170174 - Are the Muslims awaiting the Mahdi or the Messiah?

the question

All the Abrahamic religions believe in one God and are awaiting their Messiah who is mentioned in their scriptures. So the Christians are awaiting the second coming of Jesus Christ, and the Jews are awaiting the Messiah son of David. As for you Muslims, you are awaiting two people at the same time, the Messiah Jesus son of Mary and the Awaited Mahdi. How can that be? Is it possible that these two figures refer to one man who is unique, meaning that the Mahdi is nothing more than another title for the Messiah son of Mary? If that is not so, then how do you explain that you are waiting for two messiahs at the same time?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The religion that Allah, may He be exalted, sent down is one religion, namely Islam. It is the religion of Noah (Nuh), Abraham (Ibrahim), Moses (Musa) and Jesus (‘Isa), a religion that is based on worshipping God alone with no partner or associate, and believing in all of His Messengers. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam} [Al ‘Imran 3:19]

{And whoever desires other than Islam as religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers} [Aal ‘Imraan 3:85].

And He tells us that Noah (Nuh – peace be upon him) said:

{and I have been commanded to be of the Muslims} [Yoonus 10:72].

And he tells us regarding Abraham (Ibrahim):

{ Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was one inclining toward truth, a Muslim [submitting to Allah]. And he was not of the polytheists} [Al ‘Imran 3:67].

{[It is] the religion of your father, Abraham. Allah named you “Muslims” before [in former scriptures] } [al-Hajj 22:78].

And He says concerning Moses (Musa):

{And Moses said, “O my people, if you have believed in Allah, then rely upon Him, if you should be Muslims.”} [Yoonus 10:84].

And He says tells us that Joseph (Yusuf) said:

{Cause me to die a Muslim and join me with the righteous} [Yoosuf 12:101].

But the deviant Christians drifted away from monotheism and fell into polytheism; they worshipped Jesus and his mother and disbelieved in the final Messenger who was foretold by Jesus (peace be upon him) in the Gospel (Injil).

Secondly:

The Muslims believe that at the end of time, there will be a righteous man whose name is al-Mahdi. He will unite them and lead them, and he will be a precursor to the descent of Jesus son of Mary (peace be upon him). What is so strange about the fact that the Muslims are waiting for two people and not one person? One of them is a righteous man, one of the leaders of the Muslims, namely the Mahdi, and the other is a Prophet, one of the Messengers of strong will, namely Jesus (peace be upon him).

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The three nations are all expecting an awaited one who will emerge at the end of time, for he is promised in each religion. The Muslims are awaiting the descent of the Messiah Jesus son of Mary from heaven, to break the cross, kill the pigs and kill his enemies among the Jews and those among the Christians who worship him. And

they are awaiting the emergence of the Mahdi, who will be one of the descendants of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him); he will fill the earth with justice as it was filled with injustice."(*Ighathat al-Lahfan* 2/338).

Al-Bukhari (2222) and Muslim (155) narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “By the One in Whose hand is my soul, soon the Son of Maryam will descend among you as a just ruler, he will break the cross, kill the pigs and abolish the jizyah, and wealth will become so abundant that no one will accept it.”

In the hadith of Jaabir ibn ‘Abdillah (may Allah be pleased with him), it says: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: Jesus son of Mary will come down, and their leader the Mahdi will say: ‘Come and lead us in prayer.’ But he will say: ‘No; their leader should be from among them,’ by way of Allah honouring this ummah.”

Narrated by al-Harith ibn Abi Usamah in his *Musnad*. Ibn al-Qayyim said in *al-Manar al-Munif* (1/147): Its isnad is jayyid (good).

The origin of this hadith appears in *Sahih Muslim* without naming the leader, as it says: “… Then ‘Isa ibn Maryam (peace be upon him) will descend and their leader will say: ‘Come and lead us in prayer.’ But he will say: ‘No; their leader should be from among them,’ by way of Allah honouring this ummah.” Narrated by Muslim (225).

This indicates that the Mahdi will come before Jesus, and that Jesus (peace be upon him) will pray behind him. Then Jesus (peace be upon him) will become the ruler after he kills the Dajjal, who is the false messiah whom the Jews are awaiting.

