

Anas ibn Mālik narrated that God's Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

- 1 Every Prophet warned his community against the one-eyed liar.
- 2 He is certainly one-eyed,
- 3 and your Lord is not one-eyed.
- 4 Between his eyes '*kāfir*' is written.⁽¹⁾

1 Related by al-Bukhari, 7131; Muslim, 2933.

From the Qur'an

- ﴿Indeed there has come to you a Messenger from among yourselves: one who grieves much that you should suffer; one who is full of concern for you; and who is tender and full of compassion towards the believers.﴾ (9: 128)
- ﴿Surely, those against whom your Lord's word [of judgement] has come true will not believe, (96) even though every sign should come to their knowledge, until they are faced with the grievous suffering.﴾ (10: 96-97)

The Narrator

Abu Ḥamzah Anas ibn Mālik ibn al-Naḍr of the Anṣār was a distinguished scholar, mufti, excellent reciter of the Qur'an and a leading scholar of Hadith. He was the chronicler of Islam. He was the servant of God's Messenger. Anas was the last of the Prophet's companions to die in Basrah. He was only ten years of age when the Prophet migrated to Madinah, and his mother, Umm Sulaym brought him to the Prophet to serve him. He stayed with him and took part in several military expeditions with the Prophet, as also the pledge to the Prophet (peace be upon him) known as 'the pledge under the tree'. He died in Year 93 AH 712 CE.

Summary

The Prophet (peace be upon him) gives us some description of the Impostor Misiḥ, who will provide the hardest trial on earth. Every prophet warned his people about him and the hardship that comes with him. He is one-eyed, and in between his eyes the word *kāfir*, meaning 'unbeliever', is written and this will be read by every Muslim.



Message and Meaning



Like earlier prophets, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) took care to explain the trial represented by the Impostor Misīḥ, because it is the hardest trial that will ever be witnessed on earth. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ‘Nothing that happens in between Adam’s creation and the Last Hour will be harder than the trial of the Impostor’.⁽¹⁾ Therefore, every prophet warned his community about him and explained to them the trial associated with him. This trial is hardest because of the numerous preternatural things God lets him do. These will be most amazing to all rational people. He is called the Misīḥ because one of his eyes is swept over. It is also said that he is given this name because he travels the whole earth in forty days. He is referred to as *al-Dajjāl*, i.e. the Impostor, because of all the lying, falsehood and deception he resorts to. He claims to be God. God lets him do such things that amount to an incredibly difficult test for people.

In several hadiths the Prophet (peace be upon him) mentions the Impostor’s actions and the travels he undertakes, covering the entire earth, apart from Makkah and Madinah which are out of bounds for him. The Prophet further gives some physical description of him, and tells a Muslim what he should do if he meets him. He then mentions that Jesus (peace be upon him) will then return, join the Muslim imam in prayer, and then join the Muslim army that will fight the Impostor. He will ultimately kill him at Lydda near Jerusalem. The emergence of the Impostor is given in the most authentic way, *mutawātir*, stated by more than forty companions of the Prophet who report it from him directly. Thus, it is certainly a confirmed report and there is no logical argument to preclude it.



The Prophet then mentions the most distinctive of his features, saying that one of his eyes is blind and the other protruding over his face, with a thick piece of skin projecting over it. Both are defective, but one of them is totally gone.

In other hadiths the Prophet mentions that his hair is very curly, and that he is short with his eye looking like a floating grape.⁽²⁾



The Prophet (peace be upon him) made clear that none of these descriptions applies to God. As the Impostor claims to be God, being one-eyed is a defect that cannot apply to God. The same applies to the rest of his description. Every one of his features is a defect which invites people’s sarcastic remarks. Yet they are combined in him. We know that to God only fine attributes of perfection apply.



Another feature distinguishing the Impostor is that the word *kāfir*, which means ‘unbeliever’, is written between his eyes. Every Muslim, whether lettered or unlettered, will be able to read it. This is confirmed in another hadith quoting the Prophet: ‘Every Muslim will read it’.⁽³⁾ The word ‘every’ indicates ‘all’. The writing is certainly true, as God makes it one of the signs that categorically assert that he is a liar unbeliever. The writing is made apparent to every Muslim, but God does not show it to unbelievers whom He leaves to their own devices. There is nothing to prevent any of this.

1 Related by Ahmad, 16373.

2 Related by al-Bukhari, 3441.

3 Related by Muslim, 2933.

Implementation



The Prophet (peace be upon him) explained to his community the nature of the trial involving the Impostor, and he explained what would protect them from it. Indeed the Prophet has shown us every good thing and warned us against every evil. As such, he deserves all our love, obedience and allegiance as well as our giving priority to his Sunnah above anything other people say.



One thing the Prophet (peace be upon him) told us will protect us from the trial of the Impostor *Misīh* is to memorize the first ten verses of Surah 18, The Cave. He said: 'Whoever memorises ten verses from the beginning of Surah The Cave shall be protected from the Impostor'.⁽¹⁾ Another hadith narrated by al-Nawwās ibn Sam'ān quotes the Prophet: 'Whoever of you encounters him should recite against him the opening of Surah The Cave [Surah 18]'.⁽²⁾



The Prophet used to seek God's refuge from the trial of the Impostor. 'Ā'ishah narrated that God's Messenger used to include in his supplication in every prayer: 'My Lord, I seek refuge with You from the torment in the grave; and I seek refuge with You from the trial of the Impostor *Misīh*; and I seek refuge with You from the trials of life and death. My Lord, I seek refuge with You from sin and the burden of debt.'⁽³⁾ If this was done by the Prophet (peace be upon him), it is appropriate for us to do the same and often pray to God to protect us from the trial of the Impostor.



Advocates of Islam and teachers should follow the example of prophets and warn people against trials that may be manifest or concealed.



The Prophet (peace be upon him) made it clear that God protects believers from the trial of the Impostor, enabling them to read the word *kāfir*, i.e. unbeliever, written between his eyes. The most assured protection a believer has against the Impostor is to be firm in his belief.

1 Related by Muslim, 809.

2 Related by Muslim, 2937.

3 Related by al-Bukhari, 832; Muslim, 589.

