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10. Finding The True Mahdi: He Is The Twelfth OfA Sinless Dynasty (Part 1)

The prescribed system of governance in Islam is the *khilafah*. It is led by a *khalifah* – who is also alternatively called an Imam or an *amir*. He rules for life, and represents Allah and His Messenger, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi*, on the earth. He is equally an heir of Prophet Ibrahim al–Khalil from his pure offspring. The *khilafah* is irrevocable, and shall continue uninterruptable till the Hour.

Allah has stated concerning the khilafah:

And when Ibrahim was tried by his Lord with some statements, and he fulfilled them, He said, "I will appoint you an Imam of mankind." He (Ibrahim) asked, "And of my offspring?" He (Allah) replied, "My Covenant shall not reach the wrongdoers."

Explaining this ayah, al-Hafiz Ibn Kathir (d. 774 H) states:

قال الله تعالى} :وإذ ابتلى إبراهيم ربه بكلمات فأتمهن، قال إني جاعلك للناس إماما، قال ومن ذرتي؟ قال لا ينال عهدي الظالمين {لما وفى ما أمره به ربه من التكاليف العظيمة، جعله للناس إماما يقتدون به ويأتمون بهديه .وسأل الله أن تكون هذه الإمامة متصلة بسببه، وباقية في نسبه، وخالدة في عقبه فأجيب إلى ما سأل وسلمت إليه الإمامة .بزمام، واستثنى من نيلها الظالمون، واختص بها من ذريته العلماء العاملون

Allah the Most High says: {And when Ibrahim was tried by his Lord with some statements, and he fulfilled them, He said, "I will appoint you an Imam of mankind." He (Ibrahim) asked, "And of my offspring?" He (Allah) replied, "My Covenant shall not reach the wrong-doers."} When he fulfilled the huge obligations which his Lord commanded him with, he appointed him the Imam of mankind, whom they must follow, and whose guidance they must copy. He requested Allah that this *Imamah* be

connected with his lineage, and be uninterrupted within his offspring, and be perpetual forever among his offspring. So, what he asked WAS GRANTED, and he was granted full authority of *Imamah*, and the wrong-doers were excluded from its reach, and it was made exclusive to the righteous scholars among his offspring. 1

Our Lord made His dear prophet, Ibrahim, 'alaihi al-salam, a khalifah over all mankind of his time. Ibrahim then made a du'a to him to make it uninterrupted and eternally perpetual within his offspring after him. The supplication was answered, but with a condition: the khilafah would never reach any wrong-doer among his descendants. Prof. Ibn Yasin also records in this regard:

Al-Tabari records with his sahih chain from Mujahid that he said: "(My Covenant shall not reach the wrongdoers) There will never be an Imam who does wrong."2

Of course, every sinner is a wrong-doer:

And whosoever transgresses the set limits of Allah, then indeed he has wronged himself.3

And:

And whosoever transgresses the set limits of Allah, then such are the wrongdoers.4

Therefore, the *khilafah* – which is a Covenant of Allah (and therefore His *exclusive* affair) – will never reach any sinner. Whosoever claims the *Imamah* but is a sinner, he is only an impostor.

Interestingly, even though he was the *khalifah* of the earth, Ibrahim had no political or military power. This is a crucial point about *Imamah*. Whether the people recognize their *khalifah* and give him their allegiance or not, he remains the only legitimate Imam on the face of the earth. His authority does not come from the people, nor is he appointed by them. Rather, he holds the "Covenant of Allah" which He bestows upon some of His pure servants from the offspring of Ibrahim.

Some other *khalifahs* after Ibrahim also lacked political and military power, and were nonetheless the true Imams of mankind:

ووهبنا له إسحاق ويعقوب نافلة وكلا جعلنا صالحين وجعلناهم أئمة يهدون بأمرنا

And We bestowed upon him (i.e. Ibrahim) Ishaq and Ya'qub. Each one We made righteous. And We appointed them IMAMS, guiding by Our Command.5

Neither Ishaq nor Ya'qub was ever allowed to rule, even though they were both khalifahs.

