2281 - Signs of the Hour

the question

There are various sites regarding prophesies on the last days . The sites give very precise locations and happenings before the last day. Are they true ? . However in Quran there are prophesies but it does not mention the places. If there are any clear indications in Quran or in Hadith about Last Days, can you kindly tell.

Detailed answer

The Signs of the Hour are the signs that will precede Yawm al-Qiyaamah (the Day of Judgement) and indicate that it is nigh.

The Hour (al-Saa'ah) means the time of reckoning, and is either:

1. Saa'ah sughra (the lesser hour), which is a person's death, whereupon his reckoning starts when he leaves this world and passes into the Hereafter;

2. Or Saa'ah kubraa (the greater Hour), which is when mankind will be resurrected from their graves to be judged and rewarded or punished accordingly.

When the word al-saa'ah is used on its own in the Qur'aan, it refers to the greater reckoning (the Day of Judgement), as in the aayah (interpretation of the meaning): "People ask you concerning the Hour" [al-Ahzaab 33:63]

The Signs of the Hour (i.e., the Day of Judgement) are of two types:

1. Ashraat al-Saa'ah al-Sughra (Minor signs of the Hour)

These are signs that will appear a long time before the Hour approaches, such as the decline of knowledge, the spread of ignorance, drinking of wine or alcohol, competition in the construction of tall buildings, and many others. The scholars have listed almost sixty signs, some of which will accompany the major signs, or will appear afterwards.

2. Ashraat al-Saa'ah al-Kubraa (Major Signs of the Hour)

These are major signs that will appear shortly before the Day of Judgement comes. These extraordinary events will be:

(1) The appearance of the Mahdi. At the end of time, a man from the descendents of the

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) will appear, and Allaah will help him to make His religion prevail. He will take control of the land (or the earth) and fill it with justice just as it had previously been filled with wrongdoing and oppression. Under his rule, the ummah will be blessed as it has never been blessed before.

This man's name will be like the name of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and his father's namewill be like the Messenger's father's name. He will be a descendant of Faatimah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), through the line of al-Hasan ibn 'Ali (may Allaah be pleased with him). He will appear from the East. A number of saheeh ahaadeeth refer to the appearance of the Mahdi, including the following:

1. Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "During the last days of my ummah, the Mahdi will appear. Allaah will send rain for him, and the earth will bring forth its produce. He will give money sihaahan (according to one report, the Prophet was asked, "What is sihaahan?" and he said, "Equally among people." Reported by Ahmad), and livestock will increase He will live for seven or eight" - meaning years. (Reported by al-Haakim, 4/557; he said it is saheeh according to the conditions of the two shaykhs [al-Bukhaari and Muslim]. Al-Dhahabi agreed with him. Shaykh al-Albaani said: its sanad is saheeh. Al-Silsilah al-Saheehah, 711)

2. Umm Salamah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: "I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say: 'The Mahdi will be of my family (according to one report: of the people of my household) [Reported by Ibn Hibbaan and by al-Haakim in al-Mustadrak. He said: this hadeeth is saheeh according to the conditions of the two shaykhs, but they did not report it. Al-Dhahabi agreed with him] from the children of Faatimah." [Reported by Abu Dawood, 11/373 and Ibn Maajah, 2/1368. Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami', section 6610].

Al-'Allaamah al-Safaareeni said: "So many reports were narrated concerning the appearance of the Mahdi that they reached the level of Tawaatur in meaning, and this became so well known among the scholars of Sunnah that it is counted as one of their basic beliefs." (Lawaami' al-Anwaar al-Bahiyyah, 2/84).

