

Ya Mahdi

Dear God Bestow Us world's Savior
Request From God Is The Key Of Freedom For Human..



PROMISED PEACE

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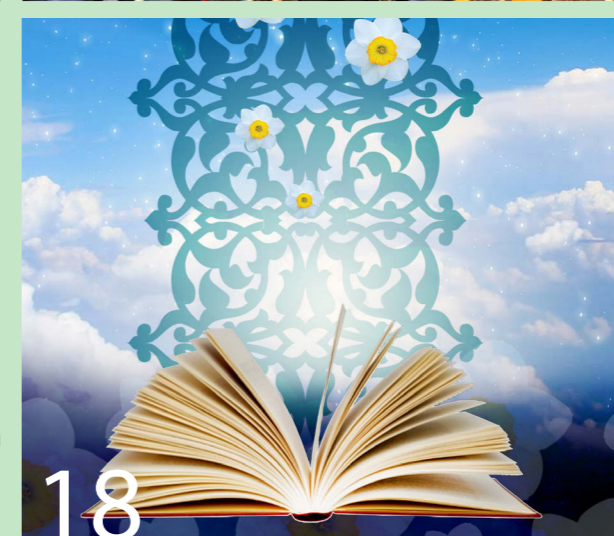
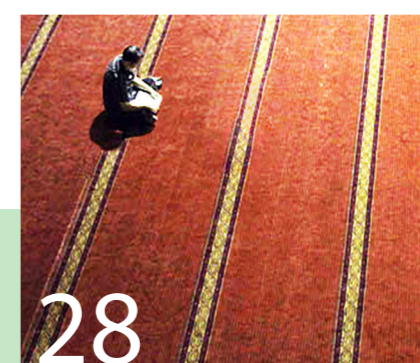
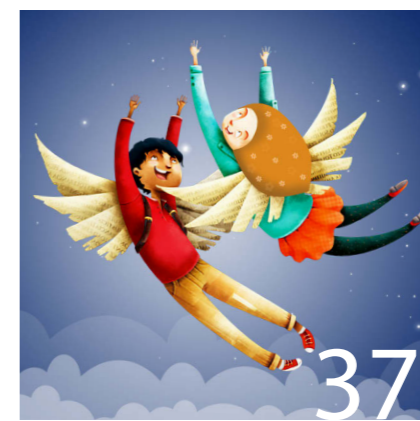
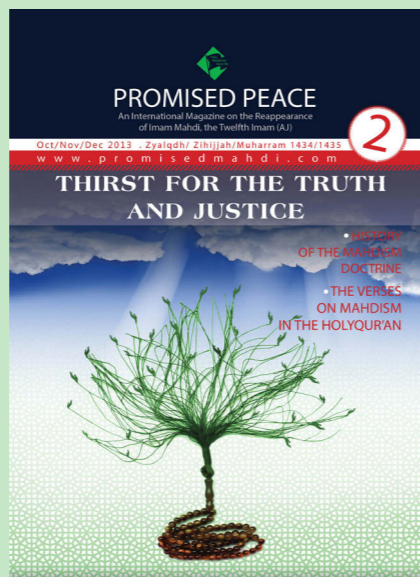
The Promised Mahdi Cultural Foundation is a society which works with the aim of spreading and deepening Mahdism culture in the world, especially among the youths and elite, as well as training the teachers and researchers in this field.

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Thirst for the Truth and Justice:

The Sign of the Reappearance of the Savior

By: Turan Jamshidiyan

Today we may fail to find even a single sect or religion which is not awaiting their savior. Followers of almost all faiths believe that the day will come, when the world is overwhelmingly infected with corruption, deviation, and crisis. On such a day, people would be like travelers astray in a desert, thirsty for the truth and justice, and this would be the sign of the reappearance of the great savior. The savior will come with the power of God to overcome the materialism and extend the one true religion, purity, and justice on earth. This is what is mentioned too, in the Quran and other holy scriptures.

In Torah and the other books of the Jewish Old Testament, and in the Christian Bible, we see that the messianic beliefs have a special place. In the holy books of Brahmans and Buddha followers as well as in that of the Zoroastrians, the reappearance of great religions at the end of time is declared. Each of these religions has its own interpretations, signs, and names for their savior. Among the Christians and the Jewish, he is known as “the Messiah”, while according to the Zoroastrians, his name is Saoshyant, which means “one who brings benefit”. The Muslims also believe that he is from Bani-Hashim family and is one of the decedents of the Prophet of Islam (SA).

It should be emphasized that according to Islam, Imam Mahdi (AJ), the savior, is by no means limited to Muslims. However we believe that he will come out in the name of Islam. Moreover, his uprising does not pertain to a special nation or people and is related to all the religions. He is coming to fight any kind of discrimination—racial and religious.

The reappearance of the savior according to various religions and Holy books:

1) The Qu’ran:

And we want to be gracious to those who were being de-

pressed in the land, making them the leaders and the inheritors of the earth. (Qasas: 5)

2) The Bible:

You must fasten your waists and your lamps burning, and you must be like people waiting for their own master, waiting for when he returns from the wedding celebrations, so that when he arrives and is knocking, they may immediately open the door for him. Happy are those slaves who when the master arrives, he finds them waiting ... You also must be the same, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you would not think he would. (The gospel of Luke, Chapter 12: 35-36)

3) The Torah:

But there shall come a rod forth of the stock of Jesse, and a grass shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him ... with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and with equity shall he reprove for the meek of the earth ... The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie with the kid, and the calf, and the lion, and the fat beast together, and a little child shall lead them. Then shall none hurt nor destroy in all the holy mountain of mine for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord. (According to the Dictionary of the Holy Book, Jesse is the name of David’s father). (Isaiah, Chapter 11: 1-10)

4) The Psalms of David:

The vicious shall be cut off, and they that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the land. Therefore yet a little while, and the wicked shall not appear, and thou shalt look after his place, and he

shall not be found. But humble men shall possess the earth, and shall have their delight in the multitude of peace ... and their inheritance shall be perpetual. (The Psalms of David, Psalm 37: 9-11 & 17)

5) In Zoroastrians sources:

Saoshyant, the great savior, will spread the religion through the world, uproot the poverty, save the almighties from devils, and make people kind, synchronic and like-principled. (JamaspNameh: 121)

6) In Hindu sources:

The tenth avatar of Vishnu is yet to appear. He will appear at the end of the Kali Yuga (Iron Age). He will appear seated on a white horse with a drawn sword blazing like a comet. He shall come finally to destroy the wicked, to restart the new creation and to restore the purity of conduct in people’s lives.

(Sirr-e Akbar, a Persian translation of the Puranas by Muhammad DaraShikoh, Volume 2: 637)

Therefore, he is Mahdi of the entire world, the redeemer and savior of all humans believing in the unique Allah. His victory is the final victory of all, messengers of Allah and justice demanders of the world. He is the regenerative of the religion of Abraham, the sane in faith, Moses and Jesus, who themselves were the enunciator of the appearance of the God’s last herald, Prophet Muhammad (SA). In other words, he will realize all the revealed religions under the name, Islam. We hope for that day.

HISTORY OF THE MAHDISM DOCTRINE

By:
Turan Jamshidiyan

Today, man has an unquenchable thirst for spirituality, and the world's right savior who is awaited by the people practicing whether Abrahamic or non-Abrahamic religions is to appear one day. Accordingly, we should have a solid, unified world and set the required ground for his appearance.

Considering the programs and activities carried out to set the ground both nationwide and worldwide for the appearance of the world savior, Bright Future Institute is one of the institutes established in the Islamic Republic of Iran which undertakes such areas of integrated, international activity as education, promotion of solidarity, and awakening of the nations.

Marking the auspicious anniversary of the Islamic world savior's birth, this institute annually holds a conference on the "Doctrine of Mahdism" whereby the researchers and scholars interested in presenting papers and sharing their ideas on various subjects of Mahdism are invited to exchange their views.

The purposes pursued by the Mahdism Doctrine are as follows:

Mahdism Doctrine is a term which is composed of two component words: doctrine and Mahdism.

In the literal sense of the word, doctrine means belief, concept, attitude, school of thought, tradition and teaching.

As for the technical sense of the word, doctrine refers to a body of principles, precepts, and rules accepted by a school of thought, a group or an individual. This means that any philosophy, belief system or policy which forms the basis for action is considered a doctrine. In other words, teaching, belief in an abstract fact, philosophy or a school of thought is referred to as a doctrine.²

Mahdism doctrine provides a comprehensive theory for the creation of a desirable society and puts a strategic interpretation on the different aspects of human life.³ Therefore, it is an all-inclusive portrayal of the promised society which delineates its numerous features, plans, goals, strategies, policies and teachings.

Based on the divine sources available for us and the lofty teachings of the philosophy of history, some of the prominent features of the doctrine of Mahdism include the following:

- a. All-inclusiveness and universalism**
- b. Justice-orientedness**
- c. Spiritualism and bringing human beings to perfection**
- d. Truth-orientedness and obliteration of falsehood**

e. Realization of obedience to God and monotheism

f. Combat against hostility and belligerence (oppression, war, insecurity, etc.)

g. Providing people with happiness and satisfaction

h. Meritocracy (ruling of the pious and the oppressed)

i. Positive and constructive reformation

j. Promotion of solidarity, consensus and unity

Also, the Mahdism doctrine caters to the human needs and desires and is a truly strategic interpretation of his affairs.⁴ The Mahdism doctrine can be considered synonymous with the "lofty concept of Mahdism", and since this epithet connotes a number of positive meanings, it both provokes criticisms of and surveys into the concept of the term in addition to the literal survey and can define the way it may be used along with the doctrine of Mahdism.