In line with the *du'a* of Ibrahim, which was answered by Allah, the *khilafah* remains eternally perpetual and uninterruptible within his sinless offspring. Naturally, it exists in our *Ummah* too, till the Day of *al–Qiyamah*. However, amongst us, it has been limited to the descendants of Ibrahim from the tribe of Quraysh only, as Imam al–Bukhari (d. 256 H) documents:

حدثنا أبو الوليد حدثنا عاصم بن محمد قال سمعت أبي عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنهما: عن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم قال لا يزال هذا الأمر في قريش ما بقي منهم اثنان

Abu al-Walid – 'Asim b. Muhammad – my father – Ibn 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with them both:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "THIS AUTHORITY shall never cease to be in Quraysh, as long as (at least) two of them are alive."6

Apparently, the Quraysh – who are in their millions today – will continue to exist in multitudes till the Hour. Therefore, the *khilafah* will always be in them till the Day of *al–Qiyamah*. Meanwhile, the nature of "this authority" – the *Imamah* – is mentioned in this *sahih hadith* of Imam Ahmad (d. 241 H):

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي حدثنا زيد بن الحباب حدثنا معاوية بن صالح قال حدثني أبو مريم انه سمع أبا هريرة يقول قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم الملك في قريش u

'Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Zayd b. al-Hubbab – Mu'awiyah b. Salih – Abu Maryam – Abu Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "THE KINGDOM is in Quraysh."7

Assessing the sanad, al-Albani (d. 1420 H) says:

وهذا إسناد صحيح

This chain is sahih.8

Then, he adds:

.قلت: زيد ثقة صدوق كما في " الميزان " وقد رفعه، وهي زيادة يجب قبولها كما تقرر في المصطلح

I say: Zayd is *thiqah* (trustworthy), *saduq* (very truthful) as stated in *al–Mizan*, and he has narrated it in a *marfu'* manner. **It is a** *ziyadah* **which must be accepted** as it has been repeatedly mentioned in *al–Mustalah*.9

It is royalty. It is monarchy. It is dynasty. Each *khalifah* is a king, who is appointed by Allah and awarded His Covenant, from the sinless offspring of Prophet Ibrahim.

We also read this *hadith* of Imam Ahmad:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يونس بن محمد ثنا حماد يعنى بن زيد ثنا مجالد عن الشعبي عن جابر بن سمرة قال خطبنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم بعرفات فقال لن يزال هذا الأمر عزيزا منيعا ظاهرا على من ناوأه حتى يملك اثنا عشر كلهم قال فلم أفهم ما بعد قال فقلت لأبى ما بعد كلهم قال كلهم من قريش

'Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Yunus b. Muhammad – Hammad b. Zayd – Mujalid – al-Sha'bi – Jabir b. Samurah:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, delivered a sermon to us at 'Arafat and said, "This affair will never cease to be strong, invincible and victorious over whoever opposes it **as long as twelve** (people) RULE BY KINGDOM. All of them...."

(Jabir said): I did not understand what was said after that. So, I said to my father, "What did he say after 'all of them...'?". He replied, "All of them will be from Quraysh." 10

Al-Arnau® says:

حديث صحيح

A sahih hadith 11

Of course, these twelve men are the only twelve *khalifahs* of this *Ummah* till the end of the world. Imam Muslim (d. 261 H) records in this regard:

حدثنا قتيبة بن سعيد وأبو بكر بن أبي شيبة قالا حدثنا حاتم (وهو ابن إسماعيل) عن المهاجر بن مسمار عن عامر بن سعد بن أبي وقاص قال كتبت إلى جابر بن مرة مع غلامي نافع أن أخبرني بشيء سمعته من رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يوم جمعة عشية رجم الأسلمي يقول (لا يزال الله عليه و سلم قليه و سلم قلية و سلم عشية رجم الأسلمي عليه من قريش (الدين قائما حتى تقوم الساعة أو يكون عليكم اثنا عشر خليفة كلهم من قريش

Qutaybah b. Sa'id and Abu Bakr b. Abi Shaybah – Hatim b. Isma'il – al-Muhajir b. Musmar – 'Amir b. Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas:

I sent a letter to Jabir b. Samurah through my servant, Nafi', to inform me of something he heard from the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. So, he wrote in reply back to me: "I heard the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, saying on a Friday, on the eve of the stoning of al-Aslami, saying: 'The religion will never cease to stand until the establishment of the Hour or as long as there are twelve *khalifahs* over you, all of them from Quraysh.'"12

The *hadith* is explicit: Islam will remain standing throughout the *khilafah* of the twelve kings, and this will be until the Day of *al-Qiyamah*. So, the twelve *khalifahs* will rule, uninterrupted, till the Hour.

