

## **BACKGROUND TO THE RISING OF AL-MAHDI**

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Muslims in general, irrespective of any sect, believe that Al-Mahdi from the descendants of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is to rise up during the end of time and he will establish a world order of justice and equity. Muslims of Sunni sect believe that Al-Mahdi is still to be born. But those of Shiite sect proclaim him to be the 12th Imam of the Age, already born on the 15th Shaban 255 A.H(869 A.D.) and presently in concealment. It is he who is Al-Mahdi who will reappear and rule over the whole world.

Let us herewith examine, in the light of the Holy Qura'n and ahadith, the background and of what qualifications and capabilities would those crusaders be who will pave the way for Al-Mahdi to rise up and help him to accomplish the predicted task.

In Sura Al Maida ayat 54, the Holy Quran says:

‘Oh you who believe! whoever from among you turns back from his religion, then Allah will bring a people, He shall love them and they shall love Him, lowly before the believers, mighty against the unbelievers, they shall strive hard in Allah's way and shall not fear the censure of any censurer’

What worse time could it be other than the present one when we daily witness how the Muslim Ummah have turned their back from the tenets of Islam which is given but a lip-service only. That there is a dire need under present world circumstances of people with the aforementioned qualities and embarked upon striving to save Islam, cannot be denied. Although such qualities were also to be found among the companions of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) when defending Islam, yet from a number of ahadith concerning the people striving for Islam before the reappearance of Al-Mahdi, we shall notice that they relate to them also. For example, in his address to one of his disciples, the fourth Imam Ali bin Husain Zainul Abedeen (A.S.) predicted and described the qualifications of such people:

“Oh Aba Khalid! during the time of his occultation (i.e. concealment of the 12th Imam) there will exist such people who would acknowledge his Imamate (leadership) and await his reappearance, they will be better than people of every era. Verily Allah the Gracious and Supreme will have bestowed upon them such intelligence, understanding and awareness that the Ghaibah (concealment) of the Imam would be as if the Imam had reappeared and already present. Allah would grant them such status as those who fought with swords against enemies under the Holy Prophet(A.S). They would in reality be devoted and our true Shias (adherents) as well as callers to Allah, manifestly and secretly” (Uqadu Durah p.130)

Again from the famous Surni book Kanzul Aamal volume 7 p.176, the following hadith of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) is worth noting:

“From the East, such people are to rise who will lay the groundwork and

pave the way for Al-Mahdi to establish his (universal) rule (on earth).”