

Al-Mahdi, Muhammad ibn Abdullah and A Caliphate That Follows the Guidance of the Prophet sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam

Hudhaifah bin Al-Yaman reported that the Messenger of Allah sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam said,

"Prophethood (meaning himself) will remain with you for as long as Allah wills it to remain, then Allah will raise it up wherever he wills to raise it up. Afterwards, there will be a Caliphate that follows the guidance of Prophethood remaining with you for as long as Allah wills it to remain. Then, He will raise it up whenever He wills to raise it up. Afterwards, there will be a reign of violently oppressive [The reign of Muslim kings who are partially unjust] rule and it will remain with you for as long as Allah wills it to remain. Then, there will be a reign of tyrannical rule and it will remain for as long as Allah wills it to remain. Then, Allah will raise it up whenever He wills to raise it up. Then, there will be a Caliphate that follows the guidance of Prophethood."

Then Hudhaifah said, "The Prophet stopped speaking." [As-Silsilah As-Sahihah, vol. 1, no. 5]

Al-Mahdi Muhammad bin Abdullah

All those who are gifted with sound comprehension know that the Mahdi who the Shiites are waiting for, does not and did not exist. The Muslim nation has faced numerous hardships and calamities because of this mystical belief that the Shiites carry and propagate regarding this Mahdi.

In the Shiite mythology, believing in the Imams is a cornerstone of their faith. However such mythology is similar to Greek and Persian mythology, as well as the beliefs of the other nations of Al-Jahiliyyah.

The Sunnis believe that Al-Mahdi will be an ordinary man, born to an ordinary women raised by ordinary men and living an ordinary life with the people of his time. He will not live in caves, as the Shiites believe. They are waiting for their Mahdi to appear from an alleged cave, where they claim he has been in hiding for over ten centuries.

In reality, Al-Mahdi will be an Imam and a Caliph, among other Caliphs who rule Muslims with justice. However, what differentiates Al-Mahdi from other Caliphs is that he will meet Jesus son of Mary sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam.

Also, Jesus, the Prophet of Allah, will pray behind Al-Mahdi. Allah will give Al-Mahdi the ability to righteously rule the Muslim nation in the span of a night. He will fill the earth with justice, as it was filled with injustice. He will lead the Muslim nation to the second conquering of Constantinople and possibly Rome.

A Caliphate That Follows the Guidance of the Prophet sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam

The Prophet Muhammad sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam mentioned that just before the end of this world, the Muslim nation will be ruled by a Caliphate that will follow the guidance sent with the Messenger of Allah sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam.

Hudhaifah bin Al-Yaman reported that the Messenger of Allah sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam said,

"Prophethood (meaning himself) will remain with you for as long as Allah wills it to remain, then Allah will raise it up wherever he wills to raise it up. Afterwards, there will be a Caliphate that follows the guidance of Prophethood remaining with you for as long as Allah wills it to remain. Then, He will raise it up whenever He wills to raise it up. Afterwards, there will be a reign of violently oppressive [The reign of Muslim kings who are partially unjust] rule and it will remain with you for as long as Allah wills it to remain. Then, there will be a reign of tyrannical rule and it will remain for as long as Allah wills it to remain. Then, Allah will raise it up whenever He wills to raise it up. Then, there will be a Caliphate that follows the guidance of Prophethood."

Then Hudhaifah said, "The Prophet stopped speaking." [As-Silsilah As-Sahihah, vol. 1, no. 5]

The reason behind mentioning this Hadith here is to state that Al-Mahdi will live in the last period of rightly guided Caliphs that the Messenger of Allah sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam mentioned himself sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam.

In this Hadith, the Messenger of Allah divided the history of the Muslim nation into the following stages:

1. The reign of the Prophet Muhammad
2. A Caliphate that rules according to the guidance revealed to the Messenger of Allah sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam This period is called the reign of the rightly guided Caliphs, starting with Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman and ending with the murder of Ali bin Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with them all. Some scholars included the short reign of Al-

Hasan bin Ali, the grandson of the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam These are the thirty years which the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam stated comprised the reign of the rightly guided Caliphs [The Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam said? "The Caliphate will remain in my nation after me for thirty years. Then, it will be a monarchy after that." Ahmad, Tirmidhi and others, Sahih Al-Jami` ' As-Saghir no. 3341].

3. The reign of unjust rule. This reign contains some injustice to a varying degree between one king and another. This period started after Al-Hasan bin Ali and includes the Umayyad, Abbasid, Mamluks and until the fall of the Ottoman State in the twentieth century.

This period includes all states that ruled in the Muslim World during those centuries. However, we exclude the reign of those rulers whose rule was similar to the rule of the rightly guided Caliphs, such as the reign of Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr and Umar bin Abdul-Aziz. These two are considered among the just Caliphs from among the tribe of Quraish who ruled or will rule the Muslim nation.

4. The reign of the tyrannical rule. This period started in the end of the Ottoman state and continues. We ask Allah that He saves us from the evils of this period and that we witness its end soon.

This reign includes all the regimes that ruled the Muslim World, whether imperial, party oriented, governments controlled by the disbelievers, like those after World War I, populist or republic, which all sought to deprive Allah from His right as the Only Legislator in all matters of life and religion.

When the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam mentioned the periods that this nation will experience, he categorized them according to the type of government, whether unjust, or that which follows the guidance of the Prophet, or autocratic and tyrannical, as we experience today.

5. The return of a Caliphate that rules following the guidance of the Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam This period requires the Muslims to be prepared and strive for its imminent coming, by spreading the knowledge of the Book and the Sunnah and the way of our righteous ancestors, As-Salaf As-Salih. This is because nothing can resurrect this nation except that which resurrected its ancestors. Until this final period comes, the religion will become a stranger, the same way it started in Makkah, a stranger to its masters and slaves, the powerful and the weak, its women, and its children.

Those who will strive to establish this righteous period are those ghurabaa strangers as the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam called them, who will carry this religion with knowledge, sound comprehension and determination. They will willingly sacrifice their well-being, face hardships, and persecution, with patience and steadfastness.

They will follow the advice of the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam when he said,

"Therefore, hold fast to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Caliphs, hold it between your front teeth! And beware of innovations (in the religion), for every innovation is a bid'ah, and every bid'ah is a deviation, and every deviation is in the Fire." [Sahih Al-Jami ' As-Saghir, no. 2549]

The ghurabaa are the ones who, by the will of Allah, will correct that which people have altered and changed of the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam after his departure from this earthly life. They will fight in the sake of Allah and dominate those who oppose them. They will be unrelenting even in the face of those who abandon or defy them, until Allah brings about His Decree (the Hour), while they are steadfast on this path.

We ask Allah, the Praised and Ever-High One, that He grants us steadfastness on the path of His Messenger sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam and the path taken by the companions and those who followed their lead until the Day of Judgment.