

The Major Signs of the Day of Judgment

(part 1 of 7): The Minor Signs



Introduction

No one can know when the Day of Judgment will occur. However, God has mercifully taught His messengers some of the signs that alert one to the fact that the Hour is approaching. These signs play a very important role, especially for those who live at a time distant from the Prophet and who did not experience first hand his teaching and example. These signs reinforce one's belief in the

Prophet. More importantly, these signs, if one takes the time to reflect upon them, are a reminder of the Day of Judgment. They should revive the heart of the person and make him recall what he is doing on this earth and to where all this is heading.

The signs of the Hour can be divided into two types. First are those that occur as part of the changes in everyday life. These are known as the “minor signs.” The second are the extraordinary or supernatural events that will occur just before the actual Hour. These are known as the “major signs.” Although the focus of this article will be the major signs, it is worthwhile to make a few points concerning the minor signs.

“The Minor Signs”

Although the intent of this article is to cover the major signs, the author would like to include a few points about the “minor signs,” since they are often neglected as people concentrate on the more “sensational” major signs. Minor signs are those signs that may occur long before the actual Last Day and, in general, they are related to day-to-day changes that occur in worldly events. The number of minor signs is numerous.^[1] Many have already occurred and many others continue to occur.^[2] Thus, minor signs can occur repeatedly around an individual yet many remain oblivious to them and to their importance. In fact, in the famous hadeeth of the Angel Gabriel, when the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, offered to tell Gabriel – in front of his Companions - some of the signs of the Hour (after the Prophet was informed about them previously), he

mentioned only some “minor signs.” Perhaps, God knows best, this is because these are the signs that have much more of an effect on one’s everyday life and worship, although the recognition of these signs are sometimes more difficult or subtle.

When one witnesses these signs around him, they should be clear reminders of God and one’s future meeting with God. They should also fortify one’s belief in God and, in particular, in the truthfulness of the Prophet Muhammad. These signs that the Prophet spoke about years—even centuries—before they ever occurred should, in addition to all of the facts concerning the Prophet Muhammad, work to strengthen an individual’s belief about the truth of Islam. Thus, they have a great role to play if the individual makes himself alert and awake to what is going on around him.

In addition, these signs should be a reminder that God has foreknowledge of everything that is occurring in this world—this is how He could convey those signs to His messenger. Therefore, God also has knowledge of everything the person is doing. God is watching and aware of every act of His creatures. At the very least, this consciousness, which comes about through witnessing the Signs of the Hour, should make the person worship and fear God knowing full well that He is seeing him. This is the superior level of faith known as *ihsaan*.

Only a couple of minor signs will be mentioned here, while the reader is greatly encouraged to research this topic further.

The Prophet stated:

“From among the signs of the Hour is the common appearance of lewd acts, working to bring about lewd acts, the cutting off of the ties of relationship and the trusting of deceivers.” (At-Tabarani)

The manifestation of this hadeeth can be seen daily in a person’s life, especially the first two or three aspects mentioned. One needs only leave one’s house, turn on a television or surf the Internet to see how prominent lewd acts—those acts which are considered lewd by Islamic Law—are today. Indeed, great effort and expense is exhausted in producing and presenting them to as many people as possible.

The Prophet also said:

“From among the signs of the Hour is the abundance of wealth, increasing of ignorance, numerous tribulations and widespread trading and business.” (Al-Hakim)

Capitalist economists boast about the amount of wealth there is in the world today. Indeed, it seems as if business and trade are the most important agendas in the world today, outstripping any moral values or even the sanctity of human

lives. When this is accompanied by ignorance—especially ignorance of the religion of God—and an increase in trials, tribulations, fighting and wars, the result for humankind is nothing short of disastrous. Yet this is what can be seen throughout the world today.

Footnotes:

[1] A number of works in Arabic cover the minor signs as well as the major signs. This author is not aware of any book in English as of yet that has a detailed discussion of the minor signs of the Day of Judgment.

[2] Another way of categorizing the signs of the Hour is the following: (1) Those signs that have already occurred and are completed; (2) those signs that have already appeared, continue to appear and are growing greater in intensity; and (3) those signs that are yet to appear. Each category deserves its own portion of reflection and relevant response.

(part 2 of 7): An Introduction to Major Signs

Comprehensive Hadeeth about the Major Signs of the Day of Judgment

The major signs are those signs that will occur relatively close to the Day of Judgment and involve matters that can be considered, in general, “out of the ordinary” or which are sensational.

