

THE GLOBE BEFORE AND AFTER THE ADVENT OF IMAM MAHDI, PART V¹

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ABSTRACT: Earlier articles in this series offered an overview of the sources of both the dominant world religions and Islamic sources on the concept of the 'End of Times' - the world's state of affairs before and after the coming of Imam Mahdi to establish worldwide justice and peace. Using the Qur'an and hadith as sources to visualise the future and increase our knowledge on the advent of Imam Mahdi with the purpose of establishing a positive relationship with him and preparing for his return, the previous parts expanded on the qualities of the people of this time, including their intellectual condition, and scientific and technological advancements, and signs of the moral, cultural, and religious state of affairs before and after his return. This part further delves into the state of affairs after his return, such as the meeting the crucial needs of the people, the expansion of Islam, and establishing a culture based on the Qur'an.

Granting freedom to people

Imam Mahdi (aj) will remove the metaphorical chains that have been fastened onto human beings.

¹ This series of papers is based on parts nine and ten of a series of lectures delivered by the author in Muharram 1428/ January 2007 in London.

The Qur'an mentions this as a task of the Holy Prophet:

وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ

*...and relieves them of their burdens and the shackles
that were upon them (7:157)*

The people in the time of *jahiliyyah* were chained, and did not have the chance to live freely and honourably. Their lives were burdened under the heavy weight of ignorance, incorrect customs, and superstitions. One of the tasks of the Prophet was to relieve them of these unnecessary burdens, as all prophets were tasked with liberating the people.

Freedom in its negative sense is that one can do whatever one likes. In this sense, religion is deemed a burden on people, something that restricts freedom, and therefore it is disliked. Hence, the trend that we see today is that people desire spirituality, but not religion. They will fill their hearts with spiritual things but will avoid the restrictions of religion. The Qur'an says:

يُرِيدُ الْإِنْسَانُ لِيَفْجُرَ أَمَامَهُ

Man desires to go on living viciously. (Qur'an, 75:5)

This verse of the Qur'an suggests that man wishes to lead his life without any barriers and restrictions, and that he should be free to do whatever he wishes, without committing himself to following anything. Islam says that this is a very short-sighted view of freedom, that such people are not free, but are actually restricted within themselves; in other words, they cannot be rid of the prison they have created for themselves. If the smallest of changes occurs to their lifestyle, they will not like it and are unable to tolerate this disruption.

Such people are weak as they become easily disturbed or disappointed, and may even commit suicide easily because they feel that there is nothing worth living for.

Freedom in its truest form is the freedom that starts within a person, the freedom to resist one's temptations and desires. It gives the person the strength to do what is right. Therefore, freedom is not for one to do whatever he wishes, but it is to do what one should. If this freedom is taken away by internal or external forces then that person is not free. A person who knows what he should do and yet cannot do it, is not truly free. And a person who does what he wants and yet cannot do what he should, is also not free. Imam Ali instructed Imam Hasan:

و لا تَكُنْ عَبْدَ غَيْرِكَ و قد جَعَلَكَ اللهُ حُرّاً

Do not be a servant of anyone; God has created you free.²

This means neither any external force nor any internal force should restrict a person's true freedom.

After the advent of Imam Mahdi (aj), he will give us back this freedom and release us from the chains that have kept us unable to move and behave as we should. For example, in a beautiful hadith, of which the end of it will be shared, Abu Basir – a famous companion of Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq – says:

لَوْ لَمْ تَسْمَعْ فِي دَهْرِكَ إِلَّا هَذَا الْحَدِيثَ لَكَفَاكَ فَضْنُهُ إِلَّا عَنْ أَهْلِهِ

² *Nahj ul-Balaghah*, Letter 31

If in your whole life you do not hear anything other than this hadith then it is sufficient. Do not disclose it to people other than whom you can trust.