Generally speaking, the Mahdism doctrine is founded upon three major principles. The first principle concerns the creation of a just world community which is of both legal and natural necessity. Legal necessity means that a moral and

ment in the world, that such a society deserves to be formed on earth and that human society would not attain happiness without the formation of such a government. Natural necessity refers to the fact that the laws governing society and history will at last nudge the human society in the direction where the replacement of all the conventions governing society and history with a just government is inevitable, that if there is an imaginable end to the history of human society, it will end in such a just government, that is to say, the end of human society is a happy ending when a just society will be built under the leadership of Imam al-Zaman (literally Imam of Time) (May God hasten his appearance).⁵

The second principle of the Mahdism doctrine involves the human social experience, revealing, in the course of history the fact that there is no way to shape a happy society save the way paved by comprehensive justice, that human beings reach comprehensive justice when it governs their society, that none of such other goals achieved in hu-

man society as freedom, quest for pleasure, and human rights in its contemporary Western sense would be effective in resolving the problems of human society and guaranteeing his happiness without attaining the goal of justice. Any good deed, value and goodness would be useful to human society if it is governed by justice.

The third principle underlying the Mahdism doctrine points out that justice cannot be administered effectively in human society unless it is administered by a person who is just in every sense of the word using a thoroughly just program, i.e. both the person administering justice and the program by means of which justice is administered must be comprehensively just. The person in charge of administering justice is one who both completely sticks to it in his behavior, thoughts and deeds and



Endnotes

Dictionaries of the Persian Language by Moein and Dehkoda.

2 Awaiting the Promised Savior, 17, Round-table discussion on the concepts of Mahdism Doctrine, p. 9.

3 Awaiting Quarterly, 16, p. 30.

4 Awaiting the Promised Savior, 17, Theoretical philosophy of history, Rahim Kargar.

5 An excerpt from the interview with Ayatollah Hajj Sheikh Muhsen Araki, a member of the Assembly of Experts of the Leadership.

Discussing the theme of "ground setting education, strategies and approaches", the ninth international conference on Mahdism doctrine pursued the following two approaches:

1. Scientific research-based approach

2. Preach-based approach

Some of the scholars who had attended the conference including Abi al-Qadir George Saliba were interviewed to express their views on Mahdism. Abi al-Qadir George Saliba is the founder of al-Liqa' al-Ruhi in Mount Lebanon which is a place of residence for 18 Lebanese clans. He established al-Liqa' al-Ruhi seeking to hold actual dialogue between different religions. He is a judge at Greek Melkite Catholic Patriarchate Court and as a special vice bishop engages in charity affairs. He works for the Greek Melkite Catholic churches of Saida and Deir al-Qamar. He is also the editor-in-chief of al-Abrashiya magazine.



PP: Please introduce yourself.

Abi al-Qadir George Saliba: Abi al-Qadir George Saliba from Lebanon. We've attended this conference here in Tehran to re-emphasize that this is a call which attracts us in the direction of peace, friendship, mutual love, benevolence and goodness, so that we forbid our minds and hearts from what is disliked and offensive, from aggression and hostility, and from vengeance not only in our dear Arab countries where we like to see the positive results but also in the whole world because it invites us to peace and friendship. Peace and friendship are among the attributes of God as they are liked by Him and practiced by those who believe in God. We Christians have come here to join hands with our moderate Muslim brethren against those who tend to accumulate wealth and seek domination over others as these two are not attributed to our God and our beliefs, for God has honored man and His other creatures.



PP: What do you think about the end-times savior?

Abi al-Qadir George Saliba: We believe in the Redeemer, and this is not a new belief. The Christians, Jews, Muslims and all who believe in God share common ground on the appearance of a savior. Here, they call him by the name Mahdi, somewhere else by Redeemer, and in another place by Shining Man or maker of peace and friendship. Names are different, but the same end is intended, i.e. peace and friendship, which is shared by all religions. Here, Mahdi claims that he will fill the world with peace and friendship, and we are seeking for peace and friendship, too. Mahdi wants to create intimacy between people, and we love intimacy, too, as we live for it. So, this is common ground shared by all communities.



PP: How many times have you attended the Conference on Mahdism Doctrine?

Abi al-Qadir George Saliba: This is the first time I've come to Tehran and attended the conference, but I've attended the conferences held in Yemen and Iraq to mark the anniversaries of the Pond of Khumm and her holiness Fatima Zahra's (sa) birth. Our motto is one of peace, friendship and moderation.



PP: Have you submitted an article to this conference? Please give us a brief description of your article.

Abi al-Qadir George Saliba: Yes, I have. There are two views addressed in my article:

1. Either Mahdi is flesh and blood, i.e. he is a human being.
2. Or he is a concept which will be developed in human society for the purpose of his redemption.

Both of these views subsist in Judaism and even in Islamic school of thought. Some believe that he is a living concept; the others say that he is a normal human being. But people are searching for peace, friendship and intimacy anyway. Either all people would change their attitudes to take a Mahdist attitude¹ or they will be saved by Mahdi as a living man who is flesh and blood.



PP: In today's young society, what necessity do you see to point out Mahdism and Intizar (awaiting Imam Mahdi (as))?

Abi al-Qadir George Saliba: We Christians wish to promote intimacy in our lives, and this is embedded in the context of our faith and life. We live for peace and friendship, we act for peace and friendship, and we exist for peace and friendship. Mahdism is not our belief, but rather we believe that we live to establish peace and friendship.



Ayatollah Muhammad Ali Taskhiri is a well-known and highly respected intellectual figure among Muslims, both Shias and Sunnis.

He was born in 1944 in the holy city of Najaf, Iraq. He acquired his primary and middle-level education from Najaf while for the acquisition of highest educational level of the Islamic Seminary (Hawzah), i.e. "Dars-e-Kharej" which covers advanced religious courses. He gained extensively from the renowned Ulama of Najaf Ashraf.

Taskhiri attained the university-level education on Arabic literature, Islamic law & Jurisprudence from the Fiqh College of Najaf Ashraf. Along with the acquisition of education, during his stay in the Islamic Seminary of Najaf Ashraf, he was also engaged in teaching the Islamic subjects. As regards the Arabic poetry and literature, he benefited from the distinguished mentors like Ayatollah Sheikh Muhammad Reza Muzzafar, Sheikh Abol Mehdi Matar and Sheikh Muhammad Amin Zain-ud-Din.

A GLANCE ON AYATOLLAH MUHAMMAD ALI TASKHIRI'S LIFE

By: Turan Jamshidian, Ph.D

Being fond of the Arabic poetry and literature at a tender age, he versified many Arabic odes and on diverse occasions delivered literary lectures at different forums of poetry and literature.

In the political arena, he played a dynamic role against the Bathist party of Iraq and for the same reason he went to prison and was given a death sentence. But with the grace of Almighty Allah he was released later.

In 1971 he proceeded to the Qom Islamic Seminary in Iran and for ten years attended the lectures delivered by the leading Ulama like Ayatollah Golpayengani, Ayatollah Wahid Khurasani, and Ayatollah Mirza Hashem Amuli. He also used to be a scholar studying economic under supervision of martyr Ayatollah Syed Baqir Sadr (RA).

In the aftermath of the victory of the glorious Islamic Revolution in Iran, he fully got engaged in cultural activities and preaching of Islam, in Iran and elsewhere in the world. During this period, Ayatollah Muhammad Ali Taskhiri held different cultural, propagation and administrative positions and undertook various responsibilities.

During the 1980s he served as the Iranian representative to the Organization of the Islamic Conference and was involved in promoting Iranian interests during the height of the Iran-Iraq War.

His role, while always significant in the government of Iran, became even more so after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. Taskhiri has been an important liaison with Shia Iraqi organizations. He

was a signatory to an intellectual letter from 38 Muslim scholars, sent as the official Islamic response to Islamophobic comments made by Pope Benedict XVI on September 12, 2006. He is one of the Ulama signatories of the Amman Message, which gives a broad foundation for defining Muslim orthodoxy.

Some of his responsibilities in political arena include: Representative of Gilan province in the Assembly of Experts, Head of the Islamic Culture and Communications Organization from its establishment until 2001, Director of International Affairs at the Islamic Ideology Propagation Organization, Member of Islamic Ideology Propagation Organization's Board of Trustees, Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister's advisor on international affairs, Secretary General of the Ahl-ul-Bayt (AS) World Assembly, and Secretary General of the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought. Following appointment by the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Khamenei, he is now serving as the Supreme leader's advisor on Islamic World's Cultural Affairs.

Ayatollah Taskhiri has authored over 50 books on various Islamic topics including Islamic ideology, Fiqh (jurisprudence), Islamic economy and Islamic history. He has also penned about 350 articles on Islamic issues including unity. Many of his works have been translated into English, Urdu and other world languages.

The English magazine on Mahdism entitled ‘Promised Peace’ interviewed him, on “Doctorin of Mahdism” and other related subjects, as one of the distinguished Islamic scholars:

PP: Which aspect of Mahdism is most welcomed all over the world?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: In fact, most of the aspects of Mahdism are universally welcomed, like:

- a. Human history movement towards perfection
- b. Inherently awaiting a just future embedded in human nature
- c. Awaiting a savior which is addressed in prophets’ schools of thought
- d. Globalization and Mahdism
- e. Inherency of Mahdism in Islam
- etc.