There are a number of hadeeth in which the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, mentioned the greater signs of the Day of Judgment together. These hadeeth include the following:

Imam Muslim records in his *Saheeh*:

Hudhaifa b. Usaid Ghifari narrated, “God’s Messenger came to us all of a sudden as we were (busy in a discussion). He said, ‘What are you discussing?’ They (the Companions) said, ‘We are discussing the Last Hour.’ Thereupon he said, ‘It will not come until you see ten signs before it.’ And (in this connection) he made a mention of the smoke, Dajjaal, the beast, the rising of the sun from the west, the descent of Jesus son of Mary (peace be upon them), Gog and Magog, and landslides in three places, one in the east, one in the west and one in Arabia, at the end of which a fire would burn forth from the Yemen and drive people to the place of their assembly.”

Muslim also writes in his *Saheeh*:

The Messenger of God said, “The Last Hour would not come until the ten signs appear: a landslide in the east, and a landslide in the west, and a landslide in the peninsula of Arabia, the smoke, the Dajjaal, the beast of the earth, Gog and Magog, the rising of the sun from the west and the fire which would emit from the lower part of Aden.” Shu’ba said that ‘Abd al- ‘Aziz b. Rufai’ reported on the authority of Abu Tufail who reported on the authority of Abu Sariha a hadeeth like this that God’s Apostle did not make a mention of (the tenth sign) but he said that out of the ten one was the descent of Jesus Christ, son of Mary (peace be upon him), and in another version it is the blowing of the violent gale which would drive the people to the ocean.

There are a couple of other hadeeth in which the Prophet mentioned some of the same events as above. In these hadeeth, he did not mention them as explicitly being signs of the Hour. Instead, the Prophet gave a very strong admonition and warning that people must perform their good deeds before these events occur, as these events directly herald the ending of the time for deeds and the beginning of the time of reckoning. Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of God said:

“Hasten to do good deeds before six things happen: the rising of the sun from the west, the smoke, the Dajjaal, the beast and (the death) of one of you or the general turmoil.” (*Muslim*)

Note that in this hadeeth the Prophet mentioned, “the death of one of you.” This is also a type of “hour.” Although it is interesting and important to learn and know the major signs of the Hour, for those who will not witness the events of the Last Days, it is their hour—their death—that they must prepare for and concerning which many are negligent. Thus, when a Bedouin came to the Prophet and asked him, “When is the Hour?” the Prophet pointed to a young boy and said, “If this boy lives, by the time he is old and decrepit, your hour would have already taken place.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhari*)

The Order of Appearance and the Nature of the Major Signs

Yoosuf al-Waabil notes that he has found no explicit texts that mention the order of appearance of the major signs of the Day of Judgment. The hadeeth which mention the signs in a group, like those just quoted above, either use the conjunction “and” or “or.” In neither case do these conjunctions give any positive indication as to the time ordering of the events. In fact, as al-Waabil notes, some of the same hadeeth mention the events in different orderings.^[1]

Ibn Hajar, however, has divided the major signs into two main categories, one definitely occurring before the other.^[2] The first set of signs is those that occur on this earth, without the nature of this earth changing completely. These are signs that should clearly awaken the people and drive them to repent to God. During those signs, there is no ultimate distinguishing between the believer and the

disbeliever nor is there any unquestionable occurrence in this creation that makes it clear that the Resurrection is at hand. The signs of this category include the coming of the Dajjaal, the return of Jesus, Gog and Magog and the landslides.

The second category of these major signs leaves no doubt as to the actual occurring of the Resurrection and the end of this Creation as humans know it now. In addition, there will be a distinguishing of the believer from the disbeliever. Hence, during and after these signs, there will be no question of repentance or returning to God. At that time, it would be too late for any repentance to be accepted by God. The signs in this category would include the appearance of the beast, the smoke and the rising of the sun from the West.

It also seems to be true that when these signs begin to occur, one will be following up the other at a relatively fast pace.^[3] The Prophet said:

“The signs shall appear one after the other like the beads on a string follow one another.”^[4]

Ahmad recorded in his *Musnad* that the Prophet said:

“The signs are like beads strung on a string. If the string breaks, they [quickly] follow one after the other.”^[5]

Footnotes:

^[1] Yoosuf al-Waabil, *Ashraat al-Saa'ah* (Al-Damam, Saudi Arabia: Maktabah ibn al-Jauzi, 1989), pp. 183-186.

