**THE CASE OF THE MISSING MESSIAH**

Not being a writer, I find it very difficult to put this down on paper. Even how to start this subject is a big problem. But due to the gravity of this subject on hand, I feel very strongly that I must present this case, however feeble my attempt might be.

My search for the Messiah is based purely on deduction, inductive and conclusive reasoning. Based on a given set of evidences, all possible conclusions are made. Ignoring the possibility of a Messiah to come would go against the opinion of millions of people around the world of various religions. About the Messiah, there are only two possibilities. One is that the whole thing is a hoax and there is no one to come. If such be the case then I will be wasting my time doing a search for the Messiah. If this possibility is true then no harm will come to anyone due to my search. I am then safe in following the second possibility which is that the Messiah will or has already come.

If such a man is to or has already come then it is very important for me to know and recognise him.

The reason for my search was simple enough. If it was not important for man to know and recognise such a Messiah, when ever he came or comes, then why was he prophesied by God? From my point of view, it was quite necessary to know and recognize this Messiah when and if he comes.

Quite early in my life, I realised that almost all religions do expect the coming of a Messiah. Many different names have been attributed to him. The Christians expect the coming of Jesus Christas, the Muslims expect Jesusas and a Mahdi. Hindus expect the return of Krishnaas. Zoroastrians, American Indians, Jews and many others expect the coming of such a man.

I decided to conduct my research based on Christian and Jewish books, although I have done similar research on the books and teachings of other religions as well.

My first step was to collect all the evidence which points towards the coming of the Messiah in the Old and New Testaments. This was indeed a difficult task. However I simply took one prophecy at a time and after authoritative interpretations of the prophecy, and after due consideration to all possibilities, I accepted one without any flaws as being conclusive. The first prophecy I considered is:

"And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (*Matth.* 24.14)

It is a self explanatory prophecy. It simply states that the Bible will be preached in all nations prior to the coming of the Messiah. This was in reply to the question about signs of Christ'sas second coming.

Now let us suppose that in any given year this prophecy was to become fulfilled. It would automatically mean that this prophecy will also be fulfilled accurately every year after that. Suppose this prophecy was fulfilled in 1982. It would mean that any year after 1982 till eternity, this prophecy would still be considered fulfilled in that year. My point is to establish that the first day or year when the prophecy was fulfilled is the time indicated by the above prophecy for the Messiah to come. Now, it is a well known fact that the Bible is preached among all nations today. However I must discover when this occurred the first time.

Many sects of Christianity are preaching that the coming of the Messiah is at hand and everyone in North America has, at one time or the other, seen or heard, "Repent, the end is nigh. Jesus is coming, The kingdom of God is at hand" etc. It was not too difficult to look into history and discover when this all began.

In 1804, the British Foreign Bible Society was established and twelve years later its sister organisation, The American Bible Society came into being. Before the existence of these societies the Bible was translated into fifty languages. By 1816, according to the records of these societies, 421 million copies were distributed amongst all nations. Massive efforts were launched by all Christians to spread the good news. This was still not good enough evidence, I had to find out what Christian scholars believed about the spreading of the Bible.

Studying the spread of Christianity conducted by Christian scholars in the last century convinced me and them that the Bible and the message of Christas had been preached all over the globe.

All continents were covered, even the interior of Africa. This all occurred, not on a small singular scale, but on a massive organised scale. *A Year Book and Guide to East Africa* published by Robert Hale Ltd in 1953, page 44, states that Christian missions began their activities among the African people in 1844. Dr. D. L. Leonard, a famous Christian historian of the Mission Movement, states in his book *A Hundred Years of Missions*. "For the first time since the epistolic period, occurred an outburst of general missionary zeal and activity." Dr. Leonard was speaking of the period between the end of the 18th century until 1844. Mr. G. S. Faber states in his book, *Eight Dissertations*, completed in 1844:

"The stupendous endeavors of one gigantic community to convey the scriptures in every language to every part of the world may well deserve to be considered as an eminent sign of these eventful times. Unless I be much mistaken, such endeavors are preparatory to the final diffusion of Christianity, which is the theme of so many inspired prophets, and which cannot be far distant in the present day."