We further read this hadith of Ahmad:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا مؤمل بن إسماعيل ثنا حماد بن سلمة حدثنا داود بن هند عن الشعبي عن جابر بن سمرة قال سمعت النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم يقول يكون لهذه الأمة اثنا عشر خليفة

'Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Mumal b. Isma'il – Hammad b. Salamah – Dawud b. Hind – al-Shu'bi – Jabir b. Samurah:

I heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying: "There will be for this *Ummah* TWELVE *KHALIFAHS*."13

Shaykh al-Arnaus says:

حديث صحيح

A sahih hadith. 14

Therefore, any other *khalifah* apart from these twelve is NOT "for" this *Ummah*. He is only an impostor.

Meanwhile, one of these twelve royal *khalifahs* is our beloved Mahdi. Imam Abu Dawud (d. 275 H) records:

حدثنا سهل بن تمام بن بزيع ثنا عمران القطان عن قتادة عن أبي نضرة عن أبي سعيد الخدري قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم " المهدي مني أجلى الجبهة أقنى الأنف يملأ الأرض قسطا وعدلا كما ملئت جورا وظلما " ويملك سبع سنين

Sahl b. Tammam b. Buzay' - 'Imran al-Qannan - Qatadah - Abu Nadhrah - Abu Sa'id al-Khudri:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "The Mahdi is from me, with a broad forehead, a curved nose. He will fill the earth with equity and justice just as it had been filled with oppression and injustice, and he will RULE BY KINGDOM for seven years." 15

Al-Albani says:

حسن

Hasan. 16

Obviously, Imam al-Mahdi is the twelfth and last of these royal *khalifahs*, since he will rule over the last generation of our *Ummah*. Imam al-Hakim (d. 403 H) documents this relevant *hadith*:

أخبرني أبو العباس محمد بن أحمد المحبوبي بمرو ثنا سعيد بن مسعود ثنا النضر بن شميل ثنا سليمان بن عبيد ثنا أبو الصديق الناجي عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : يخرج في آخر أبو الصديق الناجي عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : يخرج في آخر أبو الصديق الناجي عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : يخرج في آخر

Abu al-'Abbas Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Mahbubi - Sa'id b. Mas'ud - al-Nadhr b. Shumayl - Sulayman b. 'Ubayd - Abu al-Siddiq al-Naji - Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said, "The Mahdi will come out at the END of my *Ummah*. 17

Al-Hakim comments:

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

This hadith has a sahih chain 18

Imam al-Dhahabi (d. 748 H) agrees:

صحيح

Sahih 19

'Allamah al-Albani also says about the *hadith* in his *Sahihah*:

قلت: وهذا سند صحيح

I say: This chain is sahih20

Dr. al-Bastawi has the same verdict on it:

إسناده صحيح.

Its chain is sahih.21

The grand Salafi scholar, Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymin (d. 1421 H), declares the same thing in his commentary of *al-'Aqidah al-Safariniyyah*:

قوله : (الإمام الخاتم الفصيح) : أي من أشراط الساعة الإمام ، الإمام يعني الذي يؤم الناس لا في الصلاة ولكن في القيادة ، يكون إماماً لهم أعظم ، كالخليفة هذا الإمام

يقول أنه (الخاتم) ، الخاتم لمن ؟ الخاتم للأئمة لأنه لا إمام بعده فهو خاتم الأئمة واسمه يقول : (محمد) ، ولقبه (المهدي) يعني الذي هداه الله عز وجل ، هذا المهدي يُبعث في آخر الزمان إذا مُلئت الأرض ظلماً وجوراً ونُسِّيَ فيها الحق وصار المظلوم لقمةً للظالم وانتشرت الفوضى فحينئذ يبعث الله هذا الرجل رجلاً إماماً مصلحاً للخلق مبيّناً للحق

His statement (among them): that is, among its signs.