Thus the Muslims are awaiting the true Messiah, who was not killed or crucified; the Christians are awaiting the imaginary messiah who was killed, crucified and buried; and the Jews are awaiting the false messiah, the Dajjal, whom Allah will cause to be killed at the hand of Jesus son of Mary (peace be upon him).

The Sunnah also indicates that that the people of Gog and Magog (Ya'juj and Ma'juj) will be destroyed in answer to the prayer of Jesus (peace be upon him); thus the earth will be cleansed of the polytheists and disbelievers, and there will be no one left except the monotheists and believers.

In *Sahih Muslim* (2937), after mention of the tribulation of the Dajjal, it says: "Then whilst he is like that, Allah will send the Messiah son of Maryam, who will descend to the white minaret in the east of Damascus, wearing two garments lightly perfumed with saffron, placing his hands on the wings of two angels. When he lowers his head drops of water will come quickly from it and when he raises it, slow drops like pearls will fall. Every disbeliever whom his breath reaches will die, and his breath will reach as far as he can see. He will pursue him [the Dajjal] until he catches up with him at the gate of Ludd (Lod), and kills him. Then some people whom Allah has protected will come to 'Isa ibn Maryam, and he will wipe their faces and inform them of their ranks in Paradise. Whilst they are like that, Allah will reveal to 'Isa: I have brought forth some slaves of Mine against whom no one will be able to fight; take My slaves to safety in at-Toor [Sinai]. And Allah will send Ya'juj and Ma'juj, who will swarm down from every slope. The first of them will pass by the Lake of Tiberias and will drink what is in it, and the last of them will pass it and say: There was once water here. Then the Prophet of Allah 'Isa and his companions will be besieged until the head of the bull of one of them will be better than one hundred dinars for one of you today. The Prophet of Allah 'Isa and his companions will beseech [Allah], and Allah will send worms in their necks, and they will all perish as one in the morning. Then the Prophet of Allah 'Isa and his companions will come down to the earth and they will not find a spot the size of a handspan on earth that is not filled with their putrefaction and stench. The Prophet of Allah 'Isa (A) and his companions will beseech Allah, and Allah will send birds like the necks of Bactrian camels which will carry them and throw them wherever Allah wills. Then Allah will send rain which will not be kept out by any house of clay or hair; it will wash the earth and leave it like a mirror. Then it will be said to the earth: Bring forth your fruits and restore your blessing. On that day a group of people will eat from a pomegranate and shelter beneath its skin. Milk will be blessed until a milch-camel will be sufficient for a multitude of people, and a milch-cow will be sufficient for a tribe of people, and a milch-sheep will be sufficient for a clan of people. Then whilst they are like that, Allah will send a pleasant wind

which will cause them pain beneath their armpits and will take the soul of every believer and every Muslim. The most evil of people will be left and they will fornicate like donkeys, and upon them the Hour will come."

For a description of the Mahdi please see the answer to question no. 2937.

Thirdly:

What is more important than finding out about the future is rectifying the present, by learning about the true religion and following it.

We believe that the true religion is Islam; it is a religion that does not differentiate between the Messengers or exaggerate about any one of them. If you become Muslim, you will believe in Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. It is a religion that is based on sound human nature. Three cannot be one, and the true religion of Islam cannot attribute bad things to God the Creator or to the best of His Prophets, as the Jews do.

The evidence for the soundness of Islam is uncountable. In the Bible – despite its distortion – there is a great deal of evidence for that. For more information, please see the answers to questions no. 44018 and 101572 .

We advise you to do two things:

Firstly: turn to your Creator and ask Him to guide you to the true religion, open your heart to guidance and show you the path of salvation.

Secondly: read the Holy Quran and try to learn about Islam and what it calls people to. Try to be unbiased, like one who is seeking the truth and striving for it.

For our part, we ask Allah, may He be exalted, to open your heart, illuminate your path, guide you to Him, show you the path that leads to Him, choose for you His religion and make you one of the pious who are blessed in this world and the hereafter.

We would be happy to correspond with you and answer your questions.

And Allah knows best.