Mr. M. H. Goyer states in his book, *Prophetic Fulfillment*, that The British and Foreign Bible Society has issued since its foundation in 1804, over 421 million copies of the scriptures, in practically every country throughout the world.

In 1842, Mr. Spicer stated in his book *Our Day in the Light of Prophecy* that the Gospel in his day had been spread to 95% of the inhabitants of the earth. He further stated that in 1842, five treaty ports in China were opened for commerce and missionaries.

In 1844, Turkey was prevailed upon to recognise the right of Muslims to become Christians. In 1844, Mr. Allen Gardiner established the South American Mission. In 1842, Dr. Livingston, with the aid of his medical qualifications, opened the door of Bible preaching in the interior of Africa.

Dr. A. T. Pierson wrote in *Modern Mission Century* that India, Siam, Burma, China, Japan, Turkey, Africa, Mexico, and South America were successively and successfully entered. Within five years from 1853 to 1858 new facilities were given for the entrance of seven different countries, together embracing half the world population.

Within the period of 1800 to 1900, British evangelists and regular missionaries had openly declared that God had ordained that India, The Middle East and Africa should become Christian. Nothing was going to stop them. Britain, being the mighty empire of the day made sure that all facilities were granted for the work of the missionaries. The British believed in Christ'sas return and rushed to spread the news.

So far I have cited the attitudes of official Christian scholars towards the Bible being preached to all nations in the nineteenth century. But let us also determine the natural atmosphere around Christian countries during that period.

The nineteenth century was indeed full of events, particularly from 1830 onwards. There was an air of religious fervour throughout Christian countries. The Christians looked with great awe when they saw the sun being encircled with a great halo in 1843. The sight of a giant meteor in 1833 put fear in their hearts. The general conditions can now be realised only by reading some of the accounts of the times. Henry James Foreman, author of a book called *The Story of Prophecy*, stated on pages 310 and 311, that Lady Hester Stanhope, a valiant woman, and niece of William Pitt, turned her back on London and power and fashion, and made her home in Lebanon amongst the Arabs and Druse. She kept, as it was reported, two white Arab steeds in her stable, one for the Messiah and one for herself.

A famous Jewish convert, Joseph Wolffe, predicted the advent of Christas in 1847.

A famous Washington lady, Harriet Livermore, preached the advent of the second coming of Christas to the House of Representatives, where crowds gathered to hear her.

The more orthodox Christians prepared robes for Christas. The fashion of the day was recorded to be a shroud. A magazine called *Star of the West* Vol. XIV, page 304 states: "There is a little mosque in the Holy Land, where the priests Preside keeping ready the shoes that the Messiah is to wear when he comes to Jerusalem"

Henry J. Foreman states in his book *The Story of Prophecy* that so real was the hope of the advent, that people were actually taking almost violent action about it.

The shooting stars of 1833 and the perihelia or halo like rings around the sun in 1843, were objects of the most awesome speculation and discussion. And the tail of the great comet of 1843 measured 108 million miles in length. Whole families were engaged in making shrouds for that fateful day.

It is a fact that by 1844, the Bible had been preached to all nations. But how does this fit into the case of the missing Promised Messiah?

During my investigation regarding this prophecy of the Bible, the most striking thing I came across was the period from 1843 to 1844. Very interesting research has been conducted by an author, William Sears, an account of which is well listed in his book, *Thief in the Night*.

One very interesting fact which must be noted is that Christ'sas exact date of birth is unknown. The Christian era, which is supposed to start with the birth of Christas is an estimated date. The estimated date of Christ'sas birth is based on the day of the death of Herod the Great.

The only detailed account of Herod's life is found in a history book written by a famous Jewish historian called Josephus. He clearly indicated the date of Herod's death which turns out to be eight B.C.

