

Seal of the Prophets

Two Wikipedia Articles

Contents

Articles

Seal of the prophets	1
Khatim an-Nabuwwah	11

References

Article Sources and Contributors	19
----------------------------------	----

Article Licenses

License	20
---------	----

Seal of the prophets

Seal of the Prophets (Arabic: *نبيينا* *Khātim an-Nabiyīn*) is a title given to the Islamic prophet Muhammad by a verse in the Qur'an.^[1] Muslims traditionally agree upon that Muhammad received the final revelation in the form of the Qur'an for all mankind, for all time.

Classical lexicons and dictionaries

All classical lexicons say that the word *مُتَاخ*, which roughly translates to *Seal*, is a synonym for *رَخَّ*. Classical lexicons presenting this are Lisān al-'Arab, Tāj al-'Arūs, Al-Mufridāt li-Gharīb al-Qur'ān, Aqrab al-Mawārid, Lane's English-Arabic Lexicon, Al-Muḥīt, Muḥīt Al-Muḥīt, Al-Ghanī, Al-Wasīt and Al-Qāmūs Al-Muḥīt.^[2]

Distinction between "messenger" and "prophet"

Most Islamic commentators agree that "messenger" (*rasūl*) refers to those who bring a divine revelation which includes a new doctrinal system, while a "prophet" (*nabī*) is one who explains ethical teachings on the basis of an existing religion. Every messenger is a prophet, but not every prophet is a messenger.^[3]

Academic view

According to A.C. Welch, Muslim interpretation of *khatim an-nabiyyin* as the "last and greatest of the prophets" is most likely based on a later interpretation.^[4] Carl W. Ernst considers this phrase to mean that Muhammad's "imprint on history is as final as a wax seal on a letter". According to Arabic lexicon and the linguistic usage *Khatam* means to affix seal; to close, to come to an end; and to carry something to its ultimate end. Wilferd Madelung states that the meaning of this term is not certain.^[5]

Hadith and traditions of Muhammad

Sunnis claim to quote the Hadith of Umar and prophecy as proof of Muhammad being the last prophet, while both Shi'ī and Sunni Muslims quote the Hadith of position.

Some authentic traditions illustrated by both Shi'ī and Sunni are below:

"The tribe of Israel was guided by prophets. When a prophet passed away, another prophet succeeded him. But no prophet will come after me; only *caliphs* (literally, *successors*) will succeed me."^[6]

Muhammad affirmed: "My position in relation to the prophets who came before me can be explained by the following example: A man erected a building and adorned this edifice with great beauty, but he left an empty niche, in the corner where just one brick was missing. People looked around the building and marvelled at its beauty, but wondered why a brick was missing from that niche? I am like unto that one missing brick and I am the last in the line of the Prophets."^[6]

"So I came and in me the line of Prophets has ended."^{[7] [8]}

The very same tradition in similar words has been incorporated among other traditions reported by Jabir ibn Abd-Allah; and its last sentence reads, "It is in me that line of Prophets came to its final end."^[9]

Musnad Ahmad contains traditions reported by Ubay ibn Ka'b, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri and Abu Hurairah on the same subject with a slight variation of words here and there.^[10]

Muhammad observed: "God has bestowed upon me six favors which the former Prophets did not enjoy:

- I have been endowed with the gift of pithy and perfect speech.
 - I was granted victory owing to my awe.
 - The spoils of war were made lawful unto me.
-

- The whole earth has been made the place of worship for me and it has become the means of purification for me also. In other words in my religion, offering of prayers is not confined to certain specified places of worship. Prayers can be offered at any place over the earth. And in case water is not available it is lawful for my people to perform ablutions with earth (Tayammum) and to cleanse themselves with the soil if water for bathing is scarce.
- I have been sent by Allah to carry His Divine message to the whole world.
- The line of prophets has come to its final end in me.^[11]

Muhammad affirmed: "The chain of Messengers and Prophets has come to an end. There shall be no Messenger nor Prophet after me."^[12]

Muhammad observed: "I am Muhammad, I am Ahmad, I am the effacer and infidelity shall be erased through me; I am the assembler. People shall be assembled on Doomsday after my time. (In other words Doom is my only successor.) And I am the last in the sense that no prophet shall succeed me."^[13]

Muhammad observed: "God Almighty hath sent unto the world no apostle who did not warn his people about the appearance of Dajjal (Anti-Christ, but Dajjal did not appear in their time). I am the last in the line of Prophets and ye are the last community of believers. Without doubt, then, Dajjal shall appear from amongst ye."^[14]

'Abdur Rahman bin Jubair reported: "I heard Abdullah bin 'Amr ibn-'As narrating that one day the Holy Prophet came out of his house and joined our company. His manner gave us the impression as if he were leaving us.' He said, 'I am Muhammad, the unlettered prophet of Allah' and repeated this statement three times. Then he affirmed: "There will be no prophet after me'."^[15]

Muhammad said: "Allah will send no Apostle after me, but only Mubashshirat. It was said: what is meant by al-Mubashshirat. He said : Good vision or pious vision".^[16] (In other words there is no possibility of Divine revelation in future. At the most if some one receives an inspiration from Allah he will receive it in the form of "pious dream."^[17]

Muhammad said: "If an Apostle were to succeed me, it would have been 'Umar bin Khattab."^[18]

Muhammad told Ali, "You are related to me as Aaron was related to Moses."^[19] But no Apostle will come after me."^[20]

This tradition is recorded in Bukhari and Muslim in the account of the battle of Tabouk also. Musnad records two traditions narrated by Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas on this subject. The last sentence in one of these traditions runs as follows: "Behold there is no prophethood after me."

Detailed accounts of the traditions report that on the eve of his departure for the battle of Tabouk, Muhammad had resolved to leave Ali behind him in order to look after the defense and supervise the affairs of Medina. The hypocrites thereupon began to spread insinuations and rumours about Ali. Ali went to Muhammad and said: "'O Prophet of Allah, are you leaving me behind among women and children?'" On this occasion in order to set his mind at peace Muhammad observed: "You are related to me as was Aaron with Moses." In other words "as Hadrat Moses on the Mount Tur had left Hadrat Aaron behind to look after the tribe of Israel, so I (Muhammad) leave you behind to look after the defense of Medina." At the same time apprehending that this comparative allusion to Aaron might later on give rise to heresies, Muhammad immediately made it clear that "There will be no Prophet after me."^[21]

Thauban reports: "Muhammad observed: And there will arise Thirty imposters in my Ummah and each one of them will pronounce to the world that he is a prophet, but I am the last in the line of the Prophets of God and no Apostle will come after me."^[22]

Abu Dawood in *Kitab-ul-Malahim* has recorded another tradition reported by Abu Hurairah in the same subject. Tirmidhi has also recorded these two traditions as reported by Thauban and Abu Hurairah. The text of the second tradition runs thus: "It will come to this that thirty imposters will arise and each one of them will put forth his claim to be the Apostle of God."

Muhammad observed: "Among the tribe of Israel who went before you there indeed were such people who held communion with God, even though they were not his Prophets. If ever there arose a person from among my people

who would hold communion with God, it would be none else but 'Umar."^[6]

A version of this same tradition in Muslim contains Muhaddithuna instead of Yukallimuna. But then Mukalima and Muhaddith bear identical meaning i.e., a man enjoys the privilege of holding direct communion with God or a person who is addressed by the Almighty from the unseen. Thus we conclude that if there had been any person among the followers of Muhammad who could hold communion with God without being raised to the dignity of prophethood, it would have been `Umar.

Muhammad said: "No Prophet will come after me and there will, therefore, be no other community of followers of any new prophet."^[23]

Muhammad observed: "I am the last in line of the prophets of God and my Masjid is the last Masjid (referring the holy Masjid of the Prophet)."^[24]

A large number of such traditions of Muhammad have been reported by the *Sahabah* (companions) and a great many compilers have recorded them from authoritative sources. A study of these traditions shows that Muhammad on several occasions, and in various ways and in different words made it explicitly clear that he was the last Prophet of God; that no prophet would follow him and that the line of prophets had ended in him. Furthermore, those would claim to be prophets and messengers of God after his time would be impostors and liars.^[17]

There can be no authentic, creditable and conclusive interpretation of the words of the Qur'an, Khatam-un-Nabiyyin, than that given by Muhammad for the credentials of Muhammad need no proof and the authority of his words is unassailable. His words are authentic and a proof in itself. When Muhammad is explaining a *Nass* of the Qur'an, his explanation is the most authentic and a proof positive.^[17]

Various views

Views of various school of thoughts among majority of sects have slight difference on the basis of ayat and Hadith. However all are of the same view on the finality of Muhammad as Prophet.