^[2] Ahmad ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Baari bi-Sharh Saheeh Al-Bukhaari* (Riyadh: Idaarah al-Buhooth al-Ilmiyyah, n.d.), vol. 11, pp. 352-353.

^[3] Cf., ibn Hajar, vol. 13, p. 77; al-Waabil, pp. 188-189.

^[4] Recorded by al-Tabaraani in *al-Ausat*. .

^[5] Recorded by Ahmad.

(part 3 of 7): The False Messiah I

A brief discussion shall be given of each of the major signs mentioned by the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, in the above hadeeth.^[1] Obviously, since this is a discussion related to matters of the “unseen,” that is, matters that humans have yet to witness and experience, much of the discussion will be restricted to exactly what has been mentioned in the texts of the Quran or the Sunnah.

Al-Dajjaal (The False Messiah)

Numerous are the hadeeth of the Prophet concerning the coming of the Dajjaal or the false Messiah.^[2] These hadeeth demonstrate what a great trial and temptation this person is going to be for all humans, believers and disbelievers alike. For example, the Prophet mentioned that all of the previous prophets also warned their people about the coming of the Dajjaal. The Prophet said:

“There has never been a prophet who has not warned the Nation of that one-eyed liar (the Dajjaal).” (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

Furthermore, the Prophet, as recorded in authentic hadeeth, used to seek refuge in God during his prayers from the trials of the false messiah.

The various hadeeth of the Prophet provide a great deal of information about the Dajjaal. The Prophet, for example, made it clear that he is a human being.^[3] In general, the true believer should not be deceived by the Dajjaal because the Prophet has given such a clear description of him that there is very little room for him to deceive a believer. However, this emphasizes the importance of knowledge in Islam. If someone is completely unaware of how the Prophet described the Dajjaal, then it would not be surprising that he may fall for some of the tricks and deception of this evil being.

The numerous hadeeth about the Dajjaal include a description of the Dajjaal's physical features. These hadeeth include the following:

Muslim recorded that Ibn Umar narrated that God's Messenger made a mention of Dajjaal in the presence of the people and said: **“God is not one-eyed and behold that Dajjaal is blind in the right eye and his eye would be like a floating grape.”**

In another hadeeth recorded by Imam Muslim and others, the Prophet said: **“There would be written three (Arabic) letters: *Kaaf*^[4] *Faa*^[5] and *Raa*^[6] These three letters in this order form the basis for Arabic word “Kaafir” which means disbeliever, between the eyes of the Dajjaal.”** In another hadeeth, the Prophet stated that every Muslim would be able to read those letters.

The Prophet also described some of what the Dajjaal would come with. For example, Imam Muslim recorded that the Prophet said:

“The Dajjaal would have with him water and fire and his fire would have the effect of cold water and his water would have the effect of fire, so don't put yourself to ruin.”

The Companion of the Prophet Hudhaifah similarly stated, “I know more than you as to what there would be along with the Dajjaal. There would be along with

him two canals (one flowing with water) and the other one (having) fire (within it), and what you would see as fire would be water and what you would see as water would be fire. So he who among you is able to see that and is desirous of water should drink out of that which he sees as fire.” (Muslim)

Like all religious deceivers, those who are cognizant of the truth will be able to see behind his amazing schemes and tricks. The following hadeeth makes this point very clear. Abu Saeed al-Khudri reported that God’s Messenger one day gave a detailed account of the Dajjaal, and in that he mentioned the following:

“He would come but would not be allowed to enter the mountain passes to Medina. So he will come to stop at some tracts of land (which contain high concentrations of salt and wherein seepage occurs causing them to be barren) adjacent to the city of Medina, and a person who would come out (to where the Dajjaal is) and say to him, ‘I bear testimony to the fact that you are the Dajjaal about whom God’s Messenger (may peace be upon him) had informed us.’ The Dajjaal would then say (to his followers), ‘What would be your opinion if I were to kill this (person) and then bring him back to life, even then would you harbor some doubt in this matter?’ They would respond, ‘No.’ He would then kill (the man) and then bring him back to life. When he would bring that person back to life, he would say, ‘By God, I had no better proof of the fact (that you are a Dajjaal) than at the present time.’ The Dajjaal would then make an attempt to kill him (again) but he would not be able to do so.”

Footnotes:

[1] In this short article, the Mahdi will not be discussed for the following reason: Although the coming of the Mahdi is affirmed via numerous hadeeth of the Prophet, the Prophet did not mention his coming in the hadeeth that list major signs of the Day of Judgment.