In the report, Imam Sadiq says:

قَالَ أَبِي جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْأَنْصَارِيِّ - إِنَّ لِي إِلَيْكَ حَاجَةً فَمَتَى يَخْفُفُ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَخْلُوكَ فَأَسْأَلُكَ عَنْهَا فَقَالَ لَهُ جَابِرٌ أَيُّ الْأَوْقَاتِ أَحَبُّبَتْهُ فَخَلَا بِهِ فِي بَعْضِ الْأَيَّامِ فَقَالَ لَهُ يَا جَابِرُ أَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ اللَّوْحِ الَّذِي رَأَيْتَهُ فِي يَدِ أُمِّي فَاطِمَةَ عَلَيْهَا السَّلَامُ بِنْتُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَمَا أَخْبَرْتَنِي بِهِ أُمِّي أَنَّهُ فِي ذَلِكَ اللَّوْحِ مَكْتُوبٌ فَقَالَ جَابِرٌ أَشْهَدُ بِاللَّهِ أَنِّي دَخَلْتُ عَلَى أُمِّكَ فَاطِمَةَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فِي حَيَاةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ص فَهَتَيْتُنِي بِوَلَادَةِ الْحُسَيْنِ وَرَأَيْتُ فِي يَدَيْهَا لَوْحًا أَخْضَرَ طَنَنْتُ أَنَّهُ مِنْ زُمُرٍ وَرَأَيْتُ فِيهِ كِتَابًا أبيضَ شِبْهَ لَوْنِ الشَّمْسِ فَقُلْتُ لَهَا يَا أُمِّي يَا بِنْتَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ مَا هَذَا اللَّوْحُ فَقَالَتْ هَذَا لَوْحٌ أَهْدَاهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى رَسُولِهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ فِيهِ اسْمُ أَبِي وَاسْمُ بَعْلِي وَاسْمُ ابْنِي وَاسْمُ الْأَوْصِيَاءِ مِنْ وُلْدِي وَأَعْطَانِيهِ أَبِي لِيُنَبِّشَنِي بِذَلِكَ قَالَ جَابِرٌ فَأَعْطَانِيهِ أُمُّكَ فَاطِمَةَ عَلَيْهَا السَّلَامُ فَقَرَأْتُهُ وَاسْتَنْسَخْتُهُ فَقَالَ لَهُ أَبِي فَهَلْ لَكَ يَا جَابِرُ أَنْ تَعْرِضَهُ عَلَيَّ قَالَ نَعَمْ فَمَسَى مَعَهُ أَبِي إِلَى مَنْزِلِ جَابِرٍ فَأَخْرَجَ صَحِيفَةً مِنْ رَقٍ فَقَالَ يَا جَابِرُ انْظُرْ فِي كِتَابِكَ لِأَقْرَأَ أَنَا عَلَيْكَ فَتَظَرَ جَابِرٌ فِي نُسْخِهِ قَرَأَهُ أَبِي فَمَا خَالَفَ حَرْفٌ حَرْفًا فَقَالَ جَابِرٌ فَأَشْهَدُ بِاللَّهِ أَنِّي هَكَذَا رَأَيْتُهُ فِي اللَّوْحِ مَكْتُوبًا:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ هَذَا كِتَابٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ لِمُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيِّهِ وَنُورِهِ وَسَفِيرِهِ وَحِجَابِهِ وَدَلِيلِهِ تَزَلُّ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ

‘My father told Jabir ibn Abdullah Ansari: “I have a favour to ask. Whenever it is convenient for you, I wish to have a private conversation.”

‘Jabir replied: “Any time you wish, I am at your service!”

‘So one day Imam Baqir and Jabir met, and Imam Baqir said, “O Jabir, tell me about the tablet you saw in the

hands of my mother Fatima, and what my mother told you is written on that plate.”

Jabir replied: “I bear witness by God, when the Prophet was alive I went to visit Lady Fatima to congratulate her on the birth of Husayn, and I saw a green plate in her hands. I saw that it was emerald, and there was something like a white paper on it. I said to her: ‘May my mother and father be your ransom, O daughter of the Prophet of God! What is this plate?’ She said: ‘This is a tablet that God has gifted to the Prophet. In this plate is the name of my father, my husband, my sons, and the successors of the prophets from my progeny, and my father gave me this plate to be a glad tiding.’ Your mother Fatima passed the plate to me so I read and made a note of it.”

Imam Sadiq then says: ‘My father told Jabir: “Could you, O Jabir, show me what you noted down?” Jabir said: “Yes.” Then Imam Baqir and Jabir walked to the house of Jabir and Jabir showed him the note he had made. Imam Baqir then told Jabir: “You look at your notes and I, without looking, will read it for you.” And everything the Imam said – letter by letter – was in the notes that Jabir had. Jabir said: “I bear witness by God, I saw this exactly written on the plate: In the name of God, Most Kind, Most Merciful. This is a message from God to Muhammad His Prophet and light and envoy, brought down by Jibrail ...”’