PP: What areas of research are of paramount importance in Mahdism?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: The most important area of research has to do with the documents on Mahdism which are obtained from the Qur’anic verses and hadiths, as well as with the human beings’ responsibility towards them.

PP: How can the narrations on ‘the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (AS)’ be put to use in this regard?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: This event may be associated with the following ideas:

- a. His holiness Mahdi (May God hasten his reappearance) is prophesied by prophets.
- b. His holiness Mahdi (May God hasten his reappearance) will fulfill the aim pursued by the prophets.
- c. His holiness Mahdi (May God hasten his reappearance) is the embodiment of the aim pursued in human creation.
- Etc

PP: Do all Muslim people agree on Mahdism?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: Nearly all Muslims accept Mahdism. There may be one or two people denying it, like Ibn al-Walid, who are not fully known to us, and Ibn Khaldun, who is a historian but not a hadith scholar. However, this does not undermine the consensus among Muslim people+

PP: What preparations should be made universally for the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (May God hasten his reappearance)?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: Making preparations may involve:

- a. Developing the idea of Mahdism
- b. Developing religiosity and combat against atheism
- c. Developing standards of morality
- d. Developing healthy human relations
- e. Developing Qur’anic clear proofs
- f. Developing justice-oriented governments
- etc.



PP: What necessary measures should be taken to let all humans fully understand the importance of the savior’s actual presence in the world and make the required preparations for his reappearance?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: In addition to the measures mentioned above, the veracity of Mahdism should be clarified. Also, the way prophets invited their people to saviorism and the powerful, beneficial effects of hopefulness should be stressed.

PP: To what extent has these measures been taken so far, like the Conference on the Doctrine of Mahdism, been successful in fostering proximity between the monotheistic religions?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: All the past activities have proved useful, but they should be implemented worldwide and in a dialogical manner.

PP: Considering the fact that a lot of measures are universally being taken so as to introduce the savior to humans, what aspect of Mahdism teachings do you think has remained comparatively more neglected, and what should be done as compensation for such neglect?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: What was pointed out in reply to question six applies to this question, as well.

PP: What training strategies can be pursued at both family and society levels to shape an awaiting society?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: We should be awaiting his reappearance in very aspect of our lives.

PP: How to lay the groundwork through the world for his Reappearance?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: The idea (of reappearance) itself must be cultivated then the invalidity of wrong ideas must be demonstrated. Besides, the ethereal of God to the man should be explained. Of course, at the same time, based on Mahdism narratives, we should try to extend the Qur’anic governments.

PP: Regarding the abundant activities around the world in order to introduce the savior to the people, which dimension of the teachings of Mahdism is forgotten more than others?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: The main idea of a savior, and the necessity of realizing the purpose of the prophets which is the reign of religion over the path of humankind.



PP: How much the messianic is helping the solidarity and coherence of the nations?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: It is naturally effective because it is an international goal and it is coordinator and appealing.

PP: How much effective can be Mahdism doctrine in representing a social-political model?

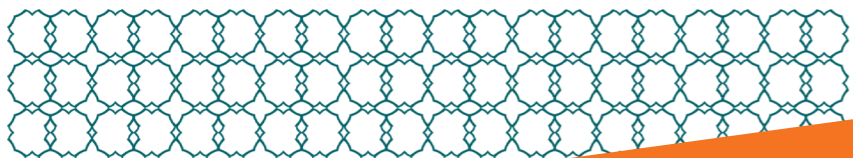
Ayatollah Taskhiri: After the failure of present comprehensive solutions like United Nations or Imperialism or Socialism, the only hope will be Messianic.

PP: How much Mahdism doctrine was effective in arousing Messianic tendencies in monotheistic religions?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: As a result of weakness in proselytizing it was unsuccessful.

PP: What do you propose to do in order to join Islamic sects together and to prepare Muslims for the reappearance of Imam Zaman?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: We have no choice other than extensive and active scientific propagation and research.



PP: Is it necessary to do anything related to economic affairs like culture?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: Unsolvable economic problems can propel humankind into this idea.

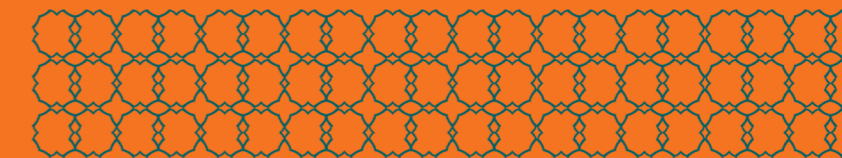
PP: Which subjects are essential for Mahdism universal researches and investigations?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: Extensive and analytic ideological studies on the weakness of previous solutions and the mystery behind it.

PP: Which one of Mahdism topics is universally attractive?

Ayatollah Taskhiri: The idea itself is attractive.

PP: Thank you for your kind help and time.



WHEN WILL HE FINALLY COME?

By: **Asra Nameliati** **H**uman life is always tinged with expectations. All people, of any age or any social standing, live with expectations. When people wake up in the morning, they expect the night. And when they sleep at night, they are awaiting for the morning. As a teenager, they expect their youth. When married, they await parenthood. And in this way, every single moment in one's life is full of expectations. These expectations are not along with incongruent in our lives, but are inherent in it, and since expectations are integral to our lives, it is necessary to have a clear definition of it. It seems that expectations are materialized through these three principles:

The first principle: dissatisfaction or discontent over the existing situation

The second principle: hope for a better future

The third principle: movement and dynamism

One who studies at high school and wishes to go to university, either is displeased with the present situation or is not content with it, and hopes to proceed to a higher grade. And since he believes in his own abilities, he struggles to achieve his goal by preparing the ground for its materialization. This is "expectation". It seems that religion has given depth and magnificence to what existed in human life.

In the sphere of expectation, religion has functioned in a similar fashion. Human beings live with expectations. Religion expands and deepens expectation, which is the essence of human life. In this way, religion perfects what human beings possess. For instance, we expect a better academic life, a better career position or a better life. All these are personal expectations. Religion sublimates this expectation, by telling humans: do not only wish for progress for yourself and your family alone! Seek this for all people! Care for all mankind! If people are not perfect, then wish perfection for all and move in the direction of communal achievement!

Where religion deepens our life, it is when it beckons men: your expectations should not be limited to the sphere of physical life, but expect the emergence of the absolute truth and the absolute justice!³ Consequently, we see that religion has not created this expectation, but has broadened and deepened it. Religion is not against human nature, but nurtures it and guides it towards perfection. Sometimes, people define expectation in a way that reduces it to weakness, surrender, destruction, and bondage.



Different kinds of expectation

1. Negative expectation

There are people who think to expect means to passively wait for the coming of the promised Savior. To these people, any reformation is doomed to failure, and sin, corruption, discrimination, and injustice prepare the way for the Advent of the Savior.

It is evident that, such expectations are a way of justifying cruelty, vice, prejudice, injustice, irresponsibility, recklessness and turning one's back to people and humanity.

2. Positive expectation

Expectation does not negate duties. The first benefit of expectation is to keep us prepared for the final battle and make us struggle for reaching the goal. In other words, positive expectation is to protest against the present situation and move towards the final perfect state of life. Expectation leads the society to the path of striving, detects shortcomings, and makes people act to remove the shortcomings; it keeps the societies from weariness, indolence, and apathy and instead invests them with dynamism. Now, let us look back at the three aspects of human nature:

1. Dissatisfaction with the present situation
2. Hope for the perfect state
3. Movement towards perfection

If we wish to nurture these incentives for the re-appearance of the Imam Zaman in our lives, first we need Ma'rifa (insight), second faith and third dynamism.

What people in an expecting society should know, on one hand, is to omit "an" understanding and appreciation of themselves – which is the best measure to judge various creeds. This is because the best one is identified when we can compare the worth and value of human beings in different creeds to determine which one corresponds with the grandeur and abilities of humankind.

On the other hand, people should become aware that the present situation is not satisfactory, and this fact needs comparison to reveal itself. Peo-

ple should compare their lives with those of others and conclude that the existing conditions are unacceptable. Imam Ali (AS) stated: "before the re-appearance of the Savior, God will pass the government to different groups so that no one would claim they would act better, with the government in their hands."⁴ As a result, if people are not made aware that there is something lacking and there are problems in this life, what would they expect and wait for?

Steps of Expectation

Therefore, regarding the question of expectation, the first principle is Ma'rifa (insight).

The second principle is faith in the final salvation of the world, which is shared by all religions. In Islam, and especially Shiism, this belief exists in relation to a specific person, which is Imam Mahdi (AS), and the Shiites believe that when his Highness reappears, the world would be a better place. Others believe, there would finally be a Savior and a redeemer of humanity who would materialize justice in all the corners of human life.

The third principle is dynamism and movement. That is, everybody should take a step, in proportion to his abilities, to further this cause and help to materialize it. Great Islamic scholars have declared that every single person should start to move on the way of expecting the Imam. If the people are expecting a muslih (a redeemer) they should move towards righteousness, and if they are expecting the absolute justice, they should step on the path of justice, sticking to virtue, avoiding sin, being upright, and following morality. They should decorate themselves with virtues, and clear themselves of any obstacles against acquiring moral decency. Because when the inner world is expurgated, there would be no space for the incoming of virtue. Thus, first, people should drain themselves of all immoralities like injustice, cruelty, corruption etc and then saturate themselves in morals and virtues.