We know now that this presents a dilemma because Herod was alive at the time of Christ'sas birth. Let us leave this for now and continue the investigation.

It did not take me too long to discover that the Christian scholars and students in all continents, independent of each other, reached the conclusion that around 1843/44, the Promised Messiah will return.

Among those who concluded this were Wolff in Asia, Edward Irving in England, Maso in Scotlandt Davis in South Carolina, William Miller in Pennsylvania, Leonard H. Kelberin in Germany and many others in various parts of the world. The sudden drive for evangelism, exemplified by Dr. Thomas who started the Christadelphian Church and Mr. Russel of the Jehovah Witnesses, was also an indication of such expectations around that time. While it is clear beyond doubt that around 1844, Christians around the world expected the return of the Messiah, it still remained a mystery as to why 1844. What leads these Biblical scholars to 1844 are the following Biblical prophecies:

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be lead away captive into all nations: And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon and in the stars: and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and wave roaring."

"Men as hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, for the power of heaven shall be shaken."

"And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with we power and great glory". (*Luke* 21:24-27)

This indeed was Christ'sas answer with regard to his second coming. Verses 24, 25 and 26 are clearly self-explanatory. However verse 27 may need to be looked into more deeply, which I hope to do some time later. Verse 24 was indeed a frightening prophecy for the Jews, and perhaps a joyous one for the Christians. In this prophecy, Christas informed the Jews that they would be totally and thoroughly destroyed and banished from the land of Jerusalem. Jerusalem would then be controlled by the Gentiles for a set period of time. This came to pass in the year 70 A.D. Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman Titus and the Jews were scattered and exiled. Around the year 132 A.D. the Jews, under the leadership of a man called Bar Cochba, tried to regain their freedom but were completely crushed by the army of the Roman Emperor Hadrian. Jerusalem was devastated even more completely than before. The site of the city was ploughed under and a new city, named in honour of Hadrian was built upon the ruins.

As stated in verse 24, many Jews fell by the edge of the sword, they fled, scattered and were lead away captive into all nations. Under Roman law, for a Jew to enter Jerusalem was a crime punishable by death. The first part of the prophecy of Christas in *Luke* 21:24 was fulfilled. The Jewish people lost their homeland as prophesied by Christas. Just a point to remember, the Romans remained in control of Jerusalem until the year 637 when the Arab rule came into effect. During the period of the Arab rule, Jews were still largely excluded from their homeland and the few remaining were being proscribed. Remarkable as it may seem, the restriction upon the Jews was lifted when Turkey signed the edict of Tolerance, allowing the Jews to enter Jerusalem. The date of this document is March 21, 1844.

It is in this year that the time for the Gentiles was fulfilled as indicated by Christ in *Luke* 21:24. This was not only my conclusion, but all Christian scholars have also agreed with this interpretation.

So far as I can see the reason why Christian scholars were excited in and around 1844 was that two prophecies pointed to this year. This was very interesting but not absolutely conclusive.

Even for a Christian to be so excited about Christ'sas return in or around 1844, there had to be more evidence that indicated above;and sure enough more evidence was found in the *Book of Revelation*.

"And the Holy City shall they tread under foot forty and two months." (11:2)

For the first time in the New Testament, the exact time for the Gentiles was indicated. My next step was to find out what the Christian scholars translated or determined these 42 months to mean. *Rev.* 11:3 repeats the same prophecy but instead of 42 months, it states 1,260 days. Christian scholars agree that 42 months converted to days is 42 times 30 equals 1,260 days. In other words, 42 months is the same as 1,260 days.

Their reasons were quite sound. Christian scholars agree that in the study of Biblical prophecy, the period of time called a "day" becomes a year when calculating the actual passing of time. This is further supported by the following verses:

"Even forty days, each day for a year". (*Numbers* 14:34)

"I have appointed thee each day for a year". (*Ezekiel* 4:6)

This formula is generally agreed by scholars of Christianity. Henry James Foreman, in his book *The Story of Prophecy*, stated that in symbolic prophecy, a day is the symbol of a year.