God then mentions Himself, monotheism (*tawhid*), and that people should only hope and trust in Him; He also mentions the prophets and that each prophet had a successor. Then it continues:

إِنِّي فَضَّلْتُكَ عَلَى الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَ فَضَّلْتُ وَصِيكَ عَلَى الْأَوْصِيَاءِ وَ أَكْرَمْتُكَ
بِسِبْطِيكَ وَ سِبْطِيكَ حَسَنٍ وَ حُسَيْنٍ فَجَعَلْتُ حَسَنًا مَعْدِنَ عَلِيٍّ-بَعْدَ
انْقِضَاءِ مُدَّةِ أَبِيهِ وَ جَعَلْتُ حُسَيْنًا خَازِنَ وَحْيِي وَ أَكْرَمْتُهُ بِالشَّهَادَةِ وَ خَتَمْتُ
لَهُ بِالسَّعَادَةِ فَهُوَ أَفْضَلُ مَنْ اسْتَشْهَدَ وَ أَرْفَعُ الشُّهَدَاءَ دَرَجَةً

‘I have made you [i.e. Prophet Muhammad] superior to other prophets and I have made your successor superior to other successors of other prophets. I have honoured you with your grandchildren Hasan and Husayn. I made Hasan the source of my knowledge after his father, and made Husayn the treasure of my revelation and honoured him with martyrdom, and I have ended his life with felicity. He is the greatest person to be martyred and has the highest status amongst all martyrs.’

The table then mentions Imam Zayn al-Abidin and Imam Baqir, and all the Imams, each with some of their characteristics, until it reaches Imam Hasan al-Askari, about whom it says:

أُخْرِجُ مِنْهُ الدَّاعِيَ إِلَى سَبِيلِي وَ الْخَازِنَ لِعِلْمِي الْحَسَنَ وَ أَجْمَلُ ذَلِكَ بِأَبِيهِ
مُحَمَّدٍ رَحْمَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ عَلَيْهِ كَمَالُ مُوسَى وَ بَهَاءُ عِيسَى وَ صَبْرُ أَيُّوبَ فَيَدُلُّ
أَوْلِيَائِي فِي زَمَانِهِ ... فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَ يُحْرَقُونَ وَ يَكُونُونَ خَائِفِينَ مَرْعُوبِينَ وَ جَلِيلِينَ ...
تُصْبَغُ الْأَرْضُ بِدِمَائِهِمْ وَ يَنْشُو الْوَيْلُ ... أَوْلِيَاكَ أَوْلِيَائِي حَقًّا بِهِمْ أَدْفَعُ كُلَّ فِتْنَتِهِ
عَمِيَاءَ حُنْدِيسٍ وَ بِهِمْ أَكْشِفُ الزَّلَازِلَ وَ أَدْفَعُ الْأَصَارَ وَ الْأَعْغَالَ أَوْلِيَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ
صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَ رَحْمَةٌ وَ أَوْلِيَاكَ هُمْ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

I appoint the one who invites people towards my path, and he has knowledge from me and that is Hasan, and I complete after him this chain of successors with his son M H M D, a mercy to all the worlds. He has the perfection of Moses and the awe of Isa and patience of

Ayyub, and in his time [of *imamah*] my special friends will be made humble, will be killed, burned, fearful, their blood will paint the earth, and they will suffer a great deal. They are truly my true friends. With them I will remove all calamities and *fitnah* ... with them I will remove earthquakes, and with them I will remove all the chains and burdens and locks that have locked up the people [i.e. people will be liberated]. Upon them shall be salutations and mercy of God, and they are the ones who have been able to find the right path.³

In this short message, God mentions:

1. People will finally be released and liberated. In our thoughts and speech with others regarding Imam Mahdi (aj), we must stress the aspect that he will be a liberator and will set humanity free.
2. Similar to the title given to the Holy Prophet, Imam Mahdi (aj) will be a mercy for all the worlds. Regarding the word *alamin*, this word is normally translated as 'worlds', but actually it does not mean just this, otherwise the Arabic word for worlds is *awalim*. *Alamin* is a plural and refers to the inhabitants of the worlds that can think and have knowledge i.e. jinns, humans, angels, and other creatures of which we do not have knowledge. However, the term does not include non-thinking beings.