In this way, the first duty of an expectant is to move in the direction of personal good. In personal life

and manner, naturally, when people like somebody they try to be similar to him, and if this beloved is the symbol of all goodness, justice and truth, the expectant should create a similar longing in himself. When we go to a funeral ceremony, we dress in dark to symbolically show we sympathize with the mourners. When we attend a celebration, we dress properly to fit in with others. So the one who is expecting justice and absolute goodness, should harmonize themselves with what they are expecting for, not behaving with cruelty. As a result, people should first, synchronize their attitudes with their beloveds⁵.

Of course, this harmony and synchrony with the Savior is worth when people act and move to prepare themselves, not waiting passively, for the Savior. That is, after experiencing all sorts of governments and being disappointed about all manmade systems of justice, people should hope for and expect the Savior of the end of the world. People should understand this and expect their Savior as a lover expects his beloved. The next duty of the expectant starts here, when personal action ends and communal obligation begins.

Scholars of Islam say that there would be a day when there exists no religious depravity, which means all people should be familiar with religious teachings. As a result, there should be scientific and cultural activity to prepare the ground for the re-appearance of the Savior. Consequently, Islam sees perfection in reforming both oneself and others; being a knowledgeable person and to lead others on this path, becoming a scholar and to teach others. That is because being a knowledgeable person alone is not sufficient. A knowledgeable person who can also mentor is perfect. The scholar who is a teacher and the perfect who perfects others are worthy. Therefore, as the third principle of expectation, people should first work on themselves and then try to reform others.

It goes without saying that, when the Just Savior reappears, all people of the society would be placed in their proper position, and this is the meaning

of justice; that each individual, depending on his abilities, stand in the proper position, not anything lower or higher than what he deserves. This would be hard for some people of course. Because they have reached high positions due to their wealth or connections. Therefore, the most important activity in preparing the ground for the re-appearance of the Savior is to make justice a habit to both the privileged and the non-privileged. For people who do not abide justice, the government of the Savior would be harsh on them.



Endnotes

1. "Entezar Amikhte ba Jan Va Rouh" (Expecting The Savior with All Heart and Soul), Mo'ud Monthly, No 1, 1376/1997.
2. "Naghsh-e Mardom dar Nesbat ba Mo'oud Akharo Zaman va Zohor Monji Akharin" (The Role of People in the Advent of the Promised Savior), Mo'ud Persian Monthly, No 3, 1376/1997.
3. And 4. "Degargounihaye Ejtemaie va Mas'aleye Entezar" (Social Transformations and the Issue of Expectation) and "Chegoune Ejtemae Montazer Dashte Bashim 2" (How to have an Expectant Society 2), from the Mahdaviat Doctrine Article Series.

5. حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا إِبْنُ عُقْدَةَ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ يُونُسَ بْنِ يَعْقُوبَ الْجَعْفِيُّ أَبُو الْحَسَنِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ مِهْرَانَ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي حَنْزَلَةَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ وَوَهْبِ بْنِ حَفْصِ بْنِ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ع أَنَّهُ قَالَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِمَا لَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ عَمَلًا إِلَّا بِهِ فَقُلْتُ بَلَى فَقَالَ شَهَادَةٌ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْأَقْرَابُ بِمَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ وَالْوَلَايَةُ لَنَا وَالْبِرَاءَةُ مِنَ أَعْدَائِنَا بِعَيْنِي الْأُمَّةَ خَاصَّةً وَالتَّسْلِيمَ لَهُمْ وَالْوَرَعَ وَالْإِحْتِهَادَ وَالطَّمَانِينَةَ وَالْإِنْتِظَارَ لِلْقَائِمِ ع ثُمَّ قَالَ إِنَّ لَنَا دَوْلَةً يُجِيءُ اللَّهُ بِهَا إِذَا شَاءَ ثُمَّ قَالَ مَنْ سَرَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنَ أَصْحَابِ الْقَائِمِ فَلْيَنْتَظِرْ وَلْيَعْمَلْ بِالْوَرَعِ وَمَحَاسِنِ الْأَخْلَاقِ وَهُوَ مُنْتَظَرٌ فَإِنْ مَاتَ وَقَامَ الْقَائِمُ بَعْدَهُ كَانَ لَهُ مِنَ الْأَجْرِ مِثْلُ أُجْرٍ مَنْ أَدْرَكَهُ فَجَدُّوا وَانْتَظَرُوا هُنَيْئًا لَكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْعَصَابَةُ الْمَرْحُومَةُ.

By Salim ibn Qais Hilali, V. 2, Alhadi – Iran; first published in 1405 after lunar calendar, Qom.

6- حتى لا يبقى في الارض مستضعف في الدين حتى المخدرات في الجبال
Which means: you will not be able to find a person impoverished in religion, not even behind the curtains. Mohammad Baqir Majlesi, Bihar ul Anwar, V. 14, p. 338; Montakhab Al-Asar, p. 443.



Encyclopedia of Mahdism

By : Hoorieh Lajvardi

In this part we are going to provide you with the meaning of the words used in Mahdism theory, doctrine and discussions.

1.

Maw'ud (The Promised):

Excerpted from the book by Tunei, p. 706.

In its literal sense, the word "Maw'ud" means the promised one.

In its religious sense, it is used to suggest a belief in the appearance of a great, divine savior in the End Time who will release all people from the suppressing paws of injustice and tyranny. This is, indeed, a universal, commonly held belief as no religion or denomination can be found to lack in the belief in the appearance of a universal, great savior as far as their main teachings and ideological basics are concerned. However, in spite of alterations made to the scriptures of old religions, we can still find a lot of scriptural cases where such promises are

made. Examples are:

In the Psalms of David (AS) as one of the books of the Old Testament, there are promises made about the appearance of the universal, promised savior. 1 By the same token, in the book of Isaiah (AS), chapters 2 and 42; the book of Zechariah (AS), chapter 14; and the book of Zephaniah (AS), chapter 3, verses 8 – 9, which are all parts of the Old Testament, one can find a lot in this regard.

The Four Canonical Gospels in the New Testament deal with this subject more fully as compared with other religious sources.

The Bible Concordance by Mr. Hux suggests that there are more than 80 occurrences of the phrase 'the son of man' in both Canonical Gospels and its non-canonical addenda only 30 cases of which make allusion to Jesus Christ (AS), and the remaining 50 cases speak of a promised savior who will appear in the End Time while being accompanied by Jesus Christ (AS) to render him assistance.

Similarly, there is a lot of material on the universally promised savior in the holy scriptures of other religions such as Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. whose leaders introduced themselves as heavenly prophets. These pieces of evidence all together provide clear proof as to the fact that the belief in the appearance of a great savior is a universally held one.

In the upcoming issues, we will discuss the savior as he is promised in various religions.

The future of the world and the scholars: Excerpted from the book by Tunei, p. 46.

In today's world, due to the developments of the late 20th century, especially the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the official ending of the Cold War, the concept of the 'world government' serves to be the underlying basis for the predictions the contemporary writers – mostly the American ones – make about the future of the world.

Linear development, political developments, and the guaranteed fulfillment of the world government and Liberal Democracy constitute the common ground shared by the Western writers. To achieve these goals, the Western leaders have the responsibility to point the uselessness of resistance to this assured trend out to non-Western leaders and people. However, they have taken different routes to arrive at their destination.

In this issue, we will discuss one of these views without adopting any critical approaches to it. In the upcoming issues, we will cover attitudes taken by other scholars.

Francis Fukuyama, originally Japanese, was acting as deputy to the chairman of the Political Planning Board in the American State Department in the summer, 1989.

Coming up with a new reading of Hegelian ideology, Fukuyama predicts the End Time as follows: According to his view, in the end of the history some societies will turn into successful, liberal ones, and the other societies will give up their claims for presentation of different, superior forms and patterns to establish a well-organized human society. As a matter of actual fact, liberalism will dominate the world because there is no mobilizing ideology to resist it. This is the end of the human ideological development, and the globalization of the Western democracy as the final form of government with its concomitant elements such as capitalistic lifestyle and tendency for a consumerist society which all lead to political and economic liberalism. Therefore, man will go through a tough time ahead. He also holds the view that the Third World does not have any significant role in the world ideological development, undermining it. According to him, Islamic awakening, nationalism, development of terrorism, instability of world markets, monetary crisis, etc. are incidental to the main trend of liberalism, not contradicting it in fundamentals. Rather, human ideologically common legacy is of paramount importance. It is the political and economic liberalism which constitutes this common legacy.

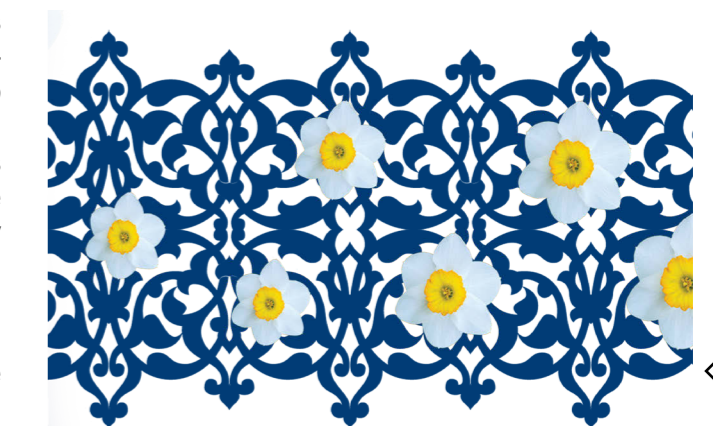
Note: Since there was no information on the word 'savior' in the book, seminary and religious websites were searched about it.