[Tawaatur: a mutawaatir hadeeth is one that was narrated by so many people and transmitted by so many people that it is inconceivable that they could all have agreed on a lie. Translator] Imaam al-Shawkaani said: "The mutawaatir ahaadeeth about the awaited Mahdi, which we managed to find and examine, number fifty, including saheeh, hasan and da'eef munjabir (weak ahaadeeth that are supported by corroborating evidence) reports. They are mutawaatir beyond any shadow of a doubt The reports from the Sahaabah that speak about the Mahdi are also very many and are judged as having the status of marfoo' ahaadeeth (i.e., ahaadeeth whose isnaads go back to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), because this is not an issue in which they would have made ijtihaad." (For more information, see Question #1252).

(2) Al-Maseeh al-Dajjaal (The "Antichrist")

Al-Maseeh al-Dajjaal is a man from the sons of Aadam. He has a number of features which were mentioned in the saheeh ahaadeeth, including the following: he will be a young man with a ruddy complexion and curly hair, and will be one-eyed, with his right eye looking like a floating grape. Between his eyes will be written "ka' fa' ra'" (in unjoined letters) or "kaafir" (disbeliever), which every Muslim, literate or illiterate, will be able to read. Another of his attributes will be that he is sterile, and will have no children. Among the ahaadeeth that describe him are the following:

1. Ibn 'Umar (may Allaah be pleased with them both) reported that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whilst I was sleeping, (I dreamt that) I was doing Tawaaf around the House (the Ka'bah)." He mentioned that he saw 'Eesaa ibn Maryam, upon whom be peace, then he saw the Dajjaal, and he described him: "He is a well-built man, with a ruddy complexion and curly hair. He is one-eyed, with his eye looking like a floating grape. (Al-Haafiz ibn Hajar said in al-Fath, 6/485: i.e., it is sticking out. The word yatfaa, with no hamzah, is used to describe something that is on top of something else. It is likened to a grape which is part of the bunch but sticks out from the rest. Al-Nawawi said: the word has been narrated both with the hamzah and without the hamzah. With the hamzah it means that the light has gone out of the eye, and without the hamzah it means that it is sticking out.) They said: "This is the Dajjaal" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 13/90, and Muslim, 2/237)

2. Ibn 'Umar (may Allaah be pleased with them both) also reported that the Messenger of Allaah

(peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) described the Dajjaal as living among people, and said: "Allaah, may He be exalted, is not one-eyed, but al-Maseeh al-Dajjaal is one-eyed, and his right eye looks like a floating grape." (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 13/90, and Muslim, 18/59)
3. 'Imraan ibn Husayn (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: "I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say: "Between the creation of Aadam and the onset of the Day of Judgement, there will be a creation greater than the Dajjaal." (Reported by Muslim, 18/86). [This means that] the Dajjaal will appear from the East, from Khurasaan, from among the Jews of Isfahaan, then he will travel around the world, leaving no country but he will enter it, except for Makkah and Madeenah, which he will not be able to enter because the angels are guarding them, as is reported in the hadeeth of Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq (may Allaah be pleased with him): "The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) told us that the Dajjaal would appear from a land in the East called Khurasaan." (Reported by al-Tirmidhi, 6/495); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami', section 3398).

The fitnah (trial, tribulation) of the Dajjaal will be the greatest fitnah ever, seen from the time that Allaah created Aadam until the onset of the Day of Judgement, and this will be because of the power that Allaah will permit him to have, of working great miracles that will amaze and confuse the people. There are ahaadeeth that describe how he will have a "paradise" and a "hell", but his paradise will in fact be a hell, and vice versa. He will have rivers of water and mountains of bread. He will command the sky to rain, and it will rain, and he will command the earth to bring forth its produce, and it will bring forth its produce. The treasures of the earth will follow him, and he will travel though the earth at great speed, like rain driven by the wind. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) taught his ummah how they can protect themselves from the evil of the fitnah of the Dajjaal, as is reported in the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, who said that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "When any one of you pronounces the Shahaadah, let him seek refuge with Allaah from four things, and let him say: 'Allaahumma innee a'oodhu bika min 'adhaab jahannam, wa min 'adhaab al-qabr, wa min fitnati'l-mahyaa wa'l-mamaat, wa min sharri fitnati'l-maseeh al-dajjaal (O Allaah, I seek refuge with You from the punishment of Hell, from the punishment of the grave, from the trials of life and death, and from the evil of the

tribulation of the Dajjaal)." (Reported by Muslim, 5/87).