Unfortunately some people try to frighten non-Muslims about Imam Mahdi (aj), and make a frightening picture of him to such an extent that people become psychologically prepared to oppose and resist him. What we should do is convey the message that he is a liberator

³ *Al-Kāfi*, Vol. 1, Page 527-8

and a mercy, and this is for all people and all thinking beings. Imam Mahdi (aj) is something that all people should be keenly awaiting, including non-Muslims. In fact, many Muslims will oppose him. During the Holy Prophet's time, the assumption may have been that Jews and Christians will join him, but in fact pagans like Ammar and Abu Dharr benefitted the most, and were the best followers. In short, Imam Mahdi (aj) will be welcomed by anyone who is truly seeking the truth.

Meeting the psychological, emotional and spiritual needs of people

Hadiths also mention that Imam Mahdi will not only establish justice in that there would be no financial and economic problems, but that his justice will be so far-reaching that it will meet the psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs, even of animals and birds. We infer this from the hadith that mentioned 'the inhabitants of the earth and sky will be pleased with him'⁴, which we take to mean all inhabitants, human and non-human. This could be because there is no pollution, and that resources are in abundance. The Prophet has said:

يرضي بخلافته أهل الأرض و أهل السماء، و الطير في الجو

The inhabitants of the earth, the sky and the birds in the air will be pleased with his leadership.⁵

In another hadith we see the following:

ياوى الى المهدي امته كما تاوى النحل الى يعسوبها

⁴ Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 51, Page 74: يرضي عنه ساكن السماء و ساكن الارض

⁵ Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 51, Page 91

People will be so willing and eager to be with their Imam in that time, it can be likened to a bee that wants to meet its queen.⁶

People will try to do their best for Imam Mahdi (aj) and will try to be with him.

Progress for the religion of Islam

After the advent of Imam Mahdi (aj), Islam will be expanded as the true religion of God. The Qur'an predicts this:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَاهِرَهُ عَلَىٰ الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

It is He who has sent His Apostle with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it prevail over all religions, though the polytheists should be averse.
(9:33)

This raises a number of questions, such as:

- Will all the people become Muslims at that time?
- Will Islam be the major and superior religion whilst other religions also exist?
- Does this mean Islam in general, i.e. the religion of submission that was taught by other prophets such as Ibrahim and Ya'qub who both according to the Qur'an said were Muslim (submissive to God)?

In a hadith from Prophet Muhammad, we read:

⁶ *Muntakhab ul-Athar*, Page 478

لَيَدْخُلَنَّ هَذَا الدِّينُ عَلَى مَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ

Surely this religion will penetrate everything that the night can penetrate.⁷

During the night, everywhere is dark. Even if one closes the curtains and the door, the darkness is there. It cannot be shut out. At the end of time, the religion of God will penetrate all aspects and corners of life. This means that everything will be regulated according to the true religion of God.

This phenomenon has never happened. During the time of the Prophet, such a wide-ranging penetration of Islamic way of life was not achieved, as the world was not ready for it. But during the time of Imam Mahdi (aj), Islam will prevail. And by Islam, we mean the true religion of God, which is the true essence of all the other religions, in that God is one, and there will be a commitment to this belief. Imam Sadiq says:

إِذَا قَامَ الْقَائِمُ دَعَا النَّاسَ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ جَدِيداً وَ هَدَاهُمْ إِلَى أَمْرٍ قَدْ دُتِرَ فَصَلَّ
عَنْهُ الْجُمْهُورُ

When our Qa'im will appear, he will invite people to Islam anew. And he will guide them to a matter that has not been maintained, something that the majority of the people would have lost it.⁸

Imam Mahdi will bring a sound and fresh presentation of Islam again. However, this does not mean that pure Islam did not exist before that.

⁷ *Muntakhab ul-Athar*, Page 212

⁸ *Al-Irshad*, Shaykh Mufid, Vol. 2, Page 383

There will be true Muslims, although the majority would have deviated from true Islam.

Regarding the condition of religion in the end of time, the Qur'an says:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَىٰ الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ
الْمُشْرِكُونَ

It is He who has sent His Apostle with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it prevail over all religions, though the polytheists should be averse.
(9:33)

This verse shows that religion of the truth will overcome all other religions (or philosophies or ways of life) that have not been sent by God, or are so much distorted that cannot guide people properly, because they have become religion of falsehood. And this will happen even if the pagans and polytheists dislike it and are not happy.

When referring to the Qur'anic commentaries such as *Tafsir Nemuneh*, there is a discussion between scholars about this verse, and whether it means Islam has a power in itself such as the power of reasoning and rationality, and because this complies with the innate nature of human beings this power makes Islam stronger than any other religion or could it be something more? Could it be that Islam has a power in its essence?