Classic interpretations by scholars of Islamic jurisprudence, Tafsir and Hadith

Khatam meaning last

`Abd Allah ibn `Abbas detailed in his commentary of Qur'an mentions

"The meaning of Khatam-un-Nabiyeen is that God has concluded the Prophet hood on Muhammad and after him there would be no Prophet or Messenger"^[25]

Abū Ḥanīfa, the founder of the Sunni Hanafi school of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), comments on one of the incident of his life

"Once a guy came to me and claimed that he is messenger of God and give me some time so that I can prove through my logic and reasons that I am Prophet of God, on hearing this I (Abu Hanifa) said that who ever ask for the logic from any one to prove his Prophecy after Muhammad is Kafir (disbeliever) and who ever is giving such explanations is also Kafir (disbeliever)"^[26]

The Shī'ī Imām Ja'far al-Sadiq while discussing the Qur'anic verse, "For verily We granted the Book to the children of Abraham", said that:

God vouchsafed to the children of Abraham, Messengers, Prophets and Imams. But what is ironical is that people believe in what God blessed the children of Abraham with and yet they deny this blessing for the progeny of Muhammad.^[27]

Fakhr al-Din al-Razi also known as Fakhruddin Razi or Imam Razi, was a Persian polymath: a Sunni Islamic theologian of the Ash'ari school, Islamic legal scholar of the Shafi'i school, Madrasah professor, and expert in a wide variety of disciplines, including the traditional Islamic fields of *Sharia* law, *Fiqh* jurisprudence, Islamic literature, Tafsir exegesis, Kalam theology, Arabic grammar and Muslim history; the Islamic philosophies of ethics and

metaphysics; the formal sciences of logic and mathematics says in his Tafsir:

"He is the last Prophet, if another Prophet has to come after the previous one, than an incomplete mission of Laws and teachings is left by the previous one, which is to be completed by the next one. But if no messenger has to come after the previous than he is very generous towards his people and he gives them a complete set of directions and rules(till the end of times), it is just like that father who knows that after him there is no one to take care of his child." [28]

Ibn Kathir in his commentary states:

"Hence this verse is a clear proof of the fact that no prophet will come after Muhammad and when it is said that no prophet will come after him it is a foregone conclusion that no messenger will succeed him either". [29]

The 12th century Islamic philosopher, Raghīb Isfahani, says in his *Al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Quran*:

"Verily Allah the Exalted ended the office of Prophethood (for anyone in future) and made his Shari'ah to abrogate the Shari'ahs of others. In one way he made this Shari'ah perfected, as Allah the Exalted says: 'Today have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you'. "(5:5). [30]

He further explains this epithet in these words:

"And Khatim al-Nabiyyin, for he has ended the Nubuwwa (Prophethood), i.e. with him the Prophethood has come to an end". [31]

Ibn Hajar, a medieval Shafi'ite Sunni scholar of Islam who represents the entire realm of the Sunni world in the field of Hadith commented

"The Prophet is the greatest of all the Messengers and Prophets and God has concluded the Prophethood on him and completed the Shariyat through him". [32]

A majority of Salafi and Sunni scholars have adhered to the view that khatam means last. [33] Ibn Kathir in his commentary states. [29]

Hence this verse is a clear proof of the fact that no prophet will come after Muhammad and when it is said that no prophet will come after him it is a foregone conclusion that no messenger will succeed him either.

Khatama al-'Amala is equivalent to 'Faragha min al-'Almali' which means 'to get over with the task.' 'Khatama al-Ina' bears the meaning 'The vessel has been closed and sealed so that nothing can go into it, nor can its contents spill out.' 'Khatam-al-kitab' conveys the meaning 'The letter has been enclosed and sealed so that it is finally secured.' 'Khatama-'Ala-al-Qalb' means 'The heart has been sealed so that it cannot perceive anything new nor can it forswear what it has already imbibed.' 'Khitamu-Kulli-Mashrubin' implies 'the final taste that is left in the mouth when the drink is over.' Katimatu Kulli Shaiinn 'Aqibatuhu wa Akhiratuhu means "The end in the case of everything denotes its doom and ultimate finish." Khatm-ul-Shaii Balagha Akhirahu conveys the sense, "To end a thing means to carry it to its ultimate limit." The term Khatam-i-Qur'an is used in the similar sense and the closing verses of Qur'anic Surahs are referred to as Khawatim. Khatim-ul-Qaum Akhirhuum means "The last man in the tribe." [34]

For this reason all linguists and commentators agree that Khatam-ul-Nabiyyin means 'The Last in the line of Prophets.' The word Khatam in its dictionary meaning and linguistic usage does not refer to the post office stamp which is affixed on the outgoing mail. Its literal meaning is the 'seal' which is put on the envelope to secure its contents. [17]

Khatam meaning honour, high status and not last

Aisha, the wife of the Muhammad states; [35]

"Say he is 'seal of prophets' but do not say there is no prophet after him." [36]

Raghīb Isfahani states; [35]

"Prophethood is of two kinds, general and special. The special prophethood, viz: the law-bearing prophethood is now unattainable; but the general prophethood continues to be attainable." [37]

Abdul-Qadir Gilani wrote;^[35]

"These attributes are found in the Holy Prophet in the highest abundance, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. That is the reason why he is called Khataman Nabiyyeen."^[38]

Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi, the founder of Deoband seminary seems to conform to the Sufi idea of Seal i.e. honour and not last.^[39] He writes,

According to the layman, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings on him, being Khatam is supposed to have appeared after all the other prophets. But men of understanding and the wise know it very well that being the first or the last, chronologically, does not carry any weight. How could, therefore, the words of the Holy Qur'an "'But he is the messenger of Allah and the Seal of Prophets" (33:40)^[1] mean to glorify him? But I know very well that none from among the Muslims would be prepared to agree with the common men.

"In short, if the meaning of the word Finality is accepted as explained, then his Finality of Prophethood will not be exclusively attached to the past Prophet. But even if for instance another Prophet appeared during the era of the Prophet then too, him being the Final Prophet remains intact as normal."^[40]

"If for instance even after the era of the Prophet any Prophet is born, then too it will not make any difference to the Finality of Prophethood of the Prophet."^[41]

Despite the more non-conformist stance taken by Nanotvi, most scholars have taken a more simplistic view of this concept and they support their belief by quoting Qasim Nanotvi himself where he declared:

"That Finality of time is something on which there is Ijmah"^[42]

Abdul Kareem Jilani, states;^[35]

"Hazrat Muhammad, peace and blessings on him, is the Khataman Nabiyyeen because he attained the highest perfection which no prophet ever did"^[43]

Abdul Wahhab She'raani states;^[35]

"Thus, without doubt, prophethood has not been abolished and it is only law-bearing prophethood that is abolished"^[44]

Muhammad Tahir, who commented on Aisha's statement "say he is Khataman Nabiyyeen but do not say there is not prophet after him" said;^[35]

This saying is based on the fact that Jesus is going to descend (as prophet) and it is not against the Hadith 'there is no prophet after me' because the Prophet (pbuh) meant 'there will not be any prophet who would cancel his law.'^[45]

Ali al-Qari, an Imam of the Hanafi school and a renowned interpreter of Hadith, wrote;^[35]

"That there is no revelation after the Holy Prophet (pbuh) is false; there is no truth in it. Yes! in the Hadith are the words 'La Nabiyya Ba'di' which, according to scholars, means that there will not be such a prophet in the future who brings such a law that abrogates that of the Holy Prophet (pbuh)."^[46]

Shah Waliullah who lived in India during the Mughal Empire and is sometimes known as a Mujaddid held the following opinion;^[35]