F. Hudgings, in his book *Zionism in Prophecy*, states that a solar year, of course, contains a fraction over 365 days, but in computing symbolic time, as it is set forth in the scriptures, students of prophecy find that the writer simply divides the year into twelve months of thirty days each. In other words, the time of a year in scriptural symbology refers to 360 solar years, each day representing a year.

This reasoning of the scholars was not without foundation. This measuring rod was directly derived from the following Old Testament reference:

"The waters of the flood came on the 17th day of second month." (*Gen.* 7:2)

"The waters abated and ceased on the 17th day of the 7th month." (*Gen.* 8:8)

"The waters prevailed upon the earth 150 days." (*Gen.* 7:24)

Now it is quite clear that 150 days will total up to five months only if each month has 30 days. So it now follows that whenever a day is taken to be one year it would contain 360 days. Now the prophecy in *Rev.* 11:2 and 3 i.e. 42 months and 1,260 days makes sense. 42 times 30 equals 1,260 days. Considering Biblical prophecy this means 1,260 years.

Now there are three major calenders available to the Christian scholars of the last century, the Jewish calender, the Christian calender, and the Muslim calender. Obviously the Gentiles who were in control of Jerusalem were Muslims and their scholars concluded that the year of 1,260 of the Islamic calender is the one which applies to this prophecy. 1,260 of the Islamic calender is 1844 of the Christian calender. Indeed the Christians' expectations of the return of Christas in 1844 was not without reason.

Since the object of my investigation was to find out why Christian scholars expected the return of Christas in 1844, I was reasonably satisfied with their conclusions. There are many more conclusive evidences which I came across but I was convinced that writing them here would simply enlarge this paper on a point which has already been established.

So far, I found that expectations of Christ'sas return in 1844, by the Christians had some strong bases and indeed the Bible was preached every where.

At this point I asked myself if the coming of Christas the first and second time was prophesied in the Old Testament. If so they must coincide with the prophecies of the New Testament. Time was saved by asking some informed Christians about these Old Testament Prophecies, keeping in mind that the Jews might not agree with those interpretations. I was told that Christas himself mentioned references in the Old Testament.

"When yea therefore shall see the abominations of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand up in the Holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand)." (*Matth.* 24:15)

Under the direction of Christas himself I began to read the book of Daniel. Daniel appears to have prayed, fasted and supplicated for a given period of time for the restoration of his people and land (Jerusalem). In answer to Daniel's prayers, Gabriel appeared and said:

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon the Holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy". (*Dan.* 9:24)

It would appear that Daniel prophesied the period between the time of the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the sealing up of prophecy to the Jews to be 70 weeks. This prophecy is repeated in *Jer.* 25:11 and *Chrons.* 36:21.

Now let us apply the same rule as before, i.e. one day for one year. 70 weeks times 7 days per week is 490 days which means 490 years. 490 years after the decree to rebuild the temple was issued, Prophet hood to the Jews would be cut off. The decree of the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem are.

* First Decree: 536 B.C. by Cyrus. (Ref. *Ezra*, Ch. 1)
* Second Decree: 519 B.C. by Darjus. (Ref. *Ezra*, Ch. 6)
* Third Decree: 457 B.C. by Artaxerxes. (Ref. *Ezra*, Ch. 7)
* Fourth Decree: 444 B.C. by Artaxerxes. (Ref. *Nehemiah*, Ch.2)

The fourth decree was actually a computation of the third, as it was issued by the same king.

The decree for the rebuilding of Jerusalem can be concluded to have happened in 457 B.C. and 490 years later prophethood would be cut off from the Jews. We simply deduct 457 from 490 and we get 33. This is the year in which Jesus left Judaea and since then no prophet has been sent to the Jews.