His statement (**the Last**, Eloquent Imam): that is, from the signs of the Hour is the Imam. "The Imam" (here) refers to the one who leads mankind, not (just) in *salat* but in government. This Imam will be their supreme Imam, as the *khalifah*.

He says that he (the Mahdi) is the last, the last of whom? The last of the Imams, because there will be NO Imam after him. As such, he is the LAST of the Imams. His name is Muhammad, and his title is "the Mahdi", meaning the one who has been guided by Allah the Almighty. This is the Mahdi who will be SENT during the End of Time, when the earth will have been filled with injustice and oppression, and the truth will have been forgotten, and the oppressed will have become a morsel to the oppressor, and chaos will have become widespread. At that period, Allah the Almighty will SEND this man as as a male Imam to reform THE CREATION and to restore the truth.22

He will be sent by Allah to "the creation", and will be the last of the lines of royal Imams on this earth. These Imams are twelve *for* this *Ummah*. So, the Mahdi is the twelfth Imam.

- 1. Abu al-Fida Isma'il b. Kathir, Qisas al-Anbiya (Dar al-Kutub al-Hadithah; 1st edition, 1388 H) [annotator: Mus@afa 'Abd al-Wahid], vol. 1, p. 232; Abu al-Fida Isma'il b. Kathir al-Dimashqi, al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah (Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi; 1st edition, 1408 H) [annotator: 'Ali Shiri], vol. 1, p. 191
- 2. Prof. Dr. Hikmat b. Bashir b. Yasin, Mawsu'at al-Sahih al-Masbur min al-Tafsir bi al-Mathur (Madinah: Dar al-Mathar li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi' wa al-Taba'at; 1st edition, 1420 H), vol. 1, p. 229
- 3. Qur'an 65:1
- 4. Qur'an 2:229
- 5. Qur'an 21:72-73
- 6. Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ibrahim b. Mughirah al-Bukhari al-Ju'fi, al-Jami' al-Sahih al-Mukhtasar (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Mus®afa Dib al-Bagha], vol. 3, p. 1290, # 3310 and vol. 6, p. 2612, # 6721
- 7. Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qur⊡ubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnau⊡], vol. 2, p. 364, # 8746
- 8. Abu 'Abd al-Rahman Muhammad Nasir al-Din b. al-Hajj Nuh b. Tajati b. Adam al-Ashqudri al-Albani, Silsilah al-Ahadith al-Sahihah wa Shayhun min Fiqhihah wa Fawaidihah (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma'arif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 3, p. 72, # 1084
- 9. Ibid
- 10. Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qur⊡ubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnau⊡], vol. 5, p. 96, # 20944
- **11.** Ibid
- 12. Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi], vol. 3, p. 1453, # 1822 (10)
- 13. Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qur®ubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnau®], vol. 5, p. 106, # 21051
- **14.** Ibid
- 15. Abu Dawud Sulayman b. al-Ash'ath al-Sijistani al-Azdi, Sunan (Dar al-Fikr) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. 2, p. 509, # 4285
- **16.** Ibio
- 17. Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah al-Hakim al-Naysaburi, al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Mustafa 'Abd al-Qadir 'A🗈a], vol. 4, p. 601, # 8673
- **18.** Ibid
- **19.** Ibid
- 20. Abu 'Abd al-Rahman Muhammad Nasir al-Din b. al-Hajj Nuh b. Tajati b. Adam al-Ashqudri al-Albani, Silsilah al-Ahadith al-Sahihah wa Shayhun min Fiqhihah wa Fawaidihah (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma'arif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 2, p. 328, # 711
- 21. Dr. 'Abd al-'Alim 'Abd al-'Azim al-Bastawi, al-Mahdi al-Muntazar fi Dhaw-i al-Ahadith wa al-Athar al-Sahihah wa Aqwal al-'Ulama wa Ara al-Firaq al-Mukhtalifah (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm; 1st edition, 1420 H), p. 165
- 22. Muhammad b. Salih al-'Uthaymin, Sharh al-'Aqidah al-Safariniyyah (Riyadh: Dar al-Wasan li al-Nashr; 1st edition, 1426 H), pp. 450-451

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