[2] Actually, the Prophet spoke about many great liars and deceivers, which is what the word *dajjaal* implies, who will appear before the Day of Judgment. For example, al-Bukhari and Muslim record that the Prophet said, **“The Last Hour would not come until there would arise about thirty impostors, liars, and each one of them would claim that he is a messenger of God.”** Those can be considered “minor *dajjaals*” and from the minor signs of the Day of Judgment. The “major *dajjaal*” is the greater sign of the Day of Judgment and concerning whom the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, reserved his greatest warnings.

[3] There are some who have interpreted the Dajjaal to be, for example, certain un-Islamic ideologies, nations, or worldviews, and so forth. Although one should learn from the trials that will appear at the hands of the Dajjaal and avoid such trials no matter where they may come from, it is incorrect, though, to distort the clear meaning of the hadeeth and claim that the Dajjaal is any other than a human being who will appear shortly becoming the descending of Jesus.

[4] *Kaaf* which is like the letter “k” in English in phonetically speaking [and not in terms of how it is written].

[5] *Faa* which is like the letter “f” in English phonetically speaking [and not in terms of how it is written].

[6] *Raa* which is closest to the Spanish “r” phonetically speaking [and not in terms of how it is written].

(part 4 of 7): The False Messiah II

One of the many aspects that one learns about via the story of the Dajjaal is that worldly wealth and achievements are not what determine a person’s worth and true value. Indeed, a person could possess all that the world contains yet if he is devoid of faith in his heart, he is truly worth nothing. Thus, another hadeeth in *Saheeh Muslim* reads:

Mugheerah ibn Shu’ba stated: No one asked God’s Messenger, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, more about the Dajjaal than I. He said (to me), “He should not be a source of worry to you for he would not be able to do any harm to you.” I said, “God’s Messenger, it is alleged that he would have along with him (abundance of) food and water.” Thereupon he said, “He (the Dajjaal) and his ability to misguide the believers with what God has allowed to be created by his (the Dajjaal’s) hands (i.e., the large quantities of food and water with him) would be insignificant in comparison to God’s ability to make these events a source for increasing the faith of the believers.”

Also mentioned in *Saheeh Muslim* are some hadeeths in which the Prophet Muhammad stated:

“There will be no land which the Dajjaal would not pass through or traverse except for Mecca and Medina, and there would no passage out of the passages leading to them which would not be guarded by angels arranged in rows. Then he (the Dajjaal) would appear in some tracts of land (which contain high concentrations of salt and wherein seepage occurs causing them to be barren) adjacent to the city of Medina and it (Medina) would shake violently such that every unbeliever and hypocrite would exit from it and move towards him (the Dajjaal).”

The Prophet also described the followers of the Dajjaal when he said:

“The Dajjaal would be followed by seventy thousand Jews of Isfahan wearing Persian shawls.”

The following longer hadeeth from *Saheeh Muslim* gives a more detailed account of the exploits of the Dajjaal and it will lead directly into the next occurring major sign of the Day of Judgment, the return of Jesus:

An-Nawwas ibn Sam'aan reported that God's Messenger made a mention of the Dajjaal one day in the morning. He sometimes described him to be insignificant and sometimes described (his turmoil) as very significant and we felt as if he were in the cluster of the date-palm trees. When we went to him (to the Prophet) in the evening and he read (the signs of fear) in our faces, he said, "What is the matter with you?" We said, 'God's Messenger, you made a mention of the Dajjaal in the morning (sometimes describing him) to be insignificant and sometimes very important, until we began to think as if he were present in some (near) part of the cluster of the date-palm trees.' Thereupon he said, 'I harbor fear in regard to you in so many other things besides the Dajjaal. If he comes forth while I am among you, I shall contend with him on your behalf, but if he comes forth while I am not among you, a man must contend on his own behalf and God would take care of every Muslim on my behalf (and safeguard him against his evil). He (the Dajjaal) would be a young man with twisted, contracted hair, and a blind eye. I compare him to Abd-ul-'Uzza b. Qatan. He who among you would survive to see him should recite over him the opening verses of Surah al-Kahf. He would appear on the way between Syria and Iraq and would spread mischief right and left. O servant of God! Adhere (to the path of Truth).' We said, 'God's Messenger, how long would he stay on the earth?' He said, 'For forty days, one day like a year and one day like a month and one day like a week and the rest of the days would be like your (normal) days.' We said, 'God's Messenger, would one day's prayer suffice for the prayers of day equal to one year?' Thereupon he said, 'No, but you must make an estimate of time (and then observe prayer).' We said, 'God's Messenger, how quickly would he walk upon the earth?' Thereupon he said, 'Like a cloud driven by the wind. He would come to the people and invite them (to a wrong religion) and they would affirm their faith in him and respond to him. He would then give a command to the sky and there would be rainfall upon the earth and it would grow crops. Then in the evening, their posturing animals would come to them with their humps very high and their udders full of milk and their flanks stretched. He would then come to another people and invite them. But they would reject him and he would go away from them and there would be drought for them and nothing would be left with them in the form of wealth. He would then walk through the waste land and say to it, 'Bring forth your treasures,' and the treasures would come out and collect (themselves) before him like the swarm of bees. He would then call a person brimming with youth and strike him with the sword and cut him into two pieces and (make these pieces lie at a distance which is generally) between the archer and his target. He would then call (that young man) and he will come forward laughing with his face gleaming (with happiness) and it would at this very time that God would send Christ, son of Mary...'"

