

Shī'a Islam Doctrinal Series № 8

His Eminence, the

Imām al-Mahdī

The Universal Savior of Humanity

Abdol-Rahīm al-Mūsawī et al,

Apologetics Department of the Ahlul Bayt World Assembly

Edited, Translated and Annotated by
Blake Archer Williams



Lion of Najaf publishers

Summary and Conclusion

سرناسه : موسوی، عبدالرحیم، ۱۳۴۲ - Musawi, Abdol-Rahim

عنوان قرارداد: الإمام المهدی (عج) فی روایات اهل السنه. انگلیسی

عنوان و نام پدیدآور : His eminence, the Imam al-Mahdi: the universal

; edited, translated and / Abdol-Rahim al-Mūsawī savior of humanity
annotated by Blake Archer Williams.

مشخصات نشر : 1396, 2017: PenvisParand

مشخصات ظاهری: ۶۱ ص؛ ۲۱/۵×۱۴/۵ سم.

فروست : no 8a Islam Doctrinal Series-Shī

شابک : 978-600-97650-9-6: ۵۰۰۰ ریال

رضعیت فهرست نویسی: فیبا یادداشت: انگلیسی.

یادداشت: کتاب حاضر از متن فارسی کتاب با عنوان "حضرت مهدی در روایات اهل

سنت" ترجمه شده است.

عنوان به زبان دیگر : حضرت مهدی در روایات اهل سنت

موضوع : محمدین حسن (عج)، امام دوازدهم، ۲۵۵ق -

موضوع : محمدین حسن (عج)، امام دوازدهم، ۲۵۵ق. - - احادیث اهل سنت

موضوع : Muhammad ibn Hasan, Imam XII -- Hadiths (Sunnite)

موضوع : احادیث اهل سنت -- قرن ۱۴

*Hadith (Sunnites) -- Texts -- 20th century

شناسه افزوده: ویلار، بلاک آرچر، مترجم

شناسه افزوده: Williams, Blake Archer

شناسه افزوده: مجمع جهانی اهل بیت (ع)

شناسه افزوده: Ahl-i-Bait World Assembly

رده بندی کنگره: ۲۹۶/۱۳۹۶: ۵۱/م/۵۱ BP

رده بندی دیویی: ۲۹۷/۹۵۹: شماره کتابشناسی ملی: ۴۷۲۳۲۸۲

انتشارات پنویس PĒNIVÍS

ایمیل: penvis2016@gmail.com / ۰۹۱۰۹۴۷۵۶۷۷/۵۶۸۹۰۰۰۰

• نام کتاب: His Eminence, the Imam al-Mahdi The Universal Savior

of Humanity

• ترجمه‌ی: Blake Archer Williams

• سال و نوبت چاپ: ۱۳۹۶ - اول

• شمارگان: ۱۰۰۰ جلد

• شابک (ISBN): 978-600-97650-9-6

• قیمت: ۵۰۰۰ تومان

Table of Contents

Preface 1

1: The Avowal of the Sonnī *Ōlamā* to the Birth of Imām Mahdī 10

2: The Name and Lineage of Imām Mahdī 18

3: The Characteristics of Imām Mahdī 30

4: The Rank of Imām Mahdī before God 3

5: Imām Mahdī as the Caliph of God and the Final Imām 38

6: Jesus will Defer to the Mahdī 42

7: The Banner of Imām Mahdī 46

8: The Generosity and Largesse of Imām Mahdī 48

9: The Miracle of Imām Mahdī 52

Summary and Conclusion 56

Preface

The belief in the coming of a world savior and the establishment of a universal just order is not limited to the worldview of the revealed religions. It is something that certain intellectual and philosophical traditions believe in as well. For example, the doctrine of the communists posits history as a clash or series of tensions (which are labelled alternatively as the 'theses' and 'antitheses' of history), and says that a promised day will arrive where these tensions shall cease to exist and peace and tranquility shall reign over the world.¹

A number of prominent thinkers whose worldview is not religious also have this belief. For example, the famous British philosopher Bertrand Russell has said, "The world is