This prophecy of Daniel was very accurate. It will be interesting to see if Daniel prophesied Christ'sas second coming. We read:

"Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spoke, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and how long the transgression of desolation, to give both sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?"

"And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." (*Dan*. 8:13-14)

This prophecy predicts 2300 days, which in turn becomes 2300 years. 2300 years from the last decree to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem brings us to the year 1843.

We can easily understand why Christians expected Christas around 1844.

Let me now summarize my findings.

1. The Bible was preached to all nations by 1844.
2. Christas was to appear around 1844, because the time of the Gentiles had been fulfilled in 1844.
3. The prophecies of Daniel pointed to 1843.

There are literally many more references of various civilisations and religions which state that someone of extreme religious significance and importance was to return in the year 1844.

I would like to point out that I had earlier said that Christ'sas date of birth cannot be accurately noted. All calculations have so far been done on the assumption that Christas was exactly 33 years old when he was crucified and left Judaea. Thus I must introduce a factor of possible error in all these calculations. Different historians indicate various degrees of error. For example, some say that there is an error of one year, while others believe in an eight or nine year error.

Since I myself can locate scores of mistakes in the Bible, it would be quite fair to allow for a plus minus nine year error in Christ'sas birth date, therefore a similar error for his return can be allowed. This would make his date of return anywhere from 1835 to 1853. I have also taken this error to make things more feasible, as no one really knows to what this particular year refers. The birth of the Messiah, the advent of his ministry etc.

I have concluded that the years to look for the Messiah are between 1835 and 1853.

I will now examine a few more relevant and important prophecies made by Christas.

There are 51 verses in the 24th Chapter of *Matthew*. In the first three, Christas was asked three questions:

To tell when these things shall be (the destruction of Jerusalem), to tell what shall be the signs of his second coming, and to tell the signs of the end of the world. The first question to tell the things that shall be referred to Christ'sas statement which he made in *Matthew* 24:2. This question is answered in verses 16-22. The second question is answered in verses 4 ,15, 23, 34, 37, 51. These are the signs of Christ'sas second coming. The third question, the time of the end of the world is answered in verses 35 and 36.

Let us now examine the verses which deal with Christ'sas second coming:

"And Jesus answered and said unto them: Take heed that no man deceives you. For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ and shall deceive many." (4,5)

Without too much hard work I found that there were five men in various parts of the world, in the 19th century, who claimed to be the Messiah, or a Prophet;

1. Mahdi of Sudan
2. Alexander Dowie of Zion, IL U.S.A.
3. Joseph Smith of the Mormon Church
4. Ali Muhammad Bab/ Bahaullah of Bahai faith
5. Mirza Ghulam Ahmadas of Qadian, India

This prophecy can be concluded as being fulfilled in the 19th century.

"And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass but the end is not yet."(6)

This prophecy states that before the return of Christas there will be wars and rumours of wars. This is a brief list of major wars in the last century

1. The war between China and England, terminated in the loss of Hong Kong to England and a treaty was signed in 1842.
2. The Crimean War. England, France and Turkey against Russia in 1854.
3. The Indian Mutiny 1857.
4. France and Italy against Australia in 1859.
5. Civil war of United States 1861 to 1865.
6. Franco Prussian War 1870 to 1871.
7. Russian Turkey War 1877 to 1878.
8. China and Japan 1890 to 1900.
9. A war between Turkey and Greece 1890 to 1.900.
10. A war between Spain and America 1890 to 1900.
11. Invasion of China by all great, powers 1890 to 1900
12. The Boer War, 1890 to 1902
13. The war of 1812 U.S.A. Against Canada and Britain.

This list is partial and firmly establishes that verse 6 was fulfilled in the last century.

"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places". (Verse 7)

We have just mentioned the wars which occurred in the last century and where every century is full of famines and pestilences and earthquakes. The last century had its fair share. We can conclude that verse 7 was fulfilled in the last century.