2.

Savior:

In its literal sense, the word 'savior' means someone who saves.

Man has always wished for an ideal society to be built on justice ever since the very old times when he was able to shape the primitive societies. Of course, to fulfill such a hope as was implicated in his mind and ideology, he has looked for and awaited a capable and powerful personage to have the ability to create such a society.



In fact, belief in the appearance of the savior (futurism) as shared by various peoples is so undeniable that it is held not only by the followers of the Abrahamic religions but by those who practice so-called non-Abrahamic and non-divine religions as well.

3.

Belief in the appearance of the savior in non-Abrahamic religions :

According to recorded history, belief in the principle of happiness and redemption of human from evil fulfilled by a savior in the End Time is an unquestionable principle found even in the deep corners of non-Abrahamic religions. Hindus, for example, call their mythological savior responsible for administering justice 'Kalki', who is believed to be one of the avatars of Vishnu, a Supreme God in Hinduism. In such religious books as Dadtg, Upanishads, Bask, etc., this avatar of Vishnu who- at the time of appearance- holds a sword as shining as a comet is fully characterized. He rides on clouds, governs the eastern and western mountains on the earth, and restores the religion of God and spreads it as the solid, dominant religion in the world. Kalki is a personage who saves the world, is loved by God, and is one of the righteous servants appointed by God whose name is blessed and auspicious.

A close look into the Buddhist texts and scriptures reveals that the followers of Buddhism believe in the appearance of a savior, too. Based on the Buddhist beliefs, it is incumbent on any Buddhist to await the appearance of the fifth Buddha. Followers of the religion practiced in ancient Iran, i.e. Zoroastrianism which, according to the holy Prophet of Islam (SAW), is a divine religion with its followers being among the People of the Book- even though it falls outside the category of Abrahamic religions on the basis of the common classifications decided by religious researchers- consider the appearance of the savior an inevitable fact. Zoroastrians believe that in the post-Zoroaster era a savior from the descendants of Zoroaster will appear at the end of each millennium.

3000 years after Zoroaster when the first and the second Zoroastrian saviors have appeared, Saoshyant, who is the great savior of the world and under whom human beings attain ideal happiness, will appear. On the basis of the Zoroastrian main scriptures, i.e. the Avesta, the Zend, and the Denkard, Saoshyant will rise from Iran, somewhere in the vicinity of Chichast Lake. However, in Jamasp Namag which is not categorized as a Zoroastrian scripture, Jamasp, while quoting Zoroaster as de-

scribing the details of the appearance of Saoshyant, claims that he will rise from the Arab world, which deserves careful consideration. Putting it briefly, Zoroastrians believe that upon the appearance of Saoshyant falsehood and evil will be defeated, poverty and destitution will be rooted out, and all people in the world will share the same good thoughts, good words, and good deeds.

Belief in the appearance of a savior is also a contributory element to the ideology of other non-Abrahamic religions. One can, for instance, mention the indigenous peoples in the Central America, who believe in the appearance of Kutz Lektul as one of their basic ideological fundamentals. A group of people in Scandinavia held the belief that Odin, who is granted a superior power by God, would appear and save the world and the people in it from frequent calamities and bloody wars.

A conclusion which can be drawn from considering the religious stories, legends and myths is that the belief in the appearance of a savior can virtually be seen one way or another in most of both civilized and uncivilized societies.

Belief in the Savior in Abrahamic Religions

In the three Abrahamic religions, i.e. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam belief in the appearance of the savior is an obvious fact. In the Old Testament, the holy scripture of the Jewish people, there is a lot mentioned of the End-Time Redeemer. He is the one who with righteousness shall judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth³, he shall defeat and break in pieces the oppressors with the assistance and under the or-

ders from Yahweh, he shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor⁴. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy⁵, and his justice shall shine upon the whole universe. The Jewish people call this savior that righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins⁶ Mashiah (Messiah) who is different from Jesus Christ in Christianity. In the Psalms of David (AS) we read: The transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off. But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord: he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him⁷. The Jewish Hakhams and religious leaders believe that the appearance of Messiah and his activity to improve the conditions of the world and establish justice, peace, and security among all the peoples in the world are ordained by God at the very beginning of the Creation.

According to this belief, the appearance of Messiah in the End Time is preordained by God before the Creation. It is worth mentioning that the Jewish people have always considered the belief in the appearance of the savior a sacred duty throughout the history. They believe that Messiah is a human being like other human beings, but he is endowed with divine glory and grandeur. The world will be lit by his light which is a manifestation of the light from Yahweh. It is noteworthy that some believe Messiah to be David. Another group consider him to be a descendant of David, and

some other believe that in the End Time God will send another David called Messiah to save people and the world.

Belief in the appearance of the savior is a fundamental concept in Christianity, too. Paraclete, which means one who intercedes, pacifies, and advocates, is the name of the first redeemer in Christianity. It is worth mentioning that Mani, who claimed to be a prophet in Persia in the Sassanid dynasty and even became a favorite at the court of Shapur, but who was finally killed at the command of Kartir, a Zoroastrian high-priest, considered himself the paraclete promised by Jesus Christ (AS).

According to the texts of the New Testament, Paraclete is a man who appears after Jesus Christ (AS) and administers justice. There has been disagreement among the Christian scholars as to the identity of Paraclete throughout the history; however, the obvious fact is that modern Christians believe that Jesus Christ (AS) himself will unexpectedly return to the material world, and that it is he who will fill the world with justice.

Stressing the fact that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (AS) is unexpected, and that there is no stated time for it⁸, Christianity considers the establishment of a divine government⁹ to be the philosophy behind the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (as). However, it gives signs indicating his Second Coming, including those mentioned in the gospel of Matthew: Immediately after that great trial shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give it light, and the stars shall fall from heaven. And then shall appear the signs of the



heavenly man, and then Jesus shall dismount the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give it light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. 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.¹⁰

In Islam, belief in the appearance of the savior is an inveterate and important question too. Among the pieces of evidence proving the inveteracy of the question of saviorim in Islam are kalam-based dialectical arguments put forward by the religious leaders, and the fake claimants of Mahdism who have appeared since the early rise of Islam through the Islamic history to the contemporary era. In Islam the savior, called Mahdi, is a descendant of the noble Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (SAW). Not only does he establish justice in the world and revitalize Islam, but he also restores all the other religions back to their originally real state, i.e. the same state as with Islam. However, there are differences concerning Mahdism between Shiite Islam and Sunnite Islam, which will be addressed in the next issues.

4.

The One World Government:

Excerpted from the book by Tunnei, p. 283.

Human beings have an intrinsic thirst for justice and redemption and therefore look for a redeemer

to save them from the status quo, providing them with freedom. This is, indeed, the same wish prophets, peace-seekers, the open-minded, and altruists have constantly tried to fulfill throughout the human history.

Psychoanalysts and psychologists believe that the only remedy for the human misery is his return to spirituality.

Belief in a bright future and the formation of the one world government is in keeping touch with the human nature (fitrat), and this is the reason why the great materialist and spiritualist philosophers both share the same belief.

Kant, the well-known German philosopher, for example, suggests that the establishment of a world order is contingent on laying down a universal rule. This is the very thing religions have looked for, and prophets have risen and cried out for from long ago. As a matter of fact, they sought to illumi-



nate the dark in this way.

Giving spirituality special consideration and wishing for the one world government are indicative of the fact that man is frustrated at hollow freedom and justice the fake claimants of altruism have promised to provide for the poor and the oppressed.

In today's materialistic world where morality, spirituality, and justice are replaced by utilitarianism, egoism, lust, etc., a just heavenly leader appointed by God is required to appear to remove the oppressors from the whole world with an unsurpassed power and unrivalled contrivance, thus fulfilling the divine promise.

Endnotes

- 1 For example, the Psalms of David (as), 37 : 9 – 12; 17 – 18.
- 2 Book of Isaiah, 2 : 2 – 4; Book of Isaiah, 42 : 1 – 3.
- 3 Book of Isaiah, 11 : 4.
- 4 The Psalms of David, 72 : 4.
- 5 The Psalms of David, 72 : 13.
- 6 Book of Isaiah, 11 : 5.
- 7 The Psalms of David, 37 : 38 – 40
- 8 But of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. Gospel of Matthew, 24 : 36; therefore you should also be ready, for the Son of man comes at an hour when you think not. Gospel of Luke, 12 : 40.
- 9 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Gospel of Matthew, 6 : 10. 10 Gospel of Matthew, 24 : 29 – 30.



QUR'ANIC VERSES CONCERNING MAHDISM

By :
Dr. Muhammadali Rezaei Esfahani

Abstract

There are 324 verses in the holy Qur'an which are pertaining to the concept of Mahdism based on the hadiths uttered by the holy Prophet (SAW) and his Ahl al-Bayt (People of the House/Household) (AS). There are lots of books and papers written on the subject which are directly or indirectly related to it; however, the signification of the verses and the value of the following narrations and hadiths are not the same. This is because the hadiths that follow the verses at times interpret the latter, sometimes expound them exegetically and at other times deal with the correspondences between the verses and the actual circumstances. Therefore, these verses and narrations point out to political, economic, military and historical issues of Mahdism. The purpose of the present paper is to discuss the Qur'anic verses which pertain to the notion of 'Mahdism' on the basis of Shiite and Sunnite interpretive narrations.