We accept the first opinion, as it is a great religion with great teachings. But the verse does indeed seem to suggest more, i.e. that the true religion and the doctrine of *tawhid* and devotion to God will prevail over any other kind of religion or atheism that people may adhere to. Ayatullah Makarim in his work *Tafsir Nemuneh* prefers

the second interpretation, and says the verse refers to the time of Imam Mahdi (aj). He quotes some very clear hadiths to support this argument:

1. From Imam Sadiq:

و الله ما نزل تاويلها بعد و لا ينزل تاويلها حتى يخرج القائم فاذا خرج
القائم لم يبق كافر بالله

By God this [Islam prevailing over other religions] will not be actualised before Mahdi comes. So when the Qa'im will stand, there will be no person who disbelieves in God.⁹

2. From Imam Baqir, narrated by Tabarsi in *Majma al-Bayan*:

ان ذلك يكون عند خروج المهدي من آل محمد فلا يبقى أحد إلا أقر بمحمد

This will be at the time of Mahdi and there will be no one [on earth] but that he will declare the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad.

From the first hadith we can understand that there will remain no hostility towards God. The second hadith indicates that all people will declare the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad. Some hadiths suggest that people will be Muslim in the general sense, such as the followers of Prophet Musa and Prophet Jesus, who would remain in their own religions and would not necessarily follow Islam in its narrower sense.

⁹ *Al-Mahajjat ul-Bayda*, Fayd Kashani, Page 86

3. From Imam al-Sadiq:

لم يبق اهل دين حتى يظهر الاسلام و يعترفوا بالايان

There will not remain any follower of religion except that they declare Islam, and admit their faith in God.¹⁰

Then the Imam referred to this verse:

Do they, then, seek a religion other than God's, while to Him submits whoever there is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him they will be brought back? (3:83)

Imam al-Sadiq further explained that Imam al-Mahdi will judge according to the judgement of Dawood and Prophet Muhammad. Then the earth will reveal its treasures and all the blessings will appear; there will remain no place where one can spend their charity, and there will be no school of thought except that it has a chance to reign so that when our time comes they will not be able to say: "Had we had the chance to rule we also would have done that". Then the Imam referred to the verse:

وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

And the outcome will be in favour of the Godwary.
(7:128)

4. Several hadiths say that when Imam Mahdi will come, he will remove all the heresies. To stop heresies is very difficult; even Imam Ali could not stop them completely.¹¹

¹⁰ Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 52, Page 338

In another place, Imam Ali again narrates that he left a matter by which he felt his army may become divided. These two incidents show that a person as principled as Imam Ali, who would never compromise values, is willing to leave matters be when he sees something that may fracture the *Ummah*.

Regarding a similar matter, when Prophet Musa returned to his people after his conversation with God, and after he was revealed the tablets, he saw that people were worshipping the cow of Samiri. When he questioned his brother Harun as to why this was happening and why he did not stop them from worshipping the cow, Harun replied that he was worried that his intervention might cause division in the community.¹² Therefore, he decided to wait for Musa to return and make the decision by himself. Hence, even in the face of a massive crime such as idol worship, he had to wait due to the fear of division and disunity.

Islamic unity is therefore very important and needs to be considered as one of the top priorities and above many other values. And we are very much in need of this in this age.

¹¹ When Imam Ali became the ruler, he sent Imam al-Hasan to Kufa – an important strategic location both as the capital and where the army was situated, and was the city most loyal to him – to announce some important messages. And once Imam Hasan made the announcements, lots of noise was created. The message was that in the month of Ramadan there will be no tarawih prayers, and anyone who wishes to perform this recommended prayer must do so individually and not in congregation. Imam Hasan went back and was asked by Imam Ali about the noise. Imam Hasan replied that the people were shouting ‘Wa sunnata Umara!’ (‘Lamentations upon losing the sunnah of Umar!’). Imam Ali advised that the situation should be left as it is.