"All these are the beginnings of sorrows". (Verse 8)

The last century was witness to many sorrows. This prophecy can be considered fulfilled in the last century.

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you. Ye shall be hated by all nations for my name sake". (Verse 9)

This verse applies to the followers of the true claimant of Jesusas.

This paper does not pertain to this subject. However it will be interesting to review this at a later date.

"And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another and shall hate one shall hate one another." (Verse 10)

Again this pertains to the followers of the true Messiah and their enemies.

"And many false prophets shall arise and deceive many." (verse ll )

This is a repeat of verse five which has already been shown to have been fulfilled in the last century.

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold". (verse 12)

The last century was a classic example of a time when the love of people for others was cold. Slavery and child labour abounded. This verse can be concluded to have been fulfilled in the last century.

"But he that shall endure until the end, the same shall be saved". (verse 13)

This verse applied to the followers of the true Messiah.

"And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the worlds for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." (verse 14)

I have already shown that the Bible was preached in all nations in the last century. This prophecy can be considered fulfilled in the 19th century.

Verse fifteen tells us to investigate what the Prophet Daniel prophesied. We have already concluded that Daniel predicted Christ'sas second advent in 1843. Verses 23 and 24 again refer to false prophets. Verses 25 and 26 are a warning against being deceived by false claimants.

"For as lightening cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be". (verse 27).

This prophecy shows that the Messiah will be the true claimant who comes from the east of Judea.

"For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." (verse 28)

This verse may mean that those who are false claimants will have large followings.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." (verse 29).

The true Messiah will be supported by heavenly signs such as eclipses of the sun and moon and meteor showers.

The remaining verses in chapter 24 deal mostly with the characteristics and trials that the true Messiah's followers will endure.

Although I am not a Christian I must say that after checking these prophecies I too was not only convinced, but highly surprised and even excited about the year 1844 and the return of Christas. The problem was only one, Christians of today tell me that Christas did not come in 1844. If this is so where did they go wrong in predicting Christ'sas return in 1844, if all the evidence points towards 1844 and if this verse is applied to the followers of the true Messiah.

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However there are other possibilities of this evidence verse conclusion ratio. Ask any police investigator and he or she will tell you that if any set of evidences points towards any one individual and if that individual has a solid alibi and keeping in mind that the evidence is irrefutable, the investigator will simply look for someone else upon whom the same evidences fit rather than closing the case. Based on this theory of the five claimants to messiahship previously mentioned in the last century, one of them must be the true Messiah.

When I was about to finish this paper a Christian friend of mine pointed out some more prophecies in the Old Testament about an outburst of knowledge. My personal belief is that when God sends down from heaven spiritual knowledge, He also sends down a vast increase of knowledge in other fields.

"O Daniel shut up the words and seal the book even to the time of the end." (*Dan*. 12:4)

"Which men delivered to one that is learned, saying read this, I pray thee, and he said, I can not, for it is sealed." (*Isaiah* 29:11)

"Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased.' (*Dan*. 12:4)

All of the above indicate that the true meaning of the prophecies will remain hidden until the end of time. Knowledge is to be increased at the end of time. Christian scholars considered 1844 to be the end of time. Let us look at what happened in the field of knowledge in the last century.

1. Proclamation emancipation, freeing the slaves in U.S.A. signed in 1844.
2. Laws to abolish child labour were passed.
3. First congress of women's rights.
4. First congress of universal education was established.
5. Advances in medicine, literature, music and art.
6. Invention of vulcanised rubber and telegraph in 1844.
7. Turret lathe in 1843.
8. Rotary press in 1856.
9. Elevator in 1854.

Our Movement, The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, stands unique in the sense that we have accepted the fore-mentioned evidence as true, and have accepted one of theses claimants as indeed representing the second coming of Christas as the Promised Messiah.

His name is Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmadas, and we don't ask you to blindly accept his claim, but we invite you to investigate and use logic intelligence and prayer to decide if he is true.

(Masood A. Khan)