Introduction

The bright future which will be brought forth for mankind through the beam-scattering appearance of the End-Time savior is among the concerns dealt with in heavenly religions¹. The issue of Mahdism has also been addressed in both of the Islamic sects, i.e. in both Shiite and Sunnite hadiths² Some Islamic narrations even delineate the name and characteristics of his holiness Mahdi (May God hasten his reappearance)³. The name of the last Shiite Imam, that is Mahdi or Muhammad Ibn Hassan (AS), is not explicitly stated in the holy Qur'an, nor those of the other Shiite Imams (AS). However, there are good reasons why there is no mention of Imams' names in the holy Qur'an.

1. Interpretation of the Qur'anic Verses Concerning Mahdism

Some interpretive hadiths which follow verses on Mahdism provide explanations about the meanings and concepts of the verses, that is to say, they come up with some verbal interpretation of the verses. At this juncture of our discussion, we take some of the most important of these verses into consideration:

1.1. Verses Prophesying the Domination of Islam over other Heavenly Religions

Verses falling into this category promise the ultimate domination of Islam over other heavenly religions, which is not fulfilled yet, and therefore their interpretation can apply only to Mahdism. Such verses with the same interpretations are reiterated in several Surahs (Qur'anic chapters):

a. It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad (SAW)) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islam), to make it superior over all religions even though the Mushrikun (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) hate (it). (9 : 33)

b. It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad (SAW)) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islam), that He may make it (Islam) superior over all religions. And All-Sufficient is Allah as a Witness. (48 : 28)

c. It is He Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to manifest it over all religions, although those who associate others with Allah dislike it. (61 : 9)

As for the last verse mentioned above, Imam Sadiq (AS) is quoted saying, "When Imam az-Zaman

(the Leader of the Age) (May God hasten his reappearance) reappears, there will remain no unbelievers nor those who associate others with Allah unless they dislike his reappearance. And if, for instance, they hide within a rock, that rock shall call out the believers to find and kill them"⁴. His holiness Imam Sadiq (AS) is also quoted in other hadiths saying, "I swear by Allah that the exegesis of this verse has not been fulfilled yet".

"When will it be realized, your holiness?", I asked. He replied, "When our Qa'im (the Rising One) reappears, God willing"⁵.

Obviously enough, the word 'exegesis' mentioned in the hadith above means interpretation. Also, it is obvious that the interpretation of the verses mentioned above considering the ultimate victory of Islam over other religions has not been realized since early Islam. Thus, it is intended by the verses that in the Age of Imam Mahdi (May God hasten his reappearance) and by his hands Islam will win a victory over other religions. It is worth mentioning that narrations like the ones we previously discussed are reiterated by Sunni scholars and therefore some Sunni commentators on the holy Qur'an believe that the realization of the verses is contingent upon the reappearance of his holiness Imam Mahdi (AS)⁶.

2. The Verse Enjoining Removal of Disbelief from the World

2.1. And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and polytheism: i.e. worshipping others besides Allâh) and the religion (worship) will all be for Allâh Alone [in the whole world]. But if they cease (worshipping others besides Allâh), then

certainly, Allâh is All-Seer of what they do. (8 : 39) His holiness Imam Sadiq (AS) was asked about the interpretation of this verse, and he said, "In actual fact, the exegesis of the verse is not realized yet. And if our Qa'im (the Rising One) rises, it is after his rising that the exegesis of the verse shall come true for his contemporaries, and the religion of Muhammad (SAW) shall be perfected to the point that disbelief and polytheism will be vanished from the face of earth as Allah has prophesied". 7

In this narration the word 'exegesis' means interpretation, too. It is obvious that disbelief and polytheism have more or less subsisted since early Islam and that Islam has not gained domination over the world yet. However, the latter which is the very interpretation of the verse will be realized at the time of Imam of the Age (May God hasten his reappearance).

Alusi, a great Sunni commentator, too, points out that the interpretation of the verse has not been realized yet, and its interpretation is contingent upon the reappearance of Mahdi (AS) when no disbeliever shall remain on the earth.8

3.The Qur'anic Promises about the Government

of Righteous Servants and Virtuous Believers on Earth

3.1. And We have already written in the book [of Psalms] after the [previous] mention that the land [of Paradise] is inherited by My righteous servants. (21 : 105)

Imam Baqir (AS) is quoted saying, "All heavenly scriptures have mentioned the verse which says: It is inherited by My righteous servants. 'Righteous servants' means Imam of the Age (May God hasten his reappearance) and his followers in this verse".9

Having provided his commentaries on the aforementioned verse, Alusi, a great Sunni commentator draws the conclusion that the inheritance of earth and what is included in it by the righteous applies to the believers in the Age of Mahdi (AS) and after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (AS). 10

There is a mention of this divine promise in the present holy Bible, the Psalms of David (AS), too: "For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth"11.

Somewhere else in the same book God says, "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell

therein forever".12

3.2.Allah has promised those who have believed among you and done righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession [to authority] upon the earth just as He granted it to those before them and that He will surely establish for them [therein] their religion which He has preferred for them and that He will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security, [for] they worship Me, not associating anything with Me.

(24 : 55)

As for the above-mentioned verse, Imam Sadiq (AS) is quoted saying, "This verse is about Imam of the Age (May God hasten his reappearance) and his followers"13.

As a commentary on the verse mentioned above, Ibn Kathir, a Sunni commentator while mentioning a narration which says that there are 12 just caliphs in charge of the nation refers to the promised Mahdi as one of these caliphs who will fill the world with justice.14 It is obvious that the divine promise made both in the heavenly books earlier than Qur'an and in Qur'an, as well as His promise about the inheritance of the whole world by the righteous believers and the dominance of sheer

justice and security has not been fulfilled yet, but rather they will be fulfilled only at the time of Imam of the Age (May God hasten his reappearance) based on the narrations and hadiths.

Conclusion

There are a lot of verses in the holy Qur'an which cope with different facets of Mahdism based on the hadiths of the holy Prophet (SAW) and those of his Household (AS). At times, these hadiths interpret the verses, sometimes expound them exegetically and at other times deal with the correspondences between the verses and the actual circumstances. Finally, as for subject matter, the verses and the interpretive narrations following them have to do with numerous political, economic, military, and historical issues.



Endnotes

1. See the holy Bible, Psalms, chapter 37, verses 9-18; Psalms, chapter 96, verses 10-13; New Testament, Second Epistle to Paul, chapter 3; Hindu sacred scriptures, Upanishads, p. 737; Zoroastrian sacred texts, Jamasp Namag, p. 121.
2. See Bihar al-Anwar by Majlesi, vol. 13.
3. See Muntakhab al-Athar by Saafi Golpaygani.
4. Furat Exegesis on the Holy Qur'an, p. 184; Ayyashi Commentary on the Holy Qur'an, vol. 2, p. 87.
5. An Interpretation of What was Revealed from the Holy Qur'an, vol. 434, pp. 382-3.
6. As-Suddey says: It is (realized) when Mahdi (as) reappears. Al-Kashf wa Al-Bayan (a Qur'anic commentary), vol. 5, p. 36; At-Tafsir Al-Kabir (the Great Commentary), vol. 16, p. 40; The Commentary by Ibn Abi Hatam, vol. 1, p. 211, The Commentary by Qurtubi, vol. 8, p.121; The Commentary by Tha'labi, vol. 5, p. 305. Abi Sa'id al-Khudri quotes the same hadith from the holy Prophet of Islam (SAW), Kashf ul-Asrar wa 'Uddat ul-Abrrar, a Qur'anic commentary by Meybudi, vol. 4, p. 119.
7. Ayyashi Commentary, vol. 2, p. 56; Majma' al-Bayan (a Qur'anic commentary), vol. 3, p. 543.
8. Ruh al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an (a Qur'anic commentary), vol. 9, p. 174.
9. Majma' al-Bayan (a Qur'anic commentary), vol. 4, p. 66; Menhaj as-Sadeghin (a Qur'anic commentary), vol. 6, p. 125; Muntakhab al-Athar (a collection of hadiths on Imam Mahdi (as)), p. 159; Al-Bihar, vol. 9, p. 126.
10. Ruh al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an (a Qur'anic commentary), vol. 17, p. 95.
11. The holy Bible, Old Testament, Psalms of David, chapter 37, verse 9.
12. The holy Bible, Old Testament, Psalms of David, chapter 37, verse 29.
13. Al-Qiybah (The Occulation) by Na'mani, p. 247; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 51, p. 58; Al-Mahajah, p. 148.
14. Commentary on the holy Qur'an, Ibn Kathir, vol. 2, p. 615.





By:
Asra Nameliati

All ups and downs in the human life occur in three periods in life: childhood, youth and old age.

Youth is the time of power and ability, enclosed with weakness and disability; thus, youth is the spring of life. On the way through the ups and downs of their lives, people are like mounteneers who are trying to reach the highest summit, but when they get up there, they move downwards to reach the ground again.

The soul of a young person is brimming with desires and aspirations and heaving with love and hope. No doubt, the youths are the most valuable wealth of a society, because vitality and enthusiam always attend the pure essence and nature of the youths. In all human societies, the youths are the symbol of felicity and growth and their influence over the society is in direct relation with huge social and cultural changes; as a result, Divine Representatives of God have always paid special attention to the youths. Societies will develop and excel when the youths of the society make developements. The infatiguable power of the youths and their truth-seeking nature, unless digressing away from the path of God, guarantee the society's guidance and salvation.

