10358 - No-one who was alive in 10 AH lived for more than one hundred years

the question

Could you please explain this hadith: Narrated by Abdullah ibn Umar (RA): Once the Prophet led us in the 'Isha' prayer during the last days of his life and after finishing it (the prayer) (with Taslim) he said: "Do you realize (the importance of) this night?" Nobody present on the surface of the earth tonight will be living after the completion of one hundred years from this night." -- Sahih Bukhari (1.116)

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The meaning of the hadeeth is clear and apparent, and was borne out by real events. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was stating that none of the people who were alive at that time would live for more than a hundred years, and this is what in fact happened. The last of the Sahaabah to die passed away in 110 AH, i.e., he died one hundred years after the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) died. His name was Abu’l-Tufayl ibn Waathilah.

Shaykh Sa’d al-Humayd

This hadeeth was narrated by Imaam al-Bukhaari (may Allaah have mercy on him) in his Saheeh, from ‘Abd-Allaah ibn ‘Umar, who said: “The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) led us in praying ‘Ishaa towards the end of his life. When he had said the salaam, he stood up and said: ‘Do you see this night of yours? One hundred years from now, there will not be anyone left of those who are on the face of the earth.’”

There follow some comments made by Ibn Hajar (may Allaah have mercy on him) on this hadeeth:

“Led us in prayer” means as an imaam.

“Towards the end of his life”. A corroborating report narrated by Jaabir states that this was one month before he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) died.

“Do you see” means, “Think about (this night).”

“One hundred years from now” means, when one hundred years have passed.

“There will not be anyone left of those who are on the face of the earth” means, anyone who was alive at that time.

Ibn Battaal said: What the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) meant was that during this time-span their generation would pass away. He was pointing out to them how short their lives were and that their lives were not like those of the nations who came before them, so that they would strive hard in worship.

Al-Nawawi said: What is meant is that everyone who was on the face of the earth on that night would not live for more than one hundred years after that night, whether he was young on that occasion or not. It does not mean that anyone who was born after that night would not live for a hundred years. And Allaah knows best.

This hadeeth is one of the signs of the Prophethood of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). He was speaking of future events which came to pass as he described them. The trustworthy scholars use this as evidence in refuting some of the Sufis who say that al-Khidr is still alive until now.