

The 12th Imam: What Is An Imam?

What is the 12th Imam? According to Islamic belief, an Imam is an anointed leader or ruler. Especially among the Shia beliefs an Imam is thought (though not required), to be a prayer leader or cleric when the word is capitalized. Sunnis too believe an Imam may be a prophet; Shiites believe not all prophets can be an Imam but an Imam can also be a prophet. An Imam is said to be anointed by Allah and a perfect example of leading mankind in every way.

The Shiite interpretation is that only Allah can appoint an Imam and no man has the power to do so. The 12th Imam is said to be a descendent of the Prophet Muhammad, having divine status as did each of this succession of sons. The 12th Imam is also called the Hidden Imam and the Mahdi (guided one).

The 12th Imam: Who Is The 12th Imam?

Within the Shiite, (which is predominate in Iran), it is prophesied that there is a coming 12th Imam who is the great spiritual savior. This Imam is named Abu al-Qasim Muhammad or also called Muhammad al Mahdi. He is said to have been born the son of the 11th Imam, Hasan Al-Askari and his wife, the granddaughter of an Emperor. There are conflicting statements of her name being either Fatima or Nargis Khatoon.

Most accounts of the story say that al Mahdi went into hiding as a child around the age of 5 years (about 13th Century). It said he has been 'in hiding' in caves ever since but will supernaturally return just before the Day of Judgment. According to the Hadith the criteria for the Hidden Imam are:

- He will be a descendant of Muhammad and the son of Fatima
- Will have a broad forehead and pointed nose
- Will return just before the end of the world
- His appearance will be preceded by a number of prophetic events during 3 years of horrendous world chaos, tyranny and oppression
- Will escape from Madina to Mekkah, thousands will pledge allegiance to him
- Will rule over the Arabs and the world for 7 years
- Will eradicate all tyranny and oppression bringing harmony and total peace
- Will lead a prayer in Mekkah which Jesus will be at his side and follow in

Remarkably, the 12th Imam theory plays heavily into the world's current concerns with Iran. The Shiite Muslim President of Iran, Ahmadinejad, is deeply committed to the Islamic Messiah, al Mahdi. There have been many through the years claiming to be the Hidden Imam but Ahmadinejad believes he is yet to come. He claims that he is to personally prepare the world for the coming Mahdi. In order to save the world, it must be in a state of chaos and subjugation. Ahmadinejad claims he was "directed by Allah to pave the way for the glorious appearance of the Mahdi". This apocalyptic directive includes some very scary proclamations.

The 12th Imam: Why Is This Especially Important Now?

While Christians look for Jesus' 2nd coming, the Jews await the Messiah and Muslims await the 12th Imam. However, of the three, Allah's designated Mahdi is the only one who demands a violent path to conquer the world. Mr. Ahmadinejad, and his cabinet, say they have a 'signed contract' with al Mahdi in which they pledge themselves to his work. What does this work involve? In light of concerns over Iran's nuclear capabilities, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has reportedly stated Israel should be wiped off the map. He spoke to the United Nations in September '05. During that speech he claims to have been in an aura of light and felt a change in the atmosphere during which time no one present could blink their eyes. Iran's PM is also said to have spoken in apocalyptic terms and seems to relish conflict with the West whom he calls the Great Satan. This is while he proclaims he must prepare the world for the coming Mahdi by way of a world totally under Muslim control. He is working hard to bring about the world-wide horrors that must be in place for their al Mahdi to bring peace.

This notion and goal, along with a violent hatred of infidels, America and Israel reminds us of Biblical prophecies of the coming anti-Christ and the pledges of millions to a deceiving False Messiah who will claim to bring peace. Could this 12th Imam Mahdi and his servant Ahmadinejad spark the last days of the coming true Savior?