Prophet Abraham (AS) and his two sons were two manly figures in their own time. From the perspective of the old testament, Abraham brought his much admired son to the altar to offer him as a sacrifice, as God had commanded. When God saw Abraham unwavering in his faith, He sent a ram so that Abraham would sacrifice the ram instead of his son :

1) And it came to pass after this things, that God did prove Abraham, and said to him, Abraham. And he said, here am I. 2) And he said , Take now thy son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah. And offer him there for a burnt –offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. 3) And Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Issac his son. And he clave the wood for the burnt –offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. 7) And Isaac spoke to Abraham his father, and said, My father. And he said, Here am I my son. And he said, Behold,

the fire and the wood. But where is the lamp for a burnt-offering? 8) And Abraham said, God will provide the lamp himself for the burnt –offering, my son. So they both went together. 9) And they reached the place which God told him of. And Abraham built the altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. 10) And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11) And the angel of Jehovah called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham. And he said, Here I am. 12) And he said, Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do anything unto him. For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. 13) And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind [him] a ram caught in the thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son . This is mentioned in the Quran that this faithfulness was not solely from Abraham, but also





from his young son. Abraham told his son he had seen in a dream that he had to sacrifice him: "O my son, indeed I have seen in a dream that I [must] sacrifice you, so see what you think." The son replied, "O my father, do as you are commanded. You will find me, if Allah wills, of the steadfast."

In Islam, this young man's surrender and acquiescence to God's will is celebrated each year so that people would remember him and take him as a model of submission and patience towards Divine commandments.

Moreover, the Prophet Abraham is a figure in the Quran whose youthful preachings against idolry have a significant resonance. With his power, logic, and rationality The brave Abraham invites his people to pray God and to change their ways, and he breaks their idols into pieces with an ax, turning their gods into a heap of wood and stone. This young idol-breaker stands against the powerful king of the Babylon, Nimrod, and with the power of his logic makes people think about their errors

and choose the straight path .

The Prophet Joseph (AS) was a most handsome young man, who did not give in to the temptations of Zuleika and resisted sin . Thus, the innocent Joseph was imprisoned. His power to fight the lustful ego is a model for all the youths to follow.

Against all the strictures and hardships which Pharaoh had created, Moses grew up in the Pharaoh's own palace. When young, he tried to defend a man from the tribe of the sons of Isreal, and therefore had to escape his land to save his life. He strode into the Sinai desert and reached Midian after going through many hardships. Midian was where Shuaib lived, and Moses's goodwill made her help Shuaib's two daughters .

It is known that Jesus (AS), a young prophet, also stood against all cruelty and wrongdoings of his time and defended the religion of God and the rights of the oppressed, inviting his people to worship the only God.

The holy prophet of Islam (SAW) was famous as Mohammad Amin (trustworthy) in his

youth, for being truthful and honest. He never betrayed the trust of others and never harmed anybody. He was Amin (trustworthy) both when he was a young man and later when he was appointed by God as the prophet of his nation and the messenger of God. As a prophet, he used to consult the young men and if their ideas were more practical he would act accordingly . His representative who led a group of Muslims to Habasheh (nowadays Ethiopia) was a young man named Ja'far ibn Abi Talib. The first representative of the Holy Prophet (SAW) who traveled to Medina as an ambassador of Islam was also a young man by the name of Mus'ab ibn Umair, who showed great talent in attracting people to Islam and thus the holy prophet (SAW) regarded him highly. The prophet (SAW) also sent a young man, the twenty-one-year-old Amir, as the envoy of Islam to Mecca. The holy prophet (SAW) addressed the people of Mecca in one of his writings: "do not disobey him for his young age; since the older is not meritorious; it is the meritorious who is worthy ". An eighteen or nineteen-year-old boy, Usamah, was also appointed by the Prophet (SAW) as the leader of the Islamic army. During the time when Muhammad (SAW) was the prophet of Islam, similar cases were rampant.

Why the Youth?

One of the most important reasons for the success of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in overcoming all privations was his attention to the needs of human nature. On the other hand, the immaculate nature of the youth is prone to ardently to seek truth and excellence. Thus, the young are always accompanying the holy prophet (SAW).

Regarding the behavior, character, and conduct of the young people during the time of the reappearance, it is said that most of the help-

mates of the Savior belong to this age-group. When the last prophet reappears, the young people will gather around the Savior with fervent love and show their devotion and respect to him, since the youth are bereft of obduracy. In accordance with their innocent nature, the youth are always passionately and actively seeking salvation and are ready to forsake their imitative traditions of their father. Although some of them get confused on the way to find goodness and the straight path, but their dynamism and endeavor and their dislike of passivity is itself a result



of the truth-seeking nature of the youths. That is why in every age the young people are active on the social scene.

The youths, often, less than their elders lose themselves in the glooms of the soul and its cruel biddings. In the heat of the young people, there is a strong desire for excellence of the soul and a sympathetic nature, serenity of the soul, and a kind heart accompanies them which speed up their participation in good deeds. The heart of the young is free from worldly matters and liberated from any obsession with luxuries; that is why they easily answer the call of justice. The youths find what they look for in this message. The heart, mind, and emotions of the young people find their proper home in the government of the final Savior. This final government of the Savior would secure all the youths need. The youths suffer from cruelty, evil deeds and behavior of others, and they regret people's deprivation and hope for a day when proper ethics and virtues would fill the world and people would

take the straight path.

However, diverse wishes and complex beliefs, ideas and dogmas of the elderly are like heavy padlocks to their feet, impeding their progress towards the Savior. When people get older, their heart loses its talent. It loses its leniency and turns stiff. When a young and an old man are asked to help, the young person decides faster and acts immediately. Therefore, the youths, as their pure nature directs them, seek a world resonant with good morals.

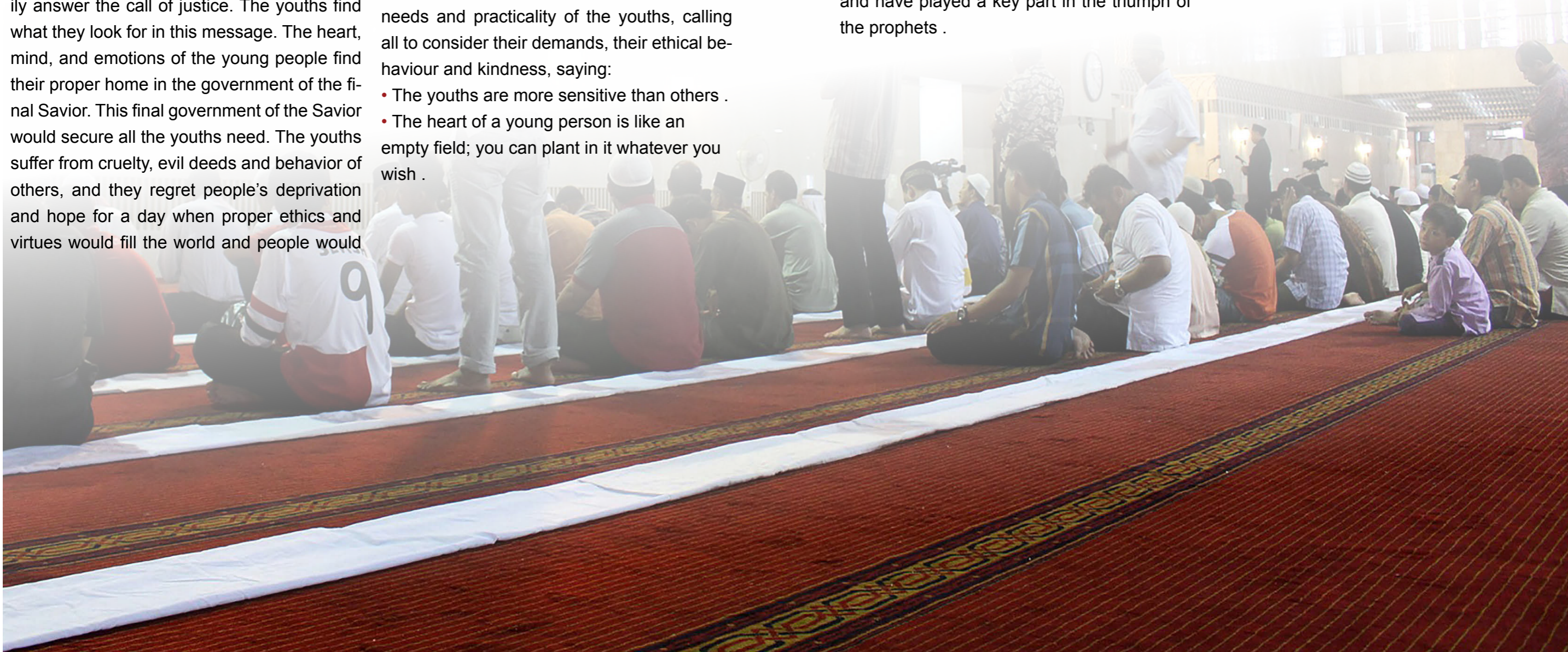
Due to this, the messengers of God have given attention to the inner longings and general needs and practicality of the youths, calling all to consider their demands, their ethical behaviour and kindness, saying:

- The youths are more sensitive than others .
- The heart of a young person is like an empty field; you can plant in it whatever you wish .