"The ending of prophets at the advent of the Holy Prophet means that after him, there can be no such person as would be given a law by the Almighty Allah and sent to the people."^[47]

Ahmad Farooqi states;

The rising of prophets after the Khatamar Rasul Hazrat Muhammad, the Chosen One, peace and blessings be upon him, from among his own followers and as a heritage, does not in any way run counter to his status as the Khatamar rasul. Therefore, O reader, do not be among those who doubt^[48]

Mohiyiud Din ibni Arabi states;

From the study and contemplation of the Darud we have arrived at the definite conclusion that there shall, from among the Muslims, certainly be persons whose status, in the matter of prophethood, shall advance to the level of prophets, if Allah pleases. But they shall not be given any book of law.^[49]

Abu Ja'far Sadiq states;

Hazrat Abu Ja'far, while discussing the Quranic verse: "For verily We granted the Book to the children of Abraham...", said that God vouchsafed to the children of Abraham, Messengers, Prophets and Imams. But what is ironical is that people believe in what God blessed the children of Abraham with and yet they deny this blessing for the progeny of Muhammad.^[50]

Ahmadiyya view

In recent history, the interpretation of the term "seal of the prophets" has been a cause of much contention between traditional Islam and the Ahmadiyya movement. The differences arose due to differences in the definition and usage of the terms "seal" and "prophet".

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community while accepting Muhammad as the 'seal of Prophets' and the last prophet to have brought a complete and comprehensive universal law for humanity, believe that prophethood subordinate to Muhammad is still open. Muhammad is believed to have brought prophethood to perfection and was the last law-bearing prophet, the apex of man's spiritual evolution. New prophets can come but they must be subordinate to Muhammad and cannot exceed him in excellence nor alter his teaching or bring any new law or religion.^[51] The Ahmadiyya community believes Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to be the promised Messiah and Mahdi, who claimed a certain kind of prophethood but never claimed to have brought a new divine law or change the law of Muhammad, but to have been Divinely appointed to revive and universally establish the law/religion of Muhammad.^[51] The Ahmadiyya community draws upon various opinions of Islamic scholars throughout the history of Islam to show the possibility of non-law bearing prophethood within Islam.

Many orthodox Muslims argue that the Ahmadi position is essentially a misrepresentation of otherwise simple expressions which prove that Muhammad was the final prophet.^[2] However many orthodox have not yet recognised that some learned and respected scholars like Ibn Arabi, Raghīb Isfahani and the Deobandi, Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi agree that the term *khatam* means superior instead of last. There seems to be confusion among the orthodox regarding the real meaning of word *khatm*. But still it should be noted that there are many other well known Islamic scholars who take the meaning of the word *khatam* as last. Besides a certain Arabic word can have many different meanings. An example is the word 'Alaq' in sura Al-Alaq of the Qur'an. The word *Alaq* has different meanings like "that which clings", "clot of blood" and so on.

Sufi Views

The end-times prophecies of Islam point to a mahdi and those of Christianity to a messiah. Muslims also believe that Jesus (Isa) is the Christ and the Messiah (a spiritual leader, prophet, and messenger who was the intended redeemer of the Hebrews who was created from the spoken word of God, but not God or His son, nor is he divine despite his virgin birth) and will return to lead them and kill the anti-Christ (Dajjal) during the Last Days. That Muhammad calls himself the *Seal of the prophets* deals with the fact that any true prophet who arose would know of Muhammad's mission and bring out his true status and identity. The case of Uwais al-Qarni who was given Muhammed's mantle after his death in 632 was because this was given to him as his successor. It is because Elijah (Ilyas) is the Seal of the prophets that Muhammad called himself the "last prophet" and other things to illustrate that he wore the "Mantle of Prophecy": he was carrying out God's will as one having been "instructed" by the angel Gabriel (Jibral) who also instructed Zechariah (Zakariyya) and Mary (Maryam). Distinct from these, Muhammad's mission dealt with the fact that the Qur'an is at the same time the Curse of God upon Israel, and the Blessing of God upon Ishmael ('Ismā'īl) as Bani-Israel (or the "New Israel", the Israelites). The arrival of the Messiah at the end can be better understood if one realizes that the Messiah will have his messenger who is "much more than a prophet", as Jesus called him. This was

John the Baptist's (Yahya ibn Zakariyya) status as the 'friend of the Bridegroom'. He was the Messenger of Jehovah of hosts, as is written about in the Book of Malachi:

For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of Jehovah of hosts.^[52]

In the Sufic philosophy it is as Muhammad once said in comparing external and internal struggle; to wit, "The ink of the Learned is holier than the blood of the martyr".

Most commonly held view about the phrase Seal of Prophets is that "seal" means finality and end.^{[53] [54]}

A small minority of scholars have translated and interpreted the word Seal in terms of honour and superiority. The vast majority of scholars from all sects of Islam accept that the only correct interpretation of the word 'khatam' is its literal meaning of 'final, last, seal', however those who disagree with this interpretation have not traditionally been considered outside the pale of Islam instead most of them are highly revered and are considered scholars of Islam.

Ghazali says^[33]

"If the right of denying the authority of consensus be admitted, it will give rise to many absurdities. For example, if someone says that it is possible for a person to attain the office of Prophethood after our Apostle Muhammad, we shall not hesitate to pronounce him as an infidel, but in the course of a controversy the man who wishes to prove that any reluctance in pronouncing such a person as an apostate is a sin shall have to seek the aid of consensus in support of his arguments, because reason is no arbiter against the possibility of the existence of a 'new prophet.' As regards the followers of the 'new prophets' they will not be utterly incapable of making various interpretations of La Nabiya Ba`di, "There will be no Prophet after me" and Khatam-ul-Nabiyyin, 'Last of the Prophets.' A follower of the 'new prophets' might say that Khatam-ul-Nabiyyin, 'Last of the Prophets' bears the meaning "last of the prominent Messengers." If you argue that "prophets" is a common word, he would very easily give this term a particular significance with regard to his own 'prophethood.' In respect of 'No Prophet will come after him', such a man would contend that this expression does not say that 'No Messengers will follow him.' There is a difference between a Prophet and a Messenger. The status of a Prophet is higher than that of the Messenger. The fact is that such absurdities can be indulged in ad infinitum. It is not difficult, in our view, to make different interpretations of a word. Besides, there is no ample scope for people to commit blunders ever and beyond these points in the exposition of these clear words. We cannot even say that those who make such interpretations are guilty of the denial of clear injunctions. But to refute those who have but their faith in the false expositions we shall say that the entire Ummah by a consensus of opinion recognizes that the words 'No Prophet shall come after him' and the context of the traditions suggests that the Holy Prophet meant that 'No Prophet, nor Messenger shall follow him.' Furthermore, the Ummah is agreed on the point that above words of the Holy Prophet leave no scope for a different interpretation than given to it by the consensus of the Ummah and he who would not join the consensus is no more than a dissident".^[55]

Rumi in his famous Masnavi writes,

"He has been raised to the station of Khatam by the grace of God. There can never be his like before him or after".

When a master excels all others in his art, don't you use the word "khatam" to convey the idea that he has excelled all others in his domain?^[56]

Make such plans to perform righteousness in the way of God that you attain prophethood within the Ummat [religious community].^[57]

Ibn Arabi also followed the same line of reasoning in his *Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*.^{[58] [59]} He has argued that the possibility of a Wali is open according to the verse 33:40.^[1] Ibn Arabi also stated in the Futuhat:

"The Messenger has informed (us) that dreams are one of the parts of Prophethood. Of Prophethood there shall remain for the people only this part, and nothing more than that. In spite of this, the term 'Prophethood' shall

not be applicable to anything, nor the term 'Prophet' be applicable to anyone other than the one endowed with a Shari'ah. Thus 'Prophethood' has been banned on account of this particular characteristic."^[60]

"From the study and contemplation of the Darud we have arrived at the definite conclusion that there shall, from among the Muslims, certainly be persons whose status, in the matter of prophethood, shall advance to the level of prophets, if God pleases. But they shall not be given any book of law".^[61]

Further he says

"After the finality of Prophet-hood the only thing possible is that of coming of Wali and all the doors to revelations and Prophet hood has been closed, hence who so ever claims to be messenger of God after Prophet Muhammad than he would be only the propagator of his new ideas, it is possible that he would be follower of our religion or not, and if he is sound minded than we should give him death penalty and if he is unsound mind than we should keep our self away".^[62]

Ahmad Sirhindi an Indian Islamic scholar from Punjab and a prominent member of the Naqshbandi Sufi order says of this subject in one of his letters

"Muhammad is the last of all Prophets and his religion is the conclusion of all previous religions, the book revealed on him is best of all the previous ones, and no religion (or sect) would surpass his religion and his religion would remain till the end of times, when Jesus would resurrected back in the world he would also be following his religion and will live as his follower".^[63]

Shah Waliullah subscribed to the opinion:

The meaning of the Holy Prophet being the Khataman Nabiyeen is that there shall not now appear a person whom God may appoint with a new Law for mankind, that is to say, there shall be no prophet who shall come with a new Law.^[64]

There cannot be an independent prophet after the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who is not his follower and his adherent.^[65]

Further he explained his views regarding any one claim to be Muslim but also a messenger

"or any one who says (or have idea) that 'there is no doubt that Muhammad is last Prophet and by this it means that it is not allowed to call someone Prophet or messenger, but the reality of Prophet hood is that if any man is given some directions from God which must be followed by others, or keeps his eyes close of any visible mistakes, and person of such quality is also present in scholars(or Imams)' then that person qualifies to be out of Islam".^[66]

Faranghi Mahal, an eminent scholar of the Ahl-e Sunnat also discussed the significance of the expression *Khatam an-nubuwwah* and on behalf of the Sunni Scholars, he declared:

The divines of the Sunni sects believe in and expound the fact that in the course of the Ministry of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, there cannot appear a law bearing prophet and his prophethood extends to the end of days. A prophet who appears during his ministry shall necessarily be the follower of the Law of Muhammad.^[67]

All those who claim that non law bearing prophet can come they believe in Return of Prophet Jesus^[68]

Over all there is a complete agreement that none of any scholars or sufis of Sunni or Shia sects (including the one who had differences of opinion on declinations of word Seal or Khatam) of Islam believed in any such person who claimed to be messenger or Prophet after Muhammad, although in history there are many instances where people came with such claims. In fact they objected and opposed such claims.^[69]

Views of other religions

Bahá'í view

The Bahá'í Faith regards Muhammad as the seal of the prophets, but does not interpret this term as meaning that no further messengers from God are possible. In particular, Bahá'ís regard the end-times prophecies of Islam (and other faiths) as being symbolic, and see the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh as symbolically fulfilling these prophetic expectations. The latter of these is the founder of the Bahá'í religion, which considers Islamic law to have been superseded by its own. Muhammad is seen as ending the *Adamic cycle*, also known as the *Prophetic cycle*, which is stated to have begun approximately 6,000 years ago,^{[70] [71]} and the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh as starting the *Bahá'í cycle*, or *Cycle of Fulfillment*, which will last at least five hundred thousand years with numerous Manifestations of God appearing throughout that time.^{[72] [73] [74]} Bahá'u'lláh gave the Title "King of the Messengers" (*sultán al-rusul*) to the Báb, and the "Sender of the Messengers" (*mursil al-rusul*) to himself. In the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, he uses the Islamic concept of the oneness of the prophets to show that the term "seal of the prophets" does not apply to Muhammad only, but to all the prophets. He also makes a direct link between Qur'an 33:40,^[1] about the seal of the prophets, and 33:44,^[75] about the promise of the "attainment of the divine Presence" on the day of resurrection, which he interprets as the meeting with the Manifestation of God. The day of resurrection is interpreted as the day of the advent of the Qa'im^{[76] [77]} These interpretive and legal differences have caused the Bahá'ís to be seen as heretics and apostates by many Muslims.

References

- [1] Qur'an 33:40
- [2] With Love to the Ahmadis of the World, page 58 (<http://www.romanizedarabic.com/withlovetoahmadis>)
- [3] Muhammad Asad, The Message of The Qur'an, 22:52, note 65 (<http://web.archive.org/web/20091027035003/http://geocities.com/masad02/021>)
- [4] Encyclopedia of Islam, Muhammad
- [5] Madelung (2004), p.17
- [6] Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Manaqib
- [7] Muslim, Kitab-ul-Fada'il, Bab-ul-Khatimin-Nabiyyin
- [8] Tirmidhi, Kitab-ul-Manaqib, Bab-Fadlin Nabi and Kitab-Adab, Bab-ul-Amthal
- [9] Musnad Abu Dawud Tayalisi
- [10] Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal
- [11] Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah
- [12] Tirmidhi, Kitab-ur-Rouya Babu Zahab-un- Nubuwwa, Musnad Ahmad, Marwiyat-Anas bin Malik
- [13] Bukhari and Muslim, Kitab-ul-Fada'il, Bab: Asmaun-Nabi; Tirmidhi, Kitab-ul- Adab, Bab: Asma-un-Nabi; Muatta', Kitab-u-Asma in-Nabi, Al- Mustadrak Hakim, Kitab-ut-Tarikh, Bab: Asma-un-Nabi.
- [14] Ibn Majah, Kitabal-fitan, bab:Dajjal
- [15] Musnad Ahmad, Marwiyat'Abdullah bin Amr ibn'-As.
- [16] Musnad Ahmad, Marwiyat Abu Tufail, Nasa'i, Abu Dawud
- [17] The Finality of Prophethood by S. Abul A'la Maududi
- [18] Tirmidhi, Kitab-ul- Manaqib
- [19] Aaron or Hārūn was the brother of Moses or Musa
- [20] Bukhari and Muslim, Kitab Fada'il as-Sahaba
- [21] Abu Dawud Tayalisi, Imam Ahmad and Muhammad bin Ishaque
- [22] Abu Dawud, Kitab-ul-Fitan
- [23] Baihaqi, Kitab-ul Rouya; Tabarani
- [24] Muslim, Kitab-ul-Hajj; Bab:Fadl-us-Salat bi Masjidi Mecca wal Medina
- [25] Tanveer ul Maqbas min Tafseer ul Ibn Abbas, pg 354
- [26] Kardari, Al Munaqab Imam Azam Abi Hanifa Min Allama Al Mustasni Faqad Kufar Page 161:1
- [27] Al-Saafi Sharah Asool Al-Kaafi, Part 3, Pg. 119
- [28] Tafseer Al Kabir, Razi, page 214:25
- [29] Tafsir Ibne Kathir, Vol. 3, pp. 493-494
- [30] Mufradat al-Qur'an
- [31] Muftadat, p.142
- [32] Fatah Albari, Asqalani Page 559:2

- [33] The Consensus of all the Ulema of the Ummah (http://www.youngmuslims.ca/online_library/books/finality_of_prophethood/fop6.htm)
- [34] Refer to Lisan-ul-'Arab; Qamus and Aqrab-ul- Muwarid
- [35] "Finality of Prophethood" (<http://www.real-islam.org/khatim5.htm>). real-islam.org. . Retrieved 19 October 2010.
- [36] Takmilah Majma'ul Bihaar, p. 85
- [37] Bahr al Muheet, vol. 3, p. 28
- [38] Tuhfa Mursala Shareef: p. 5
- [39] Tahzeer-ul-Naas by Qasim Nanutwi, pg 3
- [40] Tahzeer-ul-Naas by Qasim Nanutwi, pg 14
- [41] Tahzeer-ul-Naas by Qasim Nanutwi, pg 34
- [42] Tahzeer-ul-Naas by Qasim Nanutwi, pg 101
- [43] Al Insaanul Kaamil: vol. 1, Ch 36. Pg 69
- [44] Al Yawaaqetu Wal Jawaahir: pg 27, argument # 3
- [45] Takmilah Majma'ul Bihaar, pg 85
- [46] Al Ishaa'at Fil Sharaatis Saa'ah, pg 226
- [47] Tafheemati Ilaahiyah, Tafheem # 53
- [48] Maktubat Imam Rabbani, Hazrat Mujaddid Alf Thani (<http://www.alislam.org/library/ref/k001.htm>)
- [49] Fatuhati Makiyyah: Vol 1. pg 545 (<http://www.alislam.org/library/ref/k002.htm>)
- [50] Al-Saafi Sharah Asool Al-Kaafi, Part 3, Pg. 119 (<http://www.alislam.org/library/ref/k003.htm>)
- [51] The Question of Finality of Prophethood (<http://www.alislam.org/library/books/promisedmessiah/index.htm?page=37>), The Promised Mehdi and Messiha, by Dr. Aziz Ahmad Chaudhry, Islam International Publications Limited
- [52] Malachi 2:7
- [53] The Finality of Prophethood (<http://www.islaam.org/Finality/Finality-1.htm>)
- [54] The Finality of Prophethood (http://www.islamonline.net/English/In_Depth/mohamed/1424/misconception/article17.shtml)
- [55] Al-Iqtisad Fil Aiteqad, p.114, Egypt
- [56] Mathnawi, Vol. VI, p.8, 1917 ed.
- [57] Mathnavi Maulana Room, Daftar I, pg. 53
- [58] Selections from al-Futuh al-Makkiyya, by Shaykh Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi (<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/ABewley/ibnArabi.html>)
- [59] Futuh al-Makkiyyah, Vol. 2, p. 3
- [60] al-Futuh al-Makkiya, Vol. 2, p. 495
- [61] Futuh al-Makkiyyah, Vol 1, p. 545
- [62] al-Futuh al-Makkiya, Vol. 2, p. 51:3
- [63] Mujaddad Alif Sani, Maktoobat, daftar awal, part 4, pg 110, Letter no. 260
- [64] Tafheemati Ilaahiyah pg. 53
- [65] Al Khairul Katheer: pg 111
- [66] Al Massawi min Ahadis Al Muta(Imam Malik) p 293-299:2
- [67] Majmu'ah Fatawa: Vol. 1, pg 144
- [68] Masla-e-Khatam-e-Nabuwat aur Saalf Salaheen
- [69] Aqida Khatam Nabuwat, Allama Tahir Al Qadri, Page 517
- [70] Letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer, March 13, 1986. Published in Effendi, Shoghi; The Universal House of Justice (1983). Hornby, Helen (Ed.). ed. *Lights of Guidance: A Bahá'í Reference File* (http://bahai-library.com/hornby_lights_guidance). Bahá'í Publishing Trust, New Delhi, India. pp. 500. ISBN 81-85091-46-3. .
- [71] Taherzadeh, Adib (1977). *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, Volume 2: Adrianople 1863-68* (<http://www.peyman.info/cl/Baha'i/ROB/V2/p337-369Ch16.html#p351>). Oxford, UK: George Ronald. pp. 352. ISBN 0-85398-071-3. .
- [72] Seena Fazel and Khazeh Fananapazir (1993). "A Bahá'í Approach to the Claim of Finality in Islam" (http://bahai-library.com/fananapazir_fazel_finality_islam). *Journal of Bahá'í Studies* 5 (3): 17–40. .
- [73] Islam and the Bahá'í Faith: Seal of the Prophets (<http://www.bci.org/islam-bahai/SealProphets.htm>)
- [74] Kamran Hakim: A Personal Interpretation of the Term 'Seal of the Prophets' (http://bahai-library.com/hakim_seal_prophets)
- [75] Qur'an 33:44
- [76] Buck, Christopher (2007). *Beyond the 'Seal of the Prophets': Baha'ullah's Book of Certitude (Ketab-e Iqan)*. (http://christopherbuck.com/Buck_PDFs/Buck_Seal_2007.pdf) Religious Texts in Iranian Languages. Edited by Clause Pedersen & Fereyduun Vahman. København (Copenhagen): Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab. Pp. 369–378.
- [77] Buck, Christopher (1995). *Symbol & Secret: Qur'án Commentary in Bahá'u'lláh's Kitáb-i-Iqán, p. 191-198* (<http://books.google.com/?id=xbVTViPK8JsC&printsec=frontcover#PPR9,M1>). Los Angeles, USA: Kalimát Press. ISBN 0933770804. .

External links

- Online book: 'Finality of the Divine Revelations and Prophethood on Muhammad (SAW)' – The Muslim point of view (http://www.darulehsan.net/learningcentre/Literature/dar_ul_ehsan_literature_Finality_of_the_Divine_Revelations_and_Prophethood_on_Muhammad_SAW.php)

Khatim an-Nabuwwah

Khatim an-Nabuwwah (Arabic: هوبنلا مئخ), or Seal of Prophethood, is an Islamic belief unique to Prophet Muhammad. However, there is a difference of interpretation within Muslims; orthodox Muslims hold a consensus that this implies that prophethood came to an end after Muhammad, whereas other groups such as Ahmadiyya hold an entirely distinct view. Nonetheless, all Muslims agree upon that Muhammad received the final revelation in the form of the Qur'an for all mankind, for all time.

Origin

The term *Khatam an-nabuwwah* is derived from the Quranic phrase *Khatamun Nabiyyin* "seal of the prophets". [Qur'an 33:40]

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah, and the seal of the Prophets and God has full knowledge of all things.

Khatama al-'Amala is equivalent to 'Faragha min al-'Almali' which means 'to get over with the task.' 'Khatama al-Ina' bears the meaning 'The vessel has been closed and sealed so that nothing can go into it, nor can its contents spill out.'

'Khatam-al-kitab' conveys the meaning 'The letter has been enclosed and sealed so that it is finally secured.'

'Khatama-'Ala-al-Qalb' means 'The heart has been sealed so that it cannot perceive anything new nor can it forswear what it has already imbibed.'

'Khitamu-Kulli-Mashrubin' implies 'the final taste that is left in the mouth when the drink is over.'

Katimatu Kulli Shaiinn 'Aqibatuhu wa Akhiratuhu means "The end in the case of everything denotes its doom and ultimate finish." Khatm-ul-Shaii Balagha Akhirahu conveys the sense, "To end a thing means to carry it to its ultimate limit."

The term Khatam-i-Qur'an is used in the similar sense and the closing verses of Qur'anic Surahs are referred to as Khawatim. Khatim-ul-Qaum Akhirhuum means "The last man in the tribe." ^[1]

For this reason all linguists and commentators agree that Khatam-ul-Nabiyyin means 'The Last in the line of Prophets.' The word Khatam in its dictionary meaning and linguistic usage does not refer to the post office stamp which is affixed on the outgoing mail. Its literal meaning is the 'seal' which is but on the envelope to secure its contents. ^[2]

Classical Lexicons

All classical lexicons say that the word مِثَاق, which roughly translates to *Seal*, is a synonym for خَاتَم, which unambiguously means *Last*. Classical lexicons presenting this are Lisān al-‘Arab, Tāj al-‘Arūs, Al-Mufridāt li-Gharīb al-Qur’ān, Aqrab al-Mawārid, Lane’s English-Arabic Lexicon, Al-Muḥīt, Muḥīt Al-Muḥīt, Al-Ghanī, Al-Wasīt and Al-Qāmūs Al-Muḥīt.^[3]

Interpretations

The most commonly held view about the phrase “Seal of the Prophets” is that “seal” means finality and end.^[4]

Some scholars have translated and interpreted the word “seal” in terms of honour and superiority, instead of the finality of the prophethood. But the consensus of the Muslim community regards the denial or doubt on finality of prophethood as apostasy.

Various views

Views of various school of thoughts among majority of sects have slight difference on the basis of ayat and Hadith. However all are of the same view on the finality of Muhammad as prophet.

Hadith and traditions of Muhammad

Sunnis claims to quote the Hadith of Umar and prophecy as proof of Muhammad being the last prophet, while both Shi’ī and Sunni Muslims quote the Hadith of position.

Some authentic traditions illustrated by both Shi’ī and Sunni are below;

"The tribe of Israel was guided by prophets. When a prophet passed away, another prophet succeeded him. But no prophet will come after me; only caliphs will succeed me." ^[5]

Muhammad affirmed: "My position in relation to the prophets who came before me can be explained by the following example: A man erected a building and adorned this edifice with great beauty, but he left an empty niche, in the corner where just one brick was missing. People looked around the building and marvelled at its beauty, but wondered why a brick was missing from that niche? I am like unto that one missing brick and I am the last in the line of the Prophets." ^[6]

"So I came and in me the line of Prophets has ended." ^{[7] [8]}

The very same tradition in similar words has been incorporated among other traditions reported by Jabir bin Abdullah; and its last sentence reads, "It is in me that line of Prophets came to its final end." ^[9]

Musnad Ahmad contains traditions reported by Hadrat Ubayyi bin Ka'b, Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri and Hadrat Abu Huraira on the same subject with a slight variation of words here and there. ^[10]

Muhammad observed: "God has bestowed upon me six favors which the former Prophets did not enjoy:

- I have been endowed with the gift of pithy and perfect speech.
- I was granted victory owing to my awe.
- The spoils of war were made lawful unto me.
- The whole earth has been made the place of worship for me and it has become the means of purification for me also. In other words in my religion, offering of prayers is not confined to certain specified places of worship. Prayers can be offered at any place over the earth. And in case water is not available it is lawful for my people to perform ablutions with earth(Tayammum) and to cleanse themselves with the soil if water for bathing is scarce.
- I have been sent by Allah to carry His Divine message to the whole world.
- The line of prophets has come to its final end in me. ^[11]

Muhammad affirmed: "The chain of Messengers and Prophets has come to an end. There shall be no Messenger nor Prophet after me." [12]

Muhammad observed: "I am Muhammad, I am Ahmad, I am the effacer and infidelity shall be erased through me; I am the assembler. People shall be assembled on Doomsday after my time. (In other words Doom is my only successor.) And I am the last in the sense that no prophet shall succeed me." [13]

Muhammad observed: "God Almighty hath sent unto the world no apostle who did not warn his people about the appearance of Dajjal(Anti-Christ, but Dajjal did not appear in their time). I am the last in the line of Prophets and ye are the last community of believers. Without doubt, then, Dajjal shall appear from amongst ye". [14]

'Abdur Rahman bin Jubair reported: "I heard Abdullah bin 'Amr ibn-'As narrating that one day Muhammad came out of his house and joined our company. His manner gave us the impression as if he were leaving us.' He said, 'I am Muhammad, the unlettered prophet of Allah' and repeated this statement three times. Then he affirmed: "There will be no prophet after me'." [15]

Muhammad said: "Allah will send no Apostle after me, but only Mubashshirat. It was said: what is meant by al-Mubashshirat. He said : Good vision or pious vision". [16] (In other words there is no possibility of Divine revelation in future. At the most if some one receives an inspiration from Allah he will receive it in the form of "pious dream." [17])

Muhammad said: "If an Apostle were to succeed me, it would have been 'Umar bin Khattab." [18]

Muhammad told 'Ali, "You are related to me as Aaron was related to Moses. But no Apostle will come after me." [19]

This tradition is recorded in Bukhari and Muslim in the account of the Battle of Tabuk also. Musnad records two traditions narrated by Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas on this subject. The last sentence in one of these traditions runs as follows : "Behold there is no prophethood after me."

Detailed accounts of the traditions report that on the eve of his departure for the battle of Tabuk, Muhammad had resolved to leave Hadrat 'Ali behind him in order to look after the defense and supervise the affairs of Medina. The hypocrites thereupon began to spread insinuations and rumours about Hadrat 'Ali. Hadrat 'Ali went to the Prophet and submitted : 'O Prophet of Allah, are you leaving me behind among women and children?' On this occasion in order to set his mind at peace Muhammad observed: "You are related to me as was Aaron with Moses." In other words "as Hadrat Moses on the Mount Tur had left Hadrat Aaron behind to look after the tribe of Israel, so I (Muhammad) leave you behind to look after the defense of Medina." At the same time apprehending that this comparative allusion to Hadrat Aaron might later on give rise to heresies, the Muhammad immediately made it clear that "There will be no Prophet after me." [20]

Thauban reports: "Muhammad observed: And there will arise Thirty imposters in my Ummah and each one of them will pronounce to the world that he is a prophet, but I am the last in the line of the Prophets of God and no Apostle will come after me." [21]

Abu Dawud in 'Kitab-ul-Malahim' has recorded another tradition reported by Abu Huraira in the same subject. Tirmidhi has also recorded these two traditions as reported by Thauban and Abu Huraira. The text of the second tradition runs thus: "It will come to this that thirty imposters will arise and each one of them will put forth his claim to be the Apostle of God." Muhammad observed: "Among the tribe of Israel who went before you there indeed were such people who held communion with God, even though they were not his Prophets. If ever there arose a person from among my people who would hold communion with God, it would be none else but 'Umar (May Allah be pleased with him)." [22]

A version of this same tradition in `Muslim' contains Muhaddithuna instead of Yukallimuna. But then Mukalima and Muhaddith bear identical meaning i.e., a man enjoys the privilege of holding direct communion with God or a person who is addressed by the Almighty from the unseen. Thus we conclude that if there had been any person among the followers of Muhammad who could hold communion with God without being raised to the dignity of prophethood, it would have been `Umar.

Muhammad said: "No Prophet will come after me and there will, therefore, be no other community of followers of any new prophet." [23]

Muhammad observed: "I am the last in line of the prophets of God and my Masjid is the last Masjid (referring the holy Masjid of the Prophet)." [24]

A large number of such traditions of Muhammad have been reported by the companions and a great many compilers have recorded them from authoritative sources. A study of these traditions shows that Muhammad, on several occasions, and in various ways and in different words made it explicitly clear that he was the last prophet of God; that no prophet would follow him and that the line of prophets had ended in him. Furthermore, those would claim to be prophets and messengers of God after his time would be imposters and liars. [25]

There can be no authentic, creditable and conclusive interpretation of the words of the Qur'an, Khatam-un- Nabiyyin, than that given by Muhammad for the credentials of Muhammad need no proof and the authority of his words is unassailable. His words are authentic and a proof in itself. When Muhammad is explaining a Nass of the Holy Quran, his explanation is the most authentic and a proof positive. [26]

Scholars of Islamic jurisprudence, Tafseer & Hadith

A majority of Sunni scholars have adhered to the view that *khatam* means last.

Abdullah bin Abbas detailed in his commentary of Quran mentions

"The meaning of Khatam-un-Nabiyeen is that God has concluded the Prophet hood on Muhammad and after him there would be no Prophet or Messenger" [27]

Abu Hanifa the founder of the Sunni Hanafi school of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) comments on one of the incident of his life

"Once a guy came to me and claimed that he is messenger of God and give me some time so that I can prove through my logic and reasons that I am Prophet of God, on hearing this I (Abu Hanifa) said that who ever ask for the logic from any one to prove his Prophecy after Muhammad is Kafir (disbeliever) and who ever is giving such explanations is also Kafir (disbeliever)" [28]

The Shi'i Imām Ja'far al-Sadiq while discussing the Quranic verse, "For verily We granted the Book to the children of Abraham", said that:

God vouchsafed to the children of Abraham, Messengers, Prophets and Imams. But what is ironical is that people believe in what God blessed the children of Abraham with and yet they deny this blessing for the progeny of Muhammad. [29]

Imam Razi also known as Fakhruddin Razi or Imam Razi, was a Persian polymath: a Sunni Islamic theologian of the Ash'ari school, Islamic legal scholar of the Shafi'i school, Madrasah professor, and expert in a wide variety of disciplines, including the traditional Islamic fields of Sharia law, Fiqh jurisprudence, Islamic literature, Tafsir exegesis, Kalam theology, Arabic grammar and Muslim history; the Islamic philosophies of ethics and metaphysics; the formal sciences of logic and mathematics says in his Tafseer

"He [Muhammad] is the last Prophet, if another Prophet has to come after the previous one, than an incomplete mission of Laws and teachings is left by the previous one, which is to be completed by the next one. But if no messenger has to come after the previous than he is very generous towards his people and he gives them a complete set of directions and rules (till the end of times), it is just like that father who knows that after him there is no one to take care of his child." [30]

Ibn Kathir in his commentary states

"Hence this verse is a clear proof of the fact that no prophet will come after Muhammad and when it is said that no prophet will come after him it is a foregone conclusion that no messenger will succeed him either". [31]

The twelfth century Islamic philosopher, Raghīb Isfahani, says in his Mufradat al-Qur'an:

“Verily Allah the Exalted ended the office of Prophethood (for anyone in future) and made his Shari’ah to abrogate the Shari’ahs of others. In one way he made this Shari’ah perfected, as Allah the Exalted says: ‘Today have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you’.”(5:5).^[32]

He further explain this epithet in these words:

“And Khatim al-Nabiyyin, for he has ended the Nubuwwa (Prophethood), i.e. with him the Prophethood has come to an end”.^[33]

Ibn Hajar (February 18, 1372 – February 2, 1448, 852 A.H.), a medieval Shafiite Sunni scholar of Islam who represents the entire realm of the Sunni world in the field of Hadith commented

“Muhammad is the greatest of all the Messengers and Prophets and God has concluded the Prophethood on him and completed the Shariyat through him”.^[34]

Ahmadiyya Interpretation

View of the founder of Ahmadiyya movement, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad:

The person who was above all, and was a perfect man, and a perfect prophet, and who came with the fullness of blessings, through whom, on account of his spiritual advent and the spiritual resurrection that he brought about, the first judgment manifested itself and a whole universe that was dead was revived, that blessed prophet Khatamul Anbiya, Leader of the elect, Katamul Mursileen, Pride of the Prophets was Muhammad Mustafa, peace and the blessings of Allah by upon him. (Itmamul Hujjah, p.28)

On types of prophethood

Prophethood is of two kinds, general and special. The special prophethood, viz: the law-bearing prophethood is now unattainable; but the general prophethood continues to be attainable.^[35]

General Prophethood talks about the Good vision or pious vision to the pious people not in the sense that any other Prophet with revelations in any form is coming.

Hazrat Ayesha is reported as having said:

Say he was Khataman Nabiyyeen, but do not say that there will be no prophet after him. (Durre Manshur, Vol. V of Jalaludin Suyuti)

Hadith Bukhari and Muslim for the word 'Khatam' to mean 'Seal' in the sense of attestation or certification (i.e. not last):

“Āmīn, is the Seal (Khatam) of the Lord of all the worlds placed on the tongues of believing men.”

Anas abn Malik relates that the Holy Prophetsa desired to send a letter to the leaders of foreign nations. Someone said to him that these people do not accept any letter unless it bears a seal (Khatam). Thereupon the Holy Prophetsa had a signet ring (Khatam) made of silver, bearing the words “Muhammad Messenger of Allah.”

Sufi interpretations

Imam Ghazali (450 A.H.-505 A.H.) says^[36]

"If the right of denying the authority of consensus be admitted, it will give rise to many absurdities. For example, if someone says that it is possible for a person to attain the office of Prophethood after our Apostle Muhammad, we shall not hesitate to pronounce him as an infidel, but in the course of a controversy the man who wishes to prove that any reluctance in pronouncing such a person as an apostate is a sin shall have to seek the aid of consensus in support of his arguments, because reason is no arbiter against the possibility of the existence of a 'new prophet.' As regards the followers of the 'new prophets' they will not be utterly incapable of making various interpretations of La Nabiya Ba'di, "There will be no Prophet after me" and Khatam-ul-Nabiyyin, 'Last of the Prophets.' A follower of the 'new prophets' might say that

Khatam-ul-Naibiyyin, 'Last of the Prophets' bears the meaning "last of the prominent Messengers." If you argue that "prophets" is a common word, he would very easily give this term a particular significance with regard to his own 'prophethood.' In respect of 'No Prophet will come after him', such a man would contend that this expression does not say that 'No Messengers will follow him.' There is a difference between a Prophet and a Messenger. The status of a Prophet is higher than that of the Messenger. The fact is that such absurdities can be indulged in ad infinitum. It is not difficult, in our view, to make different interpretations of a word. Besides, there is no ample scope for people to commit blunders ever and beyond these points in the exposition of these clear words. We cannot even say that those who make such interpretations are guilty of the denial of clear injunctions. But to refute those who have but their faith in the false expositions we shall say that the entire Ummah by a consensus of opinion recognizes that the words 'No Prophet shall come after him' and the context of the traditions suggests that the Holy Prophet meant that 'No Prophet, nor Messenger shall follow him.' Furthermore, the Ummah is agreed on the point that above words of the Holy Prophet leave no scope for a different interpretation than given to it by the consensus of the Ummah and he who would not join the consensus is no more than a dissident".^[37]

Rumi in his famous Mathnawi writes,

"He has been raised to the station of Khatam by the grace of God. There can never be his like before him or after".

When a master excels all others in his art, don't you use the word "khatam" to convey the idea that he has excelled all others in his domain?^[38]

Make such plans to perform righteousness in the way of God that you attain prophethood within the Ummat [religious community].^[39]

Ibn Arabi also followed the same line of reasoning in his Futuhat.^{[40] [41]} He has argued that the possibility of a Wali is open according to the verse 33:40. Ibn Arabi also stated in the Futuhat:

"The Messenger has informed (us) that dreams are one of the parts of Prophethood. Of Prophethood there shall remain for the people only this part, and nothing more than that. In spite of this, the term 'Prophethood' shall not be applicable to anything, nor the term 'Prophet' be applicable to anyone other than the one endued with a Shari'ah. Thus 'Prophethood' has been banned on account of this particular characteristic."^[42]

"From the study and contemplation of the Darud we have arrived at the definite conclusion that there shall, from among the Muslims, certainly be persons whose status, in the matter of prophethood, shall advance to the level of prophets, if God pleases. But they shall not be given any book of law".^[43]

Further he says

"After the finality of Prophethood (on Muhammad the only thing possible is that of coming of Wali and all the doors to revelations and Prophet hood has been closed, hence who so ever claims to be messenger of God after Prophet Muhammad than he would be only the propagator of his new ideas, it is possible that he would be follower of our religion or not, and if he is sound minded than we should give him death penalty and if he is unsound mind than we should keep our self away".^[44]

Imām-i Rabbānī Shaykh Ahmad al-Farūqī al-Sirhindī(1564–1624) an Indian Islamic scholar from Punjab and a prominent member of the Naqshbandī Sufī order says at this subject in one of his letters

"Muhammad is the last of all Prophets and his religion is the conclusion of all previous religions, the book revealed on him is best of all the previous ones, and no religion (or sect) would surpass his religion and his religion would remain till the end of times, when Jesus would resurrected back in the world he would also be following his (Muhammad religion and will live as his follower".^[45]

Shah Wali Ullah Muhaddith of Dehli subscribed to the opinion:

The meaning of the Holy Prophet being the Khataman Nabiyeen is that there shall not now appear a person whom God may appoint with a new Law for mankind, that is to say, there shall be no prophet who shall come

with a new Law.^[46]

There cannot be an independent prophet after the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who is not his follower and his adherent.^[47]

Further he explained his views regarding any one claim to be Muslim but also a messenger

"or any one who says (or have idea) that 'there is no doubt that Muhammad is last Prophet and by this it means that it is not allowed to call someone Prophet or messenger, but the reality of Prophet hood is that if any man is given some directions from God which must be followed by others, or keeps his eyes close of any visible mistakes, and person of such quality is also present in scholars(or Imams)' then that person qualifies to be out of Islam".^[48]

Faranghi Mahal, an eminent scholar of the Ahl-e Sunnat also discussed the significance of the expression *Khatam an-nubuwwah* and on behalf of the Sunni Scholars, he declared:

The divines of the Sunni sects believe in and expound the fact that in the course of the Ministry of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, there cannot appear a law bearing prophet and his prophethood extends to the end of days. A prophet who appears during his ministry shall necessarily be the follower of the Law of Muhammad.^[49]

Over all there is a complete agreement that none of any scholars or sufis of Sunni or Shia sects (including the one who had differences of opinion on declinations of word Seal or Khatam) of Islam believed in any such person who claimed to be messenger or Prophet after Muhammad, although in history there are many instances where people came with such claims. In fact they objected and opposed such claims.^[50]

Controversies

The concept of the finality of prophethood of Muhammad has caused controversy in recent times. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, hold Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to be a prophet subordinate to Muhammad. Ahmed claimed to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi in 1889 and founded a movement in Qadian, India. His claims resulted in a violent reaction among many Muslims of the India subcontinent. The Salafi and Sunni scholars vehemently opposed him and in subsequent years a movement for the Majlis Tahafuz-e-Khatam-e-Nabuwwat was founded.^[51] This movement, at times violent,^[52] is still very active in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and other countries where Ahmadiyya adherents are present.^[53]

External links

- Ahmadis believe in Khatam-e-Nabuwwat ^[54]

References

- [1] Refer to Lisan-ul-'Arab; Qamus and Aqrab-ul- Muwarid
- [2] The Finality of Prophethood by S. Abul A'la Maududi
- [3] (<http://www.romanizedarabic.com/withlovetoahmadis>) With Love to the Ahmadis of the World, page 58
- [4] islaam.org: The Finality of Prophethood (http://uk.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=2D96B97B87502A25)
- [5] Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Manaqib
- [6] Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Manaqib
- [7] Muslim, Kitab-ul-Fada'il, Bab-ul-Khatimin-Nabiyyin
- [8] Tirmidhi, Kitab-ul-Manaqib, Bab-Fadlin Nabi and Kitab-Adab, Bab-ul-Amthal
- [9] Musnad Abu Dawud Tayalisi
- [10] Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal
- [11] Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah
- [12] Tirmidhi, Kitab-ur-Rouya Babu Zahab-un- Nubuwwa, Musnad Ahmad, Marwiyat-Anas bin Malik
- [13] Bukhari and Muslim, Kitab-ul-Fada'il, Bab: Asmaun-Nabi; Tirmidhi, Kitab-ul- Adab, Bab: Asma-un-Nabi; Muatta', Kitab-u-Asma in-Nabi, Al- Mustadrak Hakim, Kitab-ut-Tarikh, Bab: Asma-un-Nabi.

- [14] Ibn Majah, Kitabul-fitan, bab:Dajjal
- [15] Musnad Ahmad, Marwiyat'Abdullah bin Amr ibn'-As.
- [16] Musnad Ahmad, Marwiyat Abu Tufail, Nasa'i, Abu Dawud
- [17] Finality of Prophet by Abu Alal Moududi
- [18] Tirmidhi,Kitab-ul- Manaqib
- [19] Bukhari and Muslim, Kitab Fada'il as-Sahaba
- [20] Abu Dawud Tayalisi, Imam Ahmad and Muhammad bin Ishaque
- [21] Abu Dawud, Kitab-ul-Fitan
- [22] Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Manaqib
- [23] Baihaqi,Kitab-ul Rouya; Tabarani
- [24] Muslim, Kitab-ul-Hajj; Bab:Fadl-us-Salat bi Masjidi Mecca wal Medina
- [25] The Finality of Prophethood by S. Abul A'la Maududi
- [26] The Finality of Prophethood by S. Abul A'la Maududi
- [27] Tanveer ul Maqbas min Tafseer ul Ibn Abbas, pg 354
- [28] Kardari, Al Munaqab Imam Azam Abi Hanifa Min Allama Al Mustasni Faqad Kufar Page 161:1
- [29] Al-Saafi Sharah Asool Al-Kaafi, Part 3, Pg. 119
- [30] Tafseer Al Kabir, Razi, page 214:25
- [31] Tafsir Ibne Kathir, Vol. 3, pp. 493-494
- [32] Mufradat al-Qur'an
- [33] Muftadat, p.142
- [34] Fatah Albari, Asqalani Page 559:2
- [35] Bahr al Muheet, vol. 3, p. 28
- [36] The Consensus of all the Ulema of the Ummah (http://www.youngmuslims.ca/online_library/books/finality_of_prophethood/fop6.htm)
- [37] Al-Iqtisad Fil Aiteqad, p.114, Egypt
- [38] Mathnawi, Vol. VI, p.8, 1917 ed.
- [39] Mathnavi Maulana Room, Daftar I, pg. 53
- [40] Selections from al-Futuhah al-Makkiyya (<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/ABewley/ibnArabi.html>), by Shaykh Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi
- [41] Futuhah-e-Makkiyyah, Vol. 2, p. 3
- [42] al-Futuhah al-Makkiya, Vol. 2, p. 495
- [43] Futuhah-e-Makkiyyah, Vol 1, p. 545
- [44] al-Futuhah al-Makkiya, Vol. 2, p. 51:3
- [45] Mujaddad Alif Sani, Maktoobat, daftar awal, part 4, pg 110, Letter no. 260
- [46] Tafheemati Ilahiyah pg. 53
- [47] Al Khairul Katheer: pg 111
- [48] Al Massawi min Ahadis Al Muta(Imam Malik) p 293-299:2
- [49] Majmu'ah Fatawa: Vol. 1, pg 144
- [50] Aqida Khatam Nabuwat, Allama Tahir Al Qadri, Page 517
- [51] Majlise Tahaffuze Khatme Nabuwat (<http://www.khatm-e-nubuwwat.com>)
- [52] Report on the situation of Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan - [[Majlis Tahafuz-e-Khatam-e-Nabuwwat (<http://www.thepersecution.org/archive/mtkn.html>)]]
- [53] Persecution of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan: An Analysis Under International Law and International Relations (<http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/hrj/iss16/khan.shtml>) *Harvard Human Rights Journal*, Vol 16, September 2003
Violent Dhaka Rally against Sect (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4556318.stm), BBC News
Eight die in Pakistan Sect Attack (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4317998.stm), BBC News
Sect offices closed in Pakistan (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4131624.stm), BBC News
- [54] <http://www.alislam.org/library/finality.html>

Article Sources and Contributors

Seal of the prophets *Source:* <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?oldid=430333061> *Contributors:* AAA765, ALM scientist, Adamfinmo, Ahmadi, Amcl, Aminullah, Andrew c, AndrewRT, Anonymous Dissident, Aown, Asenine, AtticusX, Aude, Avenged Eightfold, Basitjee, Bddrey, Bhailu, Bihco, Bilal waris, Blubberbrein2, BlueDevil, Brianbrianbrianbrian, CambridgeBayWeather, Carlaude, ChristianEdwardGruber, Citicat, Cmdrjameson, Cunado19, Duhduh111, Editor2020, Emrrans, Ephilei, Evlekis, Farhan00, Fayenatic london, Fennessy, Goldenrowley, Goldom, Grenavitar, Haemo, Hiwamy, Hojmachong, Info D, Jacobulus, Jeff3000, Jeremybyrne, Jerome Charles Potts, John of Reading, Jonah22, K.Nevelsteen, Khtru2, Khodardashh, Kkrystian, Koavf, Ld100, Lovemankind, Lusanders, MC10, Malik07, Mar4d, Marek69, MatthewVanitas, MezzoMezzo, Michael Hardy, Michal Nebyla, Mike Rosoft, Mild Bill Hiccup, Mirzmaster, Mohamad the bear, Mohammed tahboub, Mpatel, Nazli, Nbarth, Netscott, Neutron Jack, Nick Number, Ogress, Oktuck, Panaster, Peaceworld111, Peter Deer, PigFlu Oink, Proabivouac, Proofreader77, RJASE1, RickK, SEMTEX85, SKULLSPLITTER, SaifullahKhalid, Shadowjams, Shahab, Sirius86, Striver, Tatom2k, ThaGrind, Themfromspace, Timothy Usher, Tom harrison, Unicorn144, Usedbook, Wiki alf, Wiki-uk, Zeeshanhasan, Zenlax, می‌ل‌س‌ت, 200 anonymous edits

Khatim an-Nabuwwah *Source:* <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?oldid=421778259> *Contributors:* Aecis, Ahmadi, Ahsan.nabi, AliJaana, Bddrey, Bihco, BlueDevil, CambridgeBayWeather, Chatfacter, Editor2020, Farhan00, Hassanfarooqi, Iridescent, Khalidkhuso, Khokhar976, Lovemankind, Mar4d, Mohummy, Mpatel, Muhammad Hamza, Nazli, Neutron Jack, Ogress, Peaceworld111, Piano non troppo, Quaeler, Rjd0060, SKULLSPLITTER, SaifullahKhalid, Sirius86, Tatom2k, Tikiwont, VirtualEye, Yottie, Zahirahmed, 58 anonymous edits

License

Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>