(part 5 of 7): The Return of Jesus

Another one of the amazing signs shortly before the Day of Judgment is the return and descending of Jesus, peace and blessings of God be upon him, to this earth again. God says in the Quran:

“And because of their saying (in boast), ‘We killed Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of God,’ - but they did not kill him and nor did they crucify him, but the resemblance of Jesus was put over another man (and they killed that man), and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. Surely, they did not kill him. But God raised him (Jesus) up (with his body and soul) unto Himself (and he is in the heavens). And God is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise. And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), but must believe in him (Jesus) before his death. And on the Day of Resurrection, he (Jesus) will be a witness against them.” (Quran 4:157-159)

The words, **“And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), but must believe in him (Jesus) before his death,”** refer to Jesus’ worldly death after he returns to earth. At that time, the Jews and Christians will finally believe in him as a Messenger of God and a human being only, as that will be the only option possible at that time. In fact, some scholars state that part of the wisdom in Jesus’ return is the final and undeniable refutation of the Jews’ claim that they had crucified him and to bring an end to the false claim that he was the Son of God.

There are numerous hadeeth which speak about the coming of Jesus during the last days of this world. They give a description of many of the acts of Jesus after his return.

As is clear from the last hadeeth presented under the section concerning the Dajjaal, Jesus’ return will occur while the false messiah is upon the earth. The following is the continuation of the above hadeeth:

“He [the Dajjaal] would then call a person brimming with youth and strike him with the sword and cut him into two pieces and (make these pieces lie at a distance which is generally) between the archer and his target. He would then call (that young man) and he will come forward laughing with his face gleaming (with happiness) and it would be at this very time that God would send Christ, son of Mary, and he will descend at the white minaret in the eastern side of Damascus wearing two garments lightly dyed with saffron and placing his hands on the wings of two Angels. When he would lower his head,

there would fall beads of perspiration from his head, and when he would raise it up, beads like pearls would scatter from it. Every unbeliever who would smell the odor of his being would die and his breath would reach as far as he would be able to see. He would then search for him (the Dajjaal) until he would catch hold of him at the gate of Ludd and would kill him.”

Al-Bukhari and Muslim record that the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, stated:

“By Him in Whose hand is my life, the son of Mary (may peace be upon him) will soon descend among you as a just judge. He will break crosses, kill swine and abolish *Jizyah*^[1] and the wealth will pour forth to such an extent that no one will accept it.”

At the time of his appearance, he will bring an end to all of the false beliefs which crept into Christianity. Thus, he will break all of the crosses, as they signify a worship of him. Similarly, at his time, he will not accept the *jizyah* because there will be no excuse for any Jew or Christian not to believe in him and follow him. In another narration of the same hadeeth, there is a mention of the state of the followers of Jesus at that time. The Prophet said:

“He would leave the young she-camel and no one would endeavor to (collect Zakat on it). Spite, mutual hatred and jealousy against one another will certainly disappear and when he summons people to accept wealth, not even one would accept it.” In other hadeeth, the following is described, “Peace will prevail and people will use their swords as sickles. Every harmful beast will be made harmless; the sky will send down rain in abundance, and the earth will bring forth its blessings. A child will play with a fox and not come to any harm; a wolf will graze with sheep and a lion with cattle, without harming them.”^[2]

At the time of Jesus’ return, the Muslims will be lead by the *Mahdi* (A guided leader), as is mentioned in various hadeeth, such as the Prophet’s words:

“What will be your state when the son of Mary descends among you and there will be an Imam among you?” (Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

In another hadeeth in *Saheeh Muslim*, it reads:

“A section of my people will not cease fighting for the Truth and will prevail till the Day of Resurrection.” He then said, “Jesus son of Mary would then descend and their (Muslims’) commander would invite him to come and lead them in prayer, but he would say, ‘No, some among you are commanders over some (among you). This is the honor from God for this Nation.’”