- Value the youths! They welcome good deeds before others .

Concerning the real needs of the youths of the new generation, our leaders have devised certain pedagogical programs to guide the youths and to illuminate their hearts with the light of faith, offering them the life-giving and magnificent prism of life . Regarding this attention offered to the youths, which arises out of provident attention to future, much of the seductive power of depravity loses color, and the thieves of the soul and minds of the young are left unfulfilled. As a result of this pedagogical program, the youths have been the forerunners of expanding religion in every age, and have played a key part in the triumph of the prophets .

And since qualities such as serenity of soul, love of beauty (the youths have a beautiful soul which glows in their beautiful face), courage and valor, good will, unselfishness and altruism, revolutionary spirits, justice-seeking natures, responsibility in social duties, nobility, magnanimity, gallantry, faithfulness and steadfastness, kindness, independence, idealism and truth seeking exist in the youths more strongly than the elderly. These characteristics of the young people qualify them as participants in the government of the Savior (Imam Mahdi in Muslim's belief) because his government brings change to the whole world.





By:
Asra Namliti
Translated by:
S. Sara Hosseini

Tired, anxious, and exhausted, she was still moving away from her city while she did not have anywhere to stay in or any companion to accompany her. Severe pain squeezed her in its claws. Anticipating her future and stigma increased her apprehensions. Sometimes she broke down and wept, and the wetness of tears burnt her eyes, but she suffered more from the burning of her heart caused by spitefulness of the people. This caused her to take each step with more reluctance. She had no power to move. She felt drained. The mere thought of undeservedly rude remarks and inhumane treatments by kith and kin doubled her physi-

TRACES of Hope

cal weakness. With her hand on stomach and her back bent over, she trudged through the hot and arid desert. She wished she were dead and her name had been wiped out of the universe. In that desert, the only sight for her sore eyes was a single leafless tree. She could lean against it and search for the residue of her strength to give birth to her son. Fixing her eyes to the little son was a delight, sympathy and a lasting hope for her as well as the oppressed people in the world. Yes, the born child was the Messiah. The son that the world had waited for since a long time ago was born from an innocent virgin. Mary tolerated all the adversities and accusations for the love she had for God and people and for giving hope to the oppressed. She shouldered the hardships all alone so that her son could assist the oppressed in the world. Then, Holy God congratulated the coming of Christ to Mary, and to help her retrieve her lost vigor, said, "Grieve not. Thy Lord has placed a rivulet below thee; And shake towards thyself the trunk of the palm-tree; it will cause fresh ripe dates to fall upon thee; So eat and drink, and cool thy eye...2". Mary smiled and thought what a blessing that the Almighty God has not forgotten her in times of loneliness and gravity of situation in face of the oppressors and has given the herald of a bright future to her. Then, it is virtuous Mary who relates her story to another virtuous woman after hundreds of years. Mary accompanies her in hard times of loneliness, while all women of Quraysh tribe had left her when she was in labor. This time the blessed Mary's contemporaries have changed their guises and appeared as the

infidels of Quraysh to tease Khadijah: "We told you not to marry the orphan of Abutalib when you have all these rich suitors, did not we? Although he is decent and upright, he does not show reverence to our ancestors' tradition and claims to be a prophet! It is your reward, take it! Go and deliver your baby alone."

Yes, Khadijah is alone in the last moments of her pregnancy but her husband apparently does not give any regard to loneliness, raises his hands to heaven, and says something. Pain has entangled Khadijah, her soul suffers from the sinful people of the period, and the endless taunts test her patience. Suddenly Khadijah fixes her eyes to the room's door. Four women enter! Mary is one of them. She greets Khadijah, smiles at her, strokes her shoulder, and gently murmurs her story in her ear to help her tolerate the unkind kith and kin just like the time she was in a similar situation and had to deliver her only son unaided. After Messiah stepped into this world to save the people, this time the mother of the Savior of the World, Fatima daughter of Prophet of Islam whose grandson Mahdi (may Allah hasten his return)³ will step into this world to give hope to the people who await his return.



Endnotes

- 1- Qur'an, Chapter Marry, Verse 23
- 2- Ibid, 24-26
- 3- From Muslims point of view, Mahdi (AJ) is the grandson of Prophet of Islam and khadija daughter, Fatima (SA)..

HELLO MR. KIND!

Written By: Sommayeh Minooee

Translated by: S. Sara Hosseini

I hope all is well with you.

My name is Sara, I'm 12 and I'm from England.

Before hearing about that horrible news on TV I didn't know who you were. It's true that similar things like that horrible news had happened before, but it just made my heart ache again. It was the news of the murder of a black boy in the hands of a white racist man. That night not only I but also my mom and dad were moved by the news.

When I went to school the day after, the news was the hot topic between my classmates; each were talking about that cold and cruel murder, giving their opinions about the clemency of the racist murderer by the court of the United States.

When Miss Rosa, our history teacher and one of our loveliest teachers ever, entered the class and saw our sad and gloomy faces, she asked us the reason. I got up and informed her of the terrible news. She nodded in disappointment and said: "Yes my dears, I have heard about this villainy too." She said that the world is not empty of these cruelties and she pointed out to the crimes and the massacres of the people in Palestine, Iraq and Syria.

But the moment she started talking about you an air of peace and reconciliation filled the air...

She said that one day a kind man would come who would fill the world with justice. This man, whom all the religions around the world are awaiting for his arrival, will bring peace and friendship into the hearts of people. All the cruel and the cruelties will give their place to good and good deeds. There would be no more hunger in the world, there would be equality between black and white and there would be no more crimes such as this.

As Miss Rosa was talking about you the bell rang but none of us wished to leave the class and we were eager to hear more. After reassuring us she promised to dedicate some time in each of our classes to talk with us about you and tell us your stories. After hearing this, the girls were happy again wishing in their hearts for the next session to come.

And I wrote this letter to tell you that how much I love you and how much I'm rooting for you to come!

God bless you my hero.

THE PATH OF SALVATION

Written By: Sommayeh Minooee

Translated by: S. Sara Hosseini

The sound of the rain that was falling restlessly on the roof and the sound of thunder killed any hope of finding a cab at this hour of the night in the hearts of the children.

Mother's condition grew worse. Her coughs were more intense and her fever wouldn't lower. Joseph walked anxiously; he walked up and down, sometimes toward the mother and whenever he walked away he came back more anxious than before. Marry was sitting next to mother and was soaking a piece of cloth in the bowl of water and then she put it on her forehead but her fever was very high and she had to go to the hospital as soon as possible.

The door opened and while father was soaked from head to toe he entered the room hopelessly and ashamed.

Joseph: What happened dad?

Marry: Were you able to find a cab?

Father shakes his head with shame and says: It's a heavy rain. No car passes from nearby.

Joseph: Mom has to go to a hospital.

Marry: What should we do now?



Father: Pray...

The children were so worried. They were thinking to themselves: "If mom doesn't go to a hospital something might happen to her, if..."

After a few minutes of silence Joseph said: That's right, instead of thinking these horrible thoughts we should start praying...

Each of them went to a corner to find a sanctuary to pray. Marry hugged her knees within and while she cried she put her head on her knees and talked to God: Oh dear God, please...please help my mother and make her feel better

Joseph was sitting on his knees praying: "Dear lord, please heal all the sick and my mother too." He was looking at his mother when all of a sudden he thought of a man whom his mother used to talk about all the time: "Dear sir, I've heard that you always help people. Please help us as well. Please dear God for the sake of this holy man, please save my mother..."

Everyone was deep in their thoughts when they heard a noise;

Marry: What was that?

Joseph: I think someone knocked on the door.

They heard the noise again, this time louder.

Father: Yes, it seems that someone is knocking on the door.

Joseph gets up and goes toward the door. He opens the door cautiously when he sees a man standing there in a black suit with a black bag in his hand.

While he was dripping the stranger said: I'm very sorry to bother you but my car is broken down and I thought I could find a mechanic in this village but I couldn't find any. Can you help me?

Father: Come on in please

The stranger entered the house and greeted everyone

Father went to him, shook his hand and said: Hello and welcome to our house.

Please come and sit by the fireplace to get warm.

The man thanked him and sat by the fire. Marry brought him a cup of tea. He started drinking when the mother's coughing attracted his attention.

The stranger: Is she sick?

Father: yes

The stranger: Have you taken her to a doctor?

Father: We don't have any vehicles ourselves and I couldn't find a car out there on the road either.

The stranger: I'm a doctor and I have my equipment with me. If you let me, I'll take a look at her.

No one could believe what they've heard; they were both soaked and thrilled.

The doctor went to mother's bedside, put his hand on her forehead and said: "She has a very high fever. Somebody bring me my bag please."

Joseph ran and fetched his bag. The doc-

tor started examining her: "She is not doing very well. I'll do some primary therapy but you should get her to a hospital when you get the chance."

Father: "God bless you sir, thank you very much. God sent you to us himself."

Joseph went to Marry and said: "Did you see? Our prayers were heard and answered."

Marry: "Yes, I can't believe it. A doctor in this weather breaks down his car and of all these houses, knocks on our door. Thank you God! Thank you!"

Everyone thanked God for his kindness with tears of joy in their eyes and then thanked the doctor. An hour later as the rain stopped pouring mother's health got better as well. Joseph went to his room, opened up the window and watched the beautiful rainbow in the sky he said: "Dear sir, I know that you helped us too, I thank you for your help and for your kindness"

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