¹ Mohammad Bāqer as-Sadr, *A Discussion Concerning the Mahdī*, p. 87.

waiting for a savior to unite it under a single cause and banner.”²

The world-famous physicist Albert Einstein also has said, “The day is not far when peace and tranquility will be established on earth and people will live in peace and act with love and kindness toward each other.”³

The much decorated Irish playwright and critic G. Bernard Shaw addresses the need for the coming of a savior with a greater attention to detail, saying that “he is alive and endowed with a strong physical body and an extraordinary mind. He is a perfect man to whose example humanity can strive to reach. His lifespan will extend to approximately three hundred years, and he will be able to use the experiences which he has gained [from his long life].”⁴

The revealed religions all point to the certainty of the coming of a universal savior, and anyone who studies the sacred texts of these religions will see that the savior concerning whom great tidings have been given in these texts refers to the same person that Shī‘a Islam believes in and who is referred to within that tradition as the Mahdī (the Guided One) and the *Sāheb oz-Zamān* (the Lord of the Age).

² Quoted in Abdol-Reḡā Shahrestānī, *The Awaited Mahdī and the Disabuse of Misunderstandings concerning Him*, page 6.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Abbās Mahmūd ol-Aqqād, Bernard Shaw, pages 124-125.

After having carried out in-depth research into the glad tidings concerning the universal savior provided in the Book of Isaiah, Qādī Sābātī concludes: "This text expressly states that he [the savior] is the Mahdī... The Imāmī [Twelver] Shī'a say that he is Mohammad b. al-Hasan al-Askarī ؑ who was born in the year 255 HQ in Sāmarrā during the era of al-Mo'tamed, the Abbāsīd caliph. His mother was named Narjes, the bondsmaiden of Hasan al-Askarī ؑ. He became occulted for a year⁵, then he reappeared, then became occulted again; and this [second occultation] is [what has come to be known as] the Greater Occultation, after which [absence] he will not return until God will it. I have mentioned the beliefs of the Shī'a [concerning the coming of the Savior] insofar as they conform most closely to this text, and my objective has been to defend the community of [those who have attained to faith in the prophethood of] Mohammad ؐ irrespective of sectarian considerations; I therefore have concluded that, that which the Shī'a believe conforms most closely with the sacred Book [of Isaiah in the Old Testament]."⁶

⁵ The historical truth of the matter is that the Lesser Occultation of the Imām al-Mahdī ؑ took place for a period of 69 years after the death of his father, during which he maintained contact with his community by means of four Deputies, after which he went into the prolonged or Greater Occultation.

⁶ *Al-Barāhīn-Sābātīya*, quoted in Mīrzā Nūrī, *Kashf ol-Astār*, page 84.

Mohammad Reḍa Fakhroeslām, who was a Christian who converted to Islam and chose the Shī'a rite for his practice, has likewise reached this same conclusion. He wrote an encyclopedic book in refutation of Judaism and Christianity called *Anīs al-Aḍlām* wherein he investigated the various glad tidings that have been given concerning the coming of a universal savior and reached the conclusion that these were all in conformance with the Mahdī, the son of Isā al-Askarī عليه السلام.⁷

Anyone who studies the Bible carefully will discover that the attributes that appear in it concerning the universal savior about whom the Bible has provided glad tidings do not apply to anyone other than the Mahdī who is awaited by the Shī'a of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (the Members of the Household of the Prophet عليه السلام); therefore, one who is not familiar with the beliefs of the Members of the Household of the Prophet عليه السلام cannot attain to a proper understanding of the confirming indicators of the tidings provided in the Bible. As an example, an exegete of the Book of Revelation (or the Apocalypse of John as it is also called) has stated concerning verse 17:10, "The person concerning whose advent these prophecies give glad tidings has yet to be born, thus, the clear meaning [as to whom] these verses [refer] will become clear [at a time] in the future when the universal savior has appeared [on the scene]."⁸

⁷ Mohammad Sādeqī, *Beshārat al-Ahdayn* (Tidings of the Two Testaments), page 232.