This hadeeth is evidence that when Jesus returns, he will not return in the role of being a new messenger with a new law. Instead, he will return as a follower of

the Prophet Muhammad and submitting to the laws of Islam. In fact, another hadeeth in *Saheeh Muslim* describes Jesus as performing the Islamic ritual of Hajj (pilgrimage).

A hadeeth in *Saheeh Muslim* further describes that Jesus will remain ruling among the people for seven years. The Prophet said:

“Then people would live for seven years that there would be no rancor between two persons. Then God would send cold wind from the side of Syria that none would survive upon the earth having a speck of good in him or faith in him but he would die, so much so that even if some amongst you were to enter the innermost part of the mountain, this wind would reach that place also and that would cause his death.” He further said, “Only the wicked people would survive and they would be as careless as birds with the characteristics of beasts. They would never appreciate the good nor condemn evil.”

As stated earlier, when one of these great signs appear, the others are soon to follow. It is in the context of Jesus’ return that the Prophet also spoke about Gog and Magog.

Footnotes:

[1] *Jizyah* is the “exemption tax” that non-Muslims pay to the Islamic state in lieu of military service.

[2] These items are mentioned in various hadeeth recorded by Ahmad, ibn Hibbaan, Abu Dawood and others.

(part 6 of 7): The Tribes of Gog and Magog

The Tribes of Gog and Magog are referred to in a couple of places in the Quran. In one place in the Quran, God makes it clear that these tribes existed during the time of Dhul-Qarnain. God says:

“Then he [Dhul-Qarnain] followed (another) way, until, when he reached between two mountains, he found, before them a people who scarcely understood a word. They said, ‘O Dhul-Qarnain! Verily! Gog and Magog are doing great mischief in the land. Shall we then pay you a tribute in order that you might erect a barrier between us and them?’ He said, ‘That which my Lord had established me is better (than your tribute). So help me with strength (of men), I will erect between you and them a barrier. Give me pieces (blocks) of iron,’ then, when he had filled up the gap between the two

mountain-cliffs, he said, ‘Blow,’ till when he had made it (red as) fire, he said, ‘Bring me molten copper to pour over it.’ So they [Gog and Magog] were made powerless to scale it or dig through it. [Dhul-Qarnain] said, ‘This is a mercy from my Lord, but when the Promise of my Lord comes, He shall level it down to the ground. And the Promise of my Lord is ever true.’ And on that Day [i.e., the day Gog and Magog will come out], We shall leave them to surge like waves on one another, and the Trumpet will be blown, and We shall collect them all together.” (Quran 18:92-99)

Elsewhere in the Quran, God also speaks about them as a sign of the end of times. God says:

“Until, when Gog and Magog are let loose (from their barrier), and they swiftly swarm from every mound. And the true promise (Day of Resurrection) shall draw near (of fulfillment). Then (when mankind is resurrected from their graves), you shall see the eyes of the disbelievers fixedly stare in horror. (They will say), ‘Woe to us! We were indeed heedless of this; nay, but we were wrongdoers.’” (Quran 21:96-97)

The Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, gave the following description for the ruthlessness of these tribes when they are finally released upon the world:

“Gog and Magog would walk until they would reach the mountain of al-Khamar and it is a mountain of Bait-ul-Maqdis and they would say, ‘We have killed those who are upon the earth. Let us now kill those who are in the sky’ and they would throw their arrows towards the sky and the arrows would return to them besmeared with blood.”