¹² The Qur’an, 20:94

Imam Mahdi will not need to compromise on any values, because in that time people will be prepared, as they will possess understanding and knowledge. Rather, he will be able to stop all the heresies. Imam Baqir says:

لا يترك بدعة الا ازالها و لا سنه الا احياها

Mahdi will stop all the heresies and will revive all the *Sunnah* that has been forgotten.¹³

God says in a hadith to Prophet Muhammad:

بِهِ أَطَهَّرُ الْأَرْضَ مِنْ أَعْدَائِي وَ أَوْرَثُهَا أَوْلِيَّائِي وَ بِهِ أَجْعَلُ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
بِي السُّفْلَى وَ كَلِمَتِي الْعُلْيَا

With Mahdi I will clean My earth from My enemies, and I will make the position of the people who disbelieve in Me the lowest, and those who believe in Me the highest.¹⁴

Establishment of a culture based on the Qur'an

After his reappearance, Imam Mahdi (aj) will establish a Qur'anic culture. A hadith states:

اذا قام القائم ضرب فساطيط لمن يعلم الناس القرآن على ما انزل الله

When Mahdi will rise, he will set up tents for the people who teach Qur'an. But the way they will teach the Qur'an is the way God revealed it [i.e. with an accurate interpretation in the way that Prophet Muhammad taught it].¹⁵

¹³ *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 52, p. 339.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 18, p. 342.

¹⁵ *Kashf ul-Ghummah*, Vol. 2, Page 466

The mention of tents in this hadith seems to suggest that the Imam will not wait for any buildings to be set up, but will commence with the teaching and interpretation of the Qur'an immediately, even from tents.

We mentioned previously the hadith from Imam Ali in which he says:

و يرمى بالتفسير في مسامعهم

In the end of time, the interpretation of the Qur'an will be projected into the ears of the people.

This hadith could suggest that wherever they are and wherever they live, the Qur'an will come to the people. Perhaps we see this today with the numerous television channels that teach and recite the Qur'an. In another hadith from Imam Sadiq we learn:

It is as if I see the Shi'a, they have the Qur'an in their hands and they teach it to other people.

From this we can infer that the followers of the Ahlul Bayt should be the first to be equipped with Qur'anic knowledge. For a long time, the Shi'as have been criticised for not paying enough attention to some aspects of the Qur'an, and did not have many who had memorised the Qur'an (*huffadh*), but this is very much changing. Today we have many memorizers of the Qur'an, and generally in the top three of the international competitions of Qur'anic recitation, we have followers of the Ahlul Bayt.

A clear sign of a Muslim is to be committed and to be a companion of the Qur'an. At times, we take it for granted. If a day should arrive in which, God forbid, we do not have the Qur'an or anything that we can say is definitely from God, then we may appreciate how valuable

the Qur'an is. Indeed, it is the only thing about which we can say with certainty that from beginning to end is entirely from God.

In history, people have spent much time and money in search for the true revelation; for example, some have done so in attempting to prove the authenticity of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which can still not be proven to be definite revelation. However, Muslims have the Qur'an in every house but we fail to realise how important it is. I sometimes feel that if someone were told to do a lengthy worship for a year, after which they would receive one page of the original Qur'an that was first written, then I think he would do it. It seems that it is human nature to acquire things while not using them. At times we strive for things, say a book, and we place it on the shelf only to never actually read it. People will ensure they record lectures, but then they do not listen to them. This can be compared to the verses of *Surat al-Jumu'ah*, which describe the people of the Torah who had the book but were not practicing it:

*The example of those who were charged with the Torah,
then failed to carry it, is that of an ass carrying books.
Evil is the example of the people who deny God's signs,
and God does not guide the wrongdoing lot. (62:5)*

Imam Mahdi (aj) will strive for the teachings of the Qur'an to become available everywhere.

Conclusion:

Whilst there are different interpretations, it might be possible to suggest this: When Imam Mahdi (aj) reappears there will be a gradual process. He starts to defend and protect Islam from the attacks of enemies that

do not allow Islam to be practiced. He will enable the true followers to practice Islam without any fear, as the Qur'an says:

God has promised those of you who have faith and do righteous deeds that He will surely make them successors in the earth, just as He made those who were before them successors, and He will surely establish for them their religion which He has approved for them, and that He will surely change their state to security after their fear, while they worship Me, not ascribing any partners to Me.
(24:55)

The first thing, therefore, that will happen is that believers will be able to talk and express themselves freely, and practice Islam properly, and true Islam will be shown to other people. As people are shown true Islam, and they also see this in Imam Mahdi (aj), they will gradually become interested in submitting themselves to God, the One. This is expected to happen first among monotheistic communities, especially when Imam Mahdi (aj) discusses with them from their own teachings and books. Furthermore, the Jews and Christians will see Jesus with him, which will further bring unity and cohesion. And those with no faith will also see the benefit of it, in that it is not making people backward and not stunting development, and nor is it causing any suffering or deprivation, and thereafter they too will be interested in embracing faith and submitting themselves to God.