⁸ Ibid, page 264.

A number of *Sonnī* scholars have reached the same conclusion. For example, professor Saīd Ayyūb has concluded that the prophecies of the Book of Revelation refer to the same person who the *Imāmī* (Twelver) *Shī'a* believe in and whose advent they are expecting. He writes, "In the sacred books of the prophets it is written that the *Mahdī* will be inerrant;" and comments, "I attest that I have found the *Mahdī* as so described in the books of the *ahl al-keṭāb* (the People of the Book; i.e. the Christians and Jews); and the People of the Book have studied the prophecies relating to the *Mahdī*, just as they had studied the prophecies concerning his ancestor [reference to the Prophet Mohammad ﷺ]."

Revelations 12:1 refers to a woman who gives birth to twelve men. It then refers to another woman who is the woman who is to give birth to the last man in the series of twelve who are the issues from the loins of the first woman. In the passage from Revelations which follows, the dragon symbolizes the difficulties that the woman will face, standing before her and ready to devour the child she is to give birth to, which is an allegory of the dominant governing order being intent on killing the new-born child:

[Revelations 12:3] And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. [Revelations 12:4] And his tail drew

the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

Revelations describes the birth of the child, and how he will be "caught up unto God":

[Revelations 12:5] And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

[Revelations 12:6] And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

In his commentary on the above verses, Barclay says that when the woman is surrounded by danger, God protects the child by making him disappear from view. The disappearance of this child shall be 1,260 days – a period of time which is laden with significance and mystery among the Christians.⁹

Barclay continues his commentary concerning the progeny at the age of the first woman: "The dragon, that is the Devil, on

⁹ This duration is symbolic and cryptic. In the original Hebrew it appears as follows: "He will quickly disappear from the face of the serpent for a time, and times, and half a time;" cf. Mohammad Sādeqī, *Beshārat al-Ahdayn (Tidings of the Two Testaments)*, page 263.

being cast out of heaven and descending to earth, attacked the woman who was the mother of the man child," as it also appears in Revelation 12:13: "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child [who is destined to establish God's will on earth]."

Professor Saīd Ayyūb writes that "the above verses are descriptions of the Mahdī and correspond with the descriptions which the Twelver Shī'a believe concerning him."¹⁰

We therefore see that many different investigators and researchers have concluded that the tidings provided in the Bible point to the Mahdī whose descriptions correspond with the beliefs of, and to who is awaited by, the faithful of Shī'a Islam.

Given the fact that the beliefs of the Shī'a concerning Imām Mahdī (may God hasten the advent of his noble person) are relatively clear and that many detailed books have been written in which *hadīth* reports from Shī'a sources concerning the subject have been compiled, we shall proceed herein to survey *hadīth* reports which

¹⁰ *al-Masīh ad-Dajjāl*, Saīd Ayyūb, pages 379 – 380, where he brings evidence in confirmation of this thesis (quoted in *al-Mahdī al-Montazer fī'l-Fekr al-Islamīya*).

appear exclusively in the Sonnī sources concerning Imām Mahdī (may God hasten the advent of his noble person).

During the course of the review of these sources, what we are interested in resolving is the question as to whether or not these Sonnī reports also discuss the details of the rank, station, attributes and character of the Imām al-Mahdī (may God hasten the advent of his noble person); or if they simply point to the certainty of his advent at some future point in time.

It should be evident that belief and the attaining to certainty in the advent of a universal savior cannot be useful or be in conformance with the demands of the Islamic mission without it being rooted in true knowledge concerning the character and attributes of such a savior, because belief in an advent at some promised time in the future as an abstract principle divorced from faith and belief in Imām Mahdī (may God hasten the advent of his noble person) as a person is a corruption of the original concept which renders it useless. An analogy might be the case of one who believes in the obligation to perform the canonical devotions (*salāt*) but who has no idea as to how these are to be performed, in which case such a belief would be useless. In this book, then, we shall review the understanding of Imām Mahdī (may God hasten the advent of his noble person) as it has reached us through the Sonnī sources.