Ahmad recorded the following hadeeth in his *Musnad*:

“Every day, Gog and Magog are trying to dig a way out through the barrier. When they begin to see sunlight through it, the one who is in charge of them says, ‘Go back; you can carry on digging tomorrow,’ and when they come back, the barrier is stronger than it was before. This will continue until their time comes and God wishes to send them forth. They will dig until they begin to see sunlight, then the one who is in charge of them will say, “Go back; you can carry on digging tomorrow, God willing.” In this case he will make an exception by saying, ‘God willing,’ thus relating the matter to the Will of God. They will return on the following day, and find the hole as they left it. They will carry on digging and come out against the people. They will drink all the water, and the people will entrench themselves in their

fortresses. Gog and Magog will fire their arrows into the sky, and they will fall back to earth with something like blood on them. Gog and Magog will say, ‘We have defeated the people of earth, and overcome the people of heaven.’ Then God will send a kind of worm in the napes of their necks, and they will be killed by it. By Him (God) in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, the beasts of the earth will become fat.” (*As-Suyuti*)

In the lengthy hadeeth from which two portions have been quoted above, the Prophet further described the relationship between Jesus and the tribes of Gog and Magog. After Jesus will kill the false messiah, the Prophet continued speaking about what would occur:

“Then a people whom God had protected would come to Jesus, son of Mary, and he would wipe their faces and would inform them of their ranks in Paradise and it would be under such conditions that God would reveal to Jesus these words, ‘I have brought forth from amongst My servants such people against whom none would be able to fight; you take these people safely to the Mount of Toor, and then God would send Gog and Magog and they would swarm down from every slope. The first of them would pass the lake of Tiberius and drink out of it. And when the last of them would pass, he would say, ‘There was once water there.’ Jesus and his companions would then be besieged here (at Toor, and they would be so hard pressed) that the head of the ox would be dearer to them than one hundred *dinars* (old currency) and God’s Apostle, Jesus, and his companions would supplicate to God, Who would send to them insects (which would attack the necks of the Gog and Magog) and in the morning they would perish like one single person. God’s Apostle, Jesus, and his companions would then come down to the earth and they would not find in the earth as much space as a single span which is not filled with their putrefaction and stench. God’s Apostle, Jesus, and his companions would then again beseech God, Who would send birds whose necks would be like those of Bactrian camels and they would carry them and throw them where God would will. Then God would send rain which no house of clay or (the tent of) camels’ hairs would keep out and it would wash away the earth until it could appear to be a mirror. Then the earth would be told to bring forth its fruit and restore its blessing and, as a result thereof, there would grow (such a big) pomegranate that a group of persons would be able to eat that, and seek shelter under its skin, and a milch cow would give so much milk that a whole party would be able to drink it. And the milch camel would give such (a large quantity of) milk that the whole tribe would be able to drink out of that and the milch sheep would give so much milk that the whole family would be able to drink out of that. At that time God would send a pleasant wind which would soothe (people) even under their armpits, and would take the life of every Muslim and only the

wicked would survive who would commit adultery like asses and the Last Hour would come upon them.”

In another important hadeeth from *Saheeh Muslim*, the Prophet spoke about the future coming of Gog and Magog and, at the same time, stated a very important lesson that all should reflect upon. This lesson has to do with the importance of not allowing evil to be prevalent in society. In this narration, the Prophet said,

“There is no god but God! There is a destruction in store for Arabia because of turmoil which is at hand, the barrier of Gog and Magog has opened so much.”

And Sufyan [the subnarrator] made a sign of ten with the help of his hand (in order to indicate the width of the gap) and I [Zainab, the Prophet’s wife] said,

“God’s Messenger, would we be perished in spite of the fact that there would be good people amongst us?” He replied, “Of course, but only when the evil predominates.”

(Incidentally, there is a great deal of speculation concerning who exactly these tribes are. However, due to space limitations, the discussion here is limited to what is known directly from the texts of the Quran and Sunnah. As such, these are the tribes of Gog and Magog and, with respect to identifying them, very little more can be said, although a couple of hadeeth do give further information concerning their physical characteristics.)

(part 7 of 7): The Last of the Major Signs

The Three Landslides

As quoted earlier in a hadeeth (saying of Prophet Muhammad), among the major signs of the Day of Judgment are the three landslides that will occur. One will occur in the East, one in the West and one in the Arabian Peninsula. Not much further information has been given concerning these events—and therefore not much can be added. However, the well-known hadeeth exegete *ibn Hajar* does note that landslides are a well-known occurrence and have occurred often. Therefore, he says, it is likely that the nature of these three landslides which will occur shortly before the Day of Judgment will be of a much greater magnitude and severity, setting them apart from what occurs customarily in this world.^[1] And God alone knows best.

The Smoke

Among the major signs mentioned by the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, is that of “the smoke.” God refers to this event in the Quran, saying:

“Then wait you for the Day when the sky will bring forth a visible smoke, covering the people, this will be a painful torment” (Quran 44:10-11)

Again, beyond what has been stated explicitly by the Prophet, very little comment can be made concerning this sign. However, there is a hadeeth in which the Prophet said:

“Verily, your Lord has warned you concerning three [matters]: the smoke that overtakes the believer like a cold and overtakes the disbeliever and makes him swollen until it comes out of his ears.”

The Rising of the Sun from the West

According to a large number of the Quranic commentators, based on the hadeeth of the Prophet, the italicized portion of the following verse is in reference to the phenomenon of the rising of the sun from the West just prior to the Day of Resurrection:

“Do they then wait for anything other than that the angels should come to them, or that your Lord should come, or *that some Signs of your Lord should come!* The day that some of the Signs of your Lord do come, no good will it do to a person to believe then, if he believed not before, nor earned good (by performing deeds of righteousness) through his Faith. Say [to the disbelievers], ‘Wait you! We (too) are waiting’” (Quran 6:158).

In an authentic narration, the Prophet recited this verse after mentioning the people see the rising of the sun from the West. Thus, al-Bukhari records, that the Prophet said:

“The hour will not be established till the sun rises from the West; and when it rises (from the West) and the people see it, they all will believe. And that is (the time) when no good will it do to a soul to believe then.” Then he recited the complete verse (6:158).

In numerous narrations, the Prophet has made it abundantly clear that the nature of this sign is such that no one would have any reason to doubt, question or refuse to believe after seeing it. When an individual experiences a sign of this nature, the reality virtually becomes exposed to him and, therefore, there is no longer any sense of a trial or test. In fact, at that time, the test is over and the individual is already seeing the results unfolding in front of his/her very

eyes. That is why “conversion” to faith will have no meaning at that time and will not be acceptable by God.^[2]

However, before this occurs, the door to repentance to God and His mercy is always open—such is how great the mercy of God is but it is also just and based on wisdom. Thus, Muslim recorded that the Prophet said:

“He who seeks repentance (from the Lord) before the rising of the sun from the west (before the Day of Resurrection), God turns to him with Mercy.”

The rising of the sun from the West is one of three greatly definitive signs of this nature. Thus, the Prophet said:

“When three things appear faith will not benefit one who has not previously believed or has derived no good from his faith: the rising of the sun in its place of setting, the Dajjaal, and the beast of the earth.”^[3]

Muslim also recorded that the Prophet said:

“The first sign^[4] would be the appearance of the sun from the west, the appearance of the beast before the people in the forenoon and which of the two happens first, the second one would follow immediately after that.”

This leads directly into the next sign which is the appearance of the Beast of the Earth.

The Beast of the Earth

God says in the Quran,

**“And when the Word (of torment) is fulfilled against them,
We shall bring out from the earth a beast to them, which will
speak to them because mankind believed not with certainty in
Our Signs” (al-Naml 27:82).**

This verse refers to the beast of the earth who will appear shortly before the Day of Judgment.

When the Beast comes, it will distinguish the people and declare who is a believer and who is a disbeliever. Ahmad recorded that the Prophet said:

“The beast will appear and he will brand the people on their noses. The people will then go on living with this branding such that a person will buy a camel and when he is asked, ‘From whom did you buy it?’ he will reply, ‘From one of the branded people.’” (Al-Albani)

The Fire that Will Gather the People

This is the last of the great signs. After this starts the beginning of a new experience and creation. Muslim records a hadeeth in which the Prophet stated the ten major signs and it concludes with, **“at the end of which fire would burn forth from the Yemen, and would drive people to the place of their assembly.”** One can only imagine the intensity of this fire and the sheer horror and fear that the individuals alive at that time will experience. After this, all that will be left is for the masses of humanity to be resurrected and to face the reckoning of their Lord.

Final Words

No one, of course, can say why God has chosen to end this creation in the remarkable and amazing fashion that He has so chosen. This is truly an amazing and marvelous creation and perhaps it is fitting that it should be brought to an end via amazing and marvelous events. In any case, a Muslim knows with full certainty that this is what is going to occur, as the Quran and Prophet have described these events. These events will occur and the Hour will be established. With the Hour comes judgment and this is what every human should be thinking about and preparing for, especially as he/she is reading about these events that shall occur before that momentous occasion.

Footnotes:

[1] Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Baari*, vol. 13, p. 84.

[2] The classic example of this nature found in the Quran is that of the Pharaoh. Once it became clear that he was facing his death, he proclaimed his belief.

[3] Recorded by Muslim.

[4] “The first sign” here is understood to mean the first of the extraordinary signs and not of the signs in general, as obviously these will occur after the coming of the Dajjaal and the return of Jesus.