Another way of protecting oneself is by memorizing the first aayaat of Soorat al-Kahf. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) enjoined reciting the first verses of Soorat al-Kahf against the Dajjaal, by reciting the first ten verses, as was reported by al-Nawwaas ibn Sam'aan, who said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever of you encounters him (the Dajjaal), let him recite the first verses of Soorat al-Kahf against him." (Reported by Muslim, 18/65). Abu'l-Dardaa' (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever memorizes ten aayaat from the beginning of Soorat al-Kahf will be protected from the Dajjaal." (Reported by Muslim, 6/92).

The destruction of the will come at the hands of 'Eesaa ibn Maryam, upon whom be peace, as is indicated in the saheeh ahaadeeth. 'Abd-Allaah ibn 'Amr (may Allaah be pleased with them both) said: "The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: 'The Dajjaal will emerge among my ummah and Allaah will send 'Eesaa ibn Maryam and he will pursue him and destroy him." (Reported by Muslim, 18/75).

(3) The descent of 'Eesaa ibn Maryam, upon whom be peace

After the Dajjaal has appeared and spread corruption throughout the earth, Allaah will send 'Eesaa ibn Maryam, upon whom be peace, who will descend to the earth, coming down to the white minaret in the East of Damascus, Syria, resting his hands on the wings of two angels. When he lowers his head, drops will fall, and when he raises it, drops like large pearls will fall (these are like grains of silver in the shape of big pearls, and it means that drops of water as pure as pearls will fall. The water is described as pearls because of its purity). No kaafir will smell his breath except he will die, and his breath will reach as far as his eyes can see. He will come down to the victorious group that is fighting for the truth and has come together to fight the Dajjaal. He will descend at the time when the iqaamah for prayer is being given, and he will pray behind the leader of that group.

The reports about his descent are many, including the following:

1. Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "By the One in Whose hand is my soul, it is nearly time for the son of Maryam to descend upon you, to judge fairly. He will break the cross, kill the pigs and

put an end to war. Wealth will increase so much that no-one will accept it, and one prostration to Allaah will be worth more than the world and all that is in it." Then Abu Hurayrah said: "Recite, if you wish: 'And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) but must believe in him ('Eesaa - as a human Messenger of Allaah) before his ('Eesaa's) death. And on the Day of Resurrection, he ('Eesaa) will be a witness against them." [Al-Nisaa' 4:159 - interpretation of the meaning].'" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 6/490, and Muslim, 2/189).

2. Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) also reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "How will you be when 'Eesaa ibn Maryam descends to you and your leader is one of you?" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 6/491, and Muslim, 2/193).

Imaam Ibn Katheer (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in his Tafseer (7/223): "Mutawaatir ahaadeeth from the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) describe how 'Eesaa ibn Maryam will descend before the Day of Judgement as a just leader and fair ruler."

(4) Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog)

Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj are human beings, descended from Aadam and Hawwa, upon whom be peace. According to the descriptions of them given in the ahaadeeth, they belong to the Turkic Mongol race, having small eyes, small, flat noses and wide faces. Their faces look like hammered-out shields (their faces are likened to shields because they are wide and round). Their appearance at the end of time is one of the signs of the Hour, as indicated in the Qur'aan (interpretation of the meaning): "Until, when Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj are let loose (from their barrier), and they swiftly swarm from every mound. And the true promise (Day of Resurrection) shall draw near (to fulfilment). 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 zaalimoon (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.)." [al-Anbiyaa' 21:96-97]

In the story of Dhoo'l-Qarnayn, Allaah tells us (interpretation of the meaning): "Then he followed (another) way, until, when he reached between two mountains, he found, before (near) them (those two mountains), a people who scarcely understood a word. They said: 'O Dhoo'l-Qarnayn! Verily! Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj 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 (wealth, authority and power) in which my Lord has 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) or 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 [Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj] were made powerless to scale it or dig through it. (Dhoo'l-Qarnayn) 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 Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj 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." [al-Kahf 18:92-99]

Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj are also mentioned in the Sunnah, in more than one hadeeth, including the following:

1. Umm Habeebah bint Abi Sufyaan reported from Zaynab bint Jahsh that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) entered upon her one day in a nervous state, saying, "La ilaaha ill-Allaah! Woe to the Arabs from the evil that has approached! Today a hole this big has appeared in the barrier of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj," and he made a circle with his thumb and forefinger. Zaynab bint Jahsh said, "O Messenger of Allaah, will we be destroyed even though there are righteous people among us?" He said, "Yes, if evil becomes widespread." (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 6/381, Muslim, 18/2).

2. Al-Nawaas ibn Sam'aan (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported a long hadeeth describing several signs of the Hour. In this hadeeth, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: " and Allaah will send Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj, swiftly swarming from every mound. They will pass the lake of Tiberias [in Palestine] and will drink everything that is in it. Then the last of them will pass by and will say, 'There used to be water here once.' The Prophet of Allaah, 'Eesaa, and his companions, will be besieged until a bull's head will be more precious to one of them than a hundred dinars are to any of you today. 'Eesaa and his companions will pray to Allaah, and Allaah will send a kind of worm (like that found in the noses of camels and sheep) on their (Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj) necks, and they will fall down dead, all at once. Then 'Eesaa and his companions will come down out of the place where they were besieged, and they will find hardly a handspan of land that is not filled with the stench (of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj), so 'Eesaa and

his companions will pray to Allaah, and He will send birds like the necks of camels to carry them away and throw them wherever Allaah wills." (Reported by Muslim, 18/68).

(5) The swallowing up of the earth

This means that a place is swallowed up in the earth and disappears into it, as is described in the Qur'aan (interpretation of the meaning): "So We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place" [al-Qasas 28:81]. Among the major signs of the Hour will be three such events, as described in the hadeeth of Hudhayfah ibn Usayd (may Allaah be pleased with him), according to which the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The Hour will not begin until you see ten signs (including) three events where the earth swallows up, one in the East, one in the West, and one in the Arabian Peninsula." (Reported by Muslim, 18/27).

These events, like other major signs of the Hour, have not happened yet. Although other instances of places being swallowed up by the earth have occurred at various times and in various places, they did not cover so wide an area as to include both East and West. Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: "There have been instances of places being swallowed up by the ear, but it could be that what is meant by the three events referred to is events that are worse than anything yet seen, which could be more intense and cover a larger area." (Fath al-Baari, 13/84).

(6) The smoke

Another of the major signs of the Hour will be the appearance of the smoke. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "Then wait you for the Day when the sky will bring forth a visible smoke, covering the people, this is a painful torment." [al-Dhukhaan 44:10-11]. A definition of the smoke was narrated from Ibn 'Abbaas, who explained that it is one of the Signs of the Day of Judgement, as was narrated by Ibn Jareer and Ibn Abi Haatim from 'Abd-Allaah ibn Abi Maleekah, who said: "I went to Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) one day, and he said: 'I did not sleep at all last night.' I asked him, 'Why not?' He said, 'They said that a star with a tail (a comet) had appeared, and I was afraid that the smoke had started, so I could not sleep at all.'"

Imaam Ibn Katheer commented: "This is a saheeh isnaad, going back to Ibn 'Abbaas, the scholar

of the ummah and the interpreter of the Qur'aan. This is also the opinion of all the Sahaabah and Taabi'een who agreed with him, in addition, there are many ahaadeeth going back to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) - saheeh, hasan and others - which state the same thing. This is convincing evidence that the smoke will be one of the expected signs, as is also clear from the text of the Qur'aan." (Tafseer Ibn Katheer, 7/235).

Among the ahaadeeth that describe the appearance of the smoke as one of the signs of the Hour is the following:

1. Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Hasten to do good deeds before six things appear: the Dajjaal, the smoke" (Reported by Muslim, 18/87)

(7) The rising of the sun from the West

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): " 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" [al-An'aam 6:158]. Most of the mufassireen (commentators) state that one of these signs is the rising of the sun from the West. Among the reports that indicate this are:

1. The hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) according to which the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The Hour will not begin until the sun rises from the West, and when it rises and the people see it, they will all believe, but that will be when it will do a person no good to believe, if he believed not before, nor earned good (by performing deeds of righteousness) through his faith." (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 11/352, and Muslim, 2/194).

2. The hadeeth of 'Abd-Allaah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas (may Allaah be pleased with them both), who said: "I learned from the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) a hadeeth that I have never forgotten since. I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say: 'The first of the signs of the Hour to appear will be the rising of the sun from the West.'" (Reported by Muslim, 18/78).

(8) The appearance of the Beast

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "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 aayaat." [al-Naml 27:82]

Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: "The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: 'There are three things which, once they happen, it will do a person no good to believe, if he believed not before, nor earned good (by performing deeds of righteousness) through his faith: the rising of the sun from the West, the Dajjaal, and the Beast of the earth.'" (Reported by Muslim, 2/195).

Abu Umaamah (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The Beast will emerge, and it will mark all the people on their noses, and this mark will last, so that if a man buys a camel, and is asked who he bought it from, he will say, 'From the man with the mark on his nose.'" (Reported by Ahmad and classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in al-Silsilah al-Saheehah, no. 322).

According to some reports, when the Beast appears, it will mark the believers and the kaafirs. As for the believer, it will make his face shine brightly, as a sign of his faith, and as for the kaafir, it will mark his nose with a sign of his disbelief.

The Qur'aan tells us that the Beast will speak to people, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "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 aayaat." [al-Naml 27:82]. This kalaam may refer to actual speech, whereby the Beast will address people, which is supported by the reading of Ubayy ibn Ka'b (tunabbi'uhum, i.e., tell them), or it may convey the other meaning of the word kalaam, to wound, which is supported by the alternative reading (taklamuhum, i.e., mark them by cutting them) reported from Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him).

(9) The fire which will gather the people together

Another of the signs of the Hour is the great fire which will appear from the direction of Yemen, from the bottom of 'Aden, from the Sea of Hadramawt. Among the ahaadeeth that describe this are the following:

1. The hadeeth of Hudhayfah ibn Usayd which mentions the major signs of the Hour, in which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: " The last of them will be a fire which will emerge from Yemen, and will drive the people to their gathering place." According to

another report: " and a fire which will emerge from the bottom of 'Aden and drive the people (ahead of it)." (Reported by Muslim, 18/27).

2. The hadeeth of Anas (may Allaah be pleased with him) which states that when 'Abd-Allaah ibn Salaam embraced Islam, he asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) about a number of issues, including the first sign of the Hour. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The first sign of the Hour will be a fire which will drive the people from East to West." (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 6/362).

3. Ibn 'Umar (may Allaah be pleased with them both) said: "The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: 'Fire will emerge from Hadramawt or from the sea of Hadramawt (according to another report: from the direction of Hadramawt or from Hadramawt - Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh) before the Day of Judgement, and it will drive the people (ahead of it).'" (Reported by Ahmad, 7/133; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami', 3603).

A number of saheeh ahaadeeth describe how this fire will gather the people together. Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The people will be gathered in three ways, willingly or by force, two on one camel, or three or four or even ten on one camel. The rest of them will be gathered together by means of a fire, which will stay with them whenever they stop to rest or to sleep, no matter what the time of day or night." (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 11/377, Muslim, 17/194).

Finally, it should be noted that belief in the signs of the Hour is part of our belief in the Unseen (al-ghayb), without which the belief of the Muslim is incomplete. And Allaah is the Source of Strength..