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12. The Sunni Chase Of Shadows: Is There Really A Man In The Cellar?

It is without question that the only "Mahdi" in Islam who fulfils all the descriptions of the true Mahdi is the twelfth Imam of the Ahl al–Bayt, Imam Muhammad b. al–Hasan al–Askari, 'alaihi wa 'alaihim al–salam. All the other "Mahdi" candidates or claimants either fail all the conditions, or almost all. By contrast, the Twelfth Imam is a perfect match for the Mahdi described in the ahadith. Perhaps, this is why we see some Sunni 'ulama constantly launching the most vicious attacks on him. Our observation is that they seek to discredit him in order to promote the orthodox Sunni "Mahdi" – Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah al–Hasani. This tactic is often noted in Sunni–Shi'i debates. However, it is only a logical fallacy. The fact that A is wrong does not necessarily prove that B is correct. Therefore, even if the "Shi'i Mahdi" – as they like to call him – were a fake as they claim, they still need to bring irrefutable evidences to prove that their "Sunni Mahdi" meets all the criteria in the sahih ahadith! Obviously, the Ahl al–Sunnah can never prove the authenticity of their Mahdi without turning a blind eye to their own reliable reports on the Awaited Imam.

The two primary Sunni objections to the Twelfth Imam are mentioned by Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) in this submission:

قد ذكر محمد بن جرير الطبري وعبد الباقي بن قانع وغيرهما من أهل العلم بالأنساب والتواريخ أن الحسن بن علي العسكري لم يكن له نسل ولا عقب والإمامية الذين يزعمون أنه كان له ولد يدعون أنه دخل السرداب بسامرا وهو صغير منهم من قال غمره سنتان ومنهم من قال ثلاث ومنهم من قال خمس سنين

Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari, 'Abd al-Baqi b. Qani' and others from the scholars of geneology and history had stated that al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-'Askari did not have any children or offspring. The Imamiyyah who claim that he had a son say that he (the son) entered the cellar in Samara while he was still young. Among them are those who say that his age (at that time) was two. Among them are also those who say it was three. And among them are those who say it was five years. 1

So, first, he is non-existent. His father had died childless. Then, his followers claim that he entered the "cellar" in the city of Samara, near Baghdad at the age of two, three or five.

As evidence for his first claim, Ibn Taymiyyah mentions only Imam al-Tabari and Ibn Qani' by name. Then, he makes a vague reference to some other Sunni scholars of geneology and history. Imam al-Dhahabi (d. 748 H) quotes something to this effect too:

قلت: ويزعمون أن محمدا دخل سردابا في بيت أبيه، وأمه تنظر إليه، فلم يخرج إلى الساعة منه، وكان ابن تسع سنين. وقيل دون ذلك ... وأنه حي نعوذ بالله من زوال العقلوممن قال: إن الحسن العسكري لم يعقب: محمد ..ن جرير الطبرى، ويحيى بن صاعد، وناهيك بهما معرفة وثقة

I (al-Dhahabi) say: They (the Shi'ah) claim that Muhammad entered a cellar in the house of his father while his mother was looking at him, and has not come out from it up till this moment, and he was nine years old. It is said that his age was other than that ... And that he is alive. We seek the refuge of Allah from the dysfunction of the intellect.... Among those who said that al-Hasan al-Askari did not have a child were Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari and Yahya b. Sa'id, and they are sufficient for you in knowledge and trustworthiness.2

However, it seems that al-Dhahabi himself did not attach much weight to the submissions of al-Tabari, Ibn al-Qani', Yahya b. Sa'id, Ibn Taymiyyah (who was his contemporary) and probably others. In his *Tarikh al-Islam*, he claims instead:

(أحداث سنة خمسٍ وستيّن)

توفيّ فيها: أحمد بن منصور الرّماديّ، وإبراهيم بن الحارث البغداديّ، وإبراهيم بن هانيء النَّيسابوريّ، وسعدان بن نصر، وصالح بن أحمد بن حنبل، وعبد الله بن محمد بن أيوّب المُخرّميّ، وعلي بن حرب الطّائيّ، وأبو حفص النَّيسابوريّ الزاهد عمرو بن سلم، ومحمد بن الحسن العسكري من الإثني عشر، ومحمد بن هارون الفلّس، وهارون .

(Events of 265 H)

The following DIED in it (i.e. that year):

Ahmad b. Mansur al-Ramadi, Ibrahim b. al-Harith al-Baghdadi, Ibrahim b. Hani al-Naysaburi, Sa'dan b. Nasr, Salih b. Ahmad b. Hanbal, 'Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. Ayub al-Mukhrami, 'Ali b. Harb al-Tai, Abu Hafs al-Naysaburi al-Zaid 'Umar b. Salam, **Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-'Askari from the Twelve** (**Imams**), Muhammad b. Harun al-Falas, and Harun b. Sulayman al-Isbahani.3

So, al-Dhahabi personally believed that Imam al-Askari had a son named Muhammad, but who

allegedly "died" in 265 H. He did not accept the apparently hearsay testimonies of al–Tabari and similar Sunni scholars, despite affirming their scholarship and trustworthiness. The reason, perhaps, is that none of them was an eye–witness to the alleged incidents, and none of them ever mentioned any source for his information. As such, the origin of their claims about the son of al–Askari is unknown. Evidences like that are never accepted in critical matters like this one.

The first person to make that claim – from all indications – was only Ja'far The Liar, the brother of Imam al–Askari, *'alaihi al–salam*. Shaykh al–Mufid (d. 413 H), the great Shi'i scholar, has some further information for us concerning this:

وحاز جعفر ظاهر تركة أبي محمد عليه السلام واجتهد في القيام عند الشيعة مقامه، فلم يقبل أحد منهم ذلك ولا اعتقده فيه، فصار إلى سلطان الوقت يلتمس مرتبة أخيه، وبذل مالا جليلا، وتقرب بكل ما ظن أنه يتقرب به فلم ينتفع بشئ من ذلك. ولجعفر أخبار كثيرة في هذا المعنى، رأيت الإعراض عن ذكرها لأسباب لا يحتمل الكتاب . شرحها، وهي مشهورة عند الإمامية ومن عرف أخبار الناس من العامة، وبالله استعين

Ja'far seized the apparent legacy of Abu Muhammad (i.e. Imam al-Hasan al-Askari), peace be upon him, and he strove hard to take his place in the eyes of the Shi'ah. But, none of them accepted that, and none of them believed him in it. So, he went to the authorities of the time seeking the position of his brother. He spent a lot of money, and did everything that he thought could advance him. But, none of that was of any benefit to him.

There are A LOT of reports concerning Ja'far to this effect. It is my opinion to avoid quoting them for reasons whose explanation does not concern the book. They are well-known among the Imamiyyah and those who know the reports of the people from non-Shi'is. And from Allah we seek help.4

Ja'far The Liar sought to declare himself the Imam after al-Askari, and he usurped the estate of the latter. He also made every effort to validate his illegal steps, including seeking the help and interference of the Sunni authorities of that time. But, nothing worked for him. In particular, he proclaimed the non-existence of the Twelfth Imam and persecuted the Shi'ah in order to "ease" things for himself, as al-Mufid confirms:

وتولى جعفر بن علي أخو أبي محمد عليه السلام أخذ تركته، وسعى في حبس جواري أبي محمد عليه السلام واعتقال حلائله، وشنع على أصحابه بانتظارهم ولده وقطعهم بوجوده والقول بإمامته، وأغرى بالقوم حتى أخافهم وشردهم، وجرى على مخلفي أبي محمد عليه السلام بسبب ذلك كل عظيمة، من اعتقال وحبس وتهديد وتصغير واستخفاف وذل

Ja'far b. 'Ali, the brother of Abu Muhammad, peace be upon him, seized his legacy and sought to imprison the women slaves of Abu Muhammad, peace be upon him, and to put the latter's wives in confinement. He reviled his (i.e. al-Askari's) companions for awaiting his son, and for their certainty

concerning his (i.e. the son's) existence, and for their belief in his (i.e. the son's) *Imamah*. He tempted the people so much that he made them fearful and scared them away. The survivors of Abu Muhammad, peace be upon him, underwent a terrible experience on account of that – including confinement, imprisonment, threats, slander, degradation and humiliation.5

Obviously, the first source of this rumour was none other than a liar – Ja'far The Liar. He created it to support his claim to the properties of his brother and to seize his rank among the Imamiyyah. He equally went to extreme lengths to ensure his success. However, he failed woefully. Meanwhile, his rumour was picked by some elements within the Ahl al–Sunnah, and has been exploited for sectarian purposes – especially on the question of *al–mahdawiyyah*.

We quoted above the word of Imam al-Dhahabi, who did not buy into the claims of some of the heavyweights of his sect. He opposed them by affirming that Imam al-Askari actually had a son, but that he (the son) died a few years after him. Does he then have any proof for the alleged death of Imam al-Hujjah? Of course, he does not, as he himself indirectly admits in another of his books:

الحسن بن علي بن محمد بن علي الرضا بن موسى بن جعفر الصادق. أبو محمد الهاشمي الحسيني أحد أئمة الشيعة الذين تدعي الشيعة عصمتهم. ويقال له الحسن العسكري لكونه سكن سامراء، فإنها يقال لها العسكر. وهو والد منتظر الرافضة. توفي إلى رضوان الله بسامراء في ثامن ربيع الأول سنة ستين، وله تسع وعشرون سنة. ودفن . إلى جانب والده. وأمه أمة

وأما ابنه محمد بن الحسن الذي يدعوه الرافضة القائم الخلف الحجة، فولد سنة ثمان وخمسين، وقيل: سنة ست وأما ابنه محمد بن الحسن الذي يدعوه الرافضة القائم الخلف الحجة، فولد سنتين ثم عدم، ولم يعلم كيف مات. وأمه أم ولد

Al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Ridha b. Musa b. Ja'far al-Sadiq, Abu Muhammad al-Hashimi al-Husayni, one of the Imams of the Shi'ah whose 'isma (sinlessness) they proclaim. He is called al-Hasan al-'Askari because he lived in Samara, for it was called al-Askar. He was the father of the Awaited One of the Rafidhah. He passed unto the Pleasure of Allah at Samara in 8th Rabi' al-Awwal 260 H, and he was 29 years old. He was buried near his father, and his mother was a slave-woman.

As for his son, Muhammad b. al-Hasan, whom the Rafidhah call al-Qaim, al-Khalaf, al-Hujjah, he was born in 258 H. It is said that it was 256 H. He lived for two years after his father. Then, he became nonexistent, AND IT IS NOT KNOWN HOW HE DIED. His mother was a slave-woman.6

So, none knows how he "died". They just know that he was no longer seen, and thereby assumed that he had become "nonexistent". But, how did his "death" happen? None knows. Of course, this indicates clearly that none has evidence of his death! The claim of his death is without proof. It is only an assumption, a guess.

In any case, Imam al-Askari – whose truthfulness is universally accepted – *did* testify to the existence of his son during his lifetime. Shaykh al-Kulayni (d. 328 H), the ace Shi'i *hadith* compiler, documents:

محمد بن يحيى، عن أحمد بن إسحاق، عن أبي هاشم الجعفري قال: قلت لأبي محمد عليه السلام: جلالتك تمنعني من مسألتك، فتأذن لي أن أسألك؟ فقال: سل، قلت:يا سيدي هل لك ولد؟ فقال: نعم، فقلت: فإن بك حدث فأين من مسألتك، فتأذن لي أن أسألك؟ فقال: بالمدينة

Muhammad b. Yahya – Ahmad b. Ishaq – Abu Hashim al-Ja'fari:

I said to Abu Muhammad (i.e. Imam al-Askari), "Your majestic status prevents me from asking you questions. So, may I ask you a question?" He replied, "Ask". I said, "O my master, do you have any son?" He answered, "Yes." Then, I asked, "If something happened to you, where should I ask about him?" He said, "In Madinah."7

Al-Majlisi (d. 1111 H) says:

صحيح

Sahih.8

Al-Haj Muhammad Zakariya agrees:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is sahih.9

This is a truthful testimony: he fathered a son, who was in the city of the Prophet, al-Madinah. Moreover, it was not just the truthful claim: he did also show the blessed son to some of his most trusted companions. Shaykh al-Saduq (d. 381 H), another primary Shi'i *hadith* scientist, records about one of such occasions:

حدثنا علي بن عبد الله الوراق قال: حدثنا سعد بن عبد الله، عن أحمد ابن إسحاق بن سعد الأشعري قال: دخلت على أبي محمد الحسن بن علي عليهما السلام وأنا أريد أن أسأله عن الخلف] من [بعده، فقال لي مبتدئا: يا أحمد بن إسحاق إن الله تبارك وتعالى لم يخل الأرض منذ خلق آدم عليه السلام ولا يخليها إلى أن تقوم الساعة من حجة لله على خلقه، به يدفع البلاء عن أهل الأرض، وبه ينزل الغيث، وبه يخرج بركات الأرض. قال: فقلت له: يا ابن رسول الله فمن الامام والخليفة بعدك؟ فنهض عليه السلام مسرعا فدخل البيت، ثم خرج وعلى عاتقه غلام كان وجهه القمر ليلة البدر من أبناء الثلاث سنين، فقال: يا أحمد بن إسحاق لولا كرامتك على الله عز وجل وعلى حججه ما عرضت عليك ابنى هذا، إنه سمى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وكنيه، الذي يملأ الأرض قسطا وعدلا كما ملئت

.جورا وظلما

'Ali b. 'Abd Allah al-Warraq - Sa'd b. 'Abd Allah - Ahmad b. Ishaq b. Sa'd al-Ash'ari:

I went to Abu Muhammad al–Hasan b. 'Ali, peace be upon them both, and I intended to ask him about his successor. But, he said to me before I said anything, "O Ahmad b. Ishaq! Verily, Allah the Most Blessed, the Most High never leaves the earth since the creation of Adam, peace be upon him, and He will never leave it till establishment of the Hour, without an *Hujjah* of Allah over His creation. Through him, calamity is averted from the people of the earth; through him, rain descends; and through him, the blessings of the earth come out." I said to him, "O son of the Messenger of Allah? So, who is the Imam and the *khalifah* after you?"

Then, he, peace be upon him, rose hurriedly and entered the house. Then, he came out and on his shoulder was a young boy whose face was like the full moon, from the three-year-olds. Then, he said, "O Ahmad b. Ishaq! If not for your honour before Allah the Almighty and before His *Hujjahs*, I would not have shown you THIS SON OF MINE. Verily, he is the namesake of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