divine glad tidings mentioned in Qur'an. By studying these matters and tens of other similar indications, it is deduced that the Islamic message will reach its complete fulfillment when these holy aspirations will take place.

All fabricated and superstitious objectives will disappear and then only the Islam, the unique and true religion, will be the faith of the people in the east and west of the world. Injustice, oppression, and inequality shall vanish, and instead, justice and equality which is the law of the creation of the world will be established everywhere.

The Kingdom of the divinely appointed Caliph (Khalifatullah) will manifest itself in all the corners of the world. The light of the guidance of Allah will shine and the earth shall belong to the virtuous ones. Yes,

Qur'an gives the Good News which the day that all Muslims of the world are enthusiastically waiting for it, will arrive.

Beside Qur'an, the sayings of the Prophet (S) are the most important and worthiest treasure of Islamic learning. In the sea of jewels of Islamic traditions glad tidings on the Government of Justice can be seen which is regarding to the "Divine Revolution" and the "divinely appointed leader" who will fulfill this holy aspiration.

In a tradition upon whose authenticity all Muslims agree, the Messenger of Allah (S) has said:

"Even if the entire duration of the world's existence has already been exhausted and only one day is left before Doomsday, Allah will expand that day to such length of time as to accommodate the kingdom of a person from my Ahlul-Bayt who will be called by my name. He will fill out the earth with peace and justice as it will have been full of injustice and tyranny (by then)."

(Please see the next article for the list of Sunni references for the above tradition as well as many other traditions.)

لو لم يبقَ من الدنيا إلا يوم واحد لطوّل الله ذلك اليوم حتى يبعث فيه رجلاً من
أهل بيتي يواطىء إسمه إسمي يملأ الأرض قسطاً و عدلاً كما ملئت ظلماً و
جوراً.

The above precious tradition testifies that the golden divine promises will take place, sooner or later, one way or another, as also mentioned in most of the Shi'ite and Sunnite sources.

In both subjects of prophecy and Imamate (leadership) it is discussed that as a result of the law of general guidance which governs all of creation, human is of necessity endowed with the power of receiving revelation through prophecy, which directs him toward the perfection of the human norm and the well-being of the human species.

Obviously, if this perfection and happiness were not possible for human, the very fact that he is endowed with this power would have been meaningless and futile. But there is no futility in creation.

In other words, ever since he has inhabited the earth, human has had the wish to lead a social life filled with happiness in its true sense and has striven toward this end. If such a wish were not to have an objective existence it would never have been imprinted upon human's inner nature, in the same way that if there were no food there would have been no meaning for hunger (since hunger is understood when one compares a person who has eaten food and a person who has not), and if there were no water there would have been no thirst and if there were no reproduction there would have been no sexual

attraction between the sexes.

Therefore, by the reason of inner necessity and determination, the future will see a day when human society will be replete with justice, when all will live in peace and tranquillity, and when human beings will be fully possessed of virtue and perfection. The establishment of such a condition will occur through human hands but with Divine Assistance. And the leader of such a society is called in the language of the traditions, al-Mahdi (the Mahdi; the guided one).

In the different religions that govern the world (either divine or not) such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam there are references to a person who will come as the savior of mankind. These religions have given glad tidings of his coming, although there are naturally minor differences in detail that can be discerned when these teachings are compared carefully.

However one thing that all these teachings have in common is that "A human will come to establish peace and tranquillity all over the earth". Every religion has a different attachment to it, however. The least thing that a human being (regardless of his religion) is supposed to do, is to accept what all these teachings have in common. This goes to prove the necessity of belief for "his coming". Thus, the saviors of all these religions who are all expected to come at the end of the time, are manifested in one individual, since the foundation of such belief is established by all.

The attachments of different religions can be reconciled on their own tendencies, and thus rejected. The fact remains that the teachings of the previous religions have been under a long alteration process, and only Islam has been guaranteed its survival.

Thus we should accept the attachment that the traditions of the Prophet (S) has offered us with regard to the one who is coming whose name is Imam al-Mahdi (and, of course, there will come Jesus as one of the Imam al-Mahdi's follower, based on the prophetic traditions).

There are numerous traditions cited in the Sunni and the Shi'i sources from the Holy Prophet concerning the appearance of the Mahdi, such as that he is of the progeny of the Prophet and that his appearance will enable human society to reach true perfection and the full realization of spiritual life.

In addition, there are numerous other traditions concerning the fact that the Mahdi is the son of the Eleventh Imam, al-Hasan al-Askari, and that after being born and undergoing a long occultation (disappearance; living among people while he is not identified) the Mahdi will appear again, filling the world with justice as it has been corrupted by injustice and tyranny.

In a tradition the holy Prophet (S) said to the Commander of believers, 'Ali (as), that:

"There will be twelve Guides after me, the first of whom is you, O 'Ali, and the last one will be the 'Support' (al-Qa'im) who, with the grace of Allah, will gain victory over the whole east and west of the world."

Imam 'Ali al-Ridha (the eighth Imam) said, in the course of a tradition:

"The Imam after me is my son, Muhammad, and after him his son 'Ali, and after 'Ali his son, al-Hasan, and after al-Hasan his son Hujjat al-Qa'im (the proof of Allah who shall stand), who is awaited during his occultation and obeyed during his manifestation. Even if there remain from the life of the world but a single day, Allah will expand that day until he becomes manifest and fills the world with justice in the same way that it had been filled with injustice. But when? As for news of the hour (i.e., the moment of appearance), frequently my father told me, having heard it from his father who heard it from his father who heard it from his ancestors who heard it from 'Ali (as), that it was asked from the holy Prophet, O Prophet of God, when will the 'Support' (al-Qa'im) who is from your family appear? He said, His case is like that of the Hour (of time of the resurrection). 'Allah alone knows it and He will manifest it at its proper time. It is heavy in the heavens and the earth. It cometh not to you save unawares' (Qur'an 7:187)."

Musa al-Baghdadi said, I heard Imam Hasan al-Askari (the eleventh Imam) who said:

"I see that after me differences will appear among you concerning the Imam after me. Whoever accepts the Imams after the Prophet of God but denies my son is like the person who accepts all the prophets but denies the prophethood of Muhammad, the Prophet of God, upon whom be peace and blessing. And whoever denies (Muhammad) the Prophet of God is like one who has denied all the prophets of God, for obeying the last of us is like obeying the first of us and denying the last of us is like denying the first of us. But beware! Verily, for my son there is an occultation during which all people will fall into doubt except those whom Allah protects."

There are hundreds of prophetic traditions about Imam al-Mahdi (as) which have been recorded in both the Shi'ite and Sunnite collections of traditions. A large number of religious scholars from all Islamic schools of thought have independently compiled books about Imam al-Mahdi, the leader of the time. Their number runs to tens of volumes. (For more information in this regard, please see the next article.) Thus believing in Imam al-Mahdi is not exclusive to the Shi'ites, and the Sunni scholars believe in him, though they do not have the extensive information about him that the Shi'a possess.

For more information about Imam al-Mahdi (as), You may look at the following English books:

- 1- "The Awaited Savior," by B. al-Sadr and M. Mutahhari. (\$3.5)
- 2- "An Inquiry Concerning al-Mahdi," by B. al-Sadr. (\$8)
- 3- "A Reply To: Belief of Mahdism in Shi'a Imamia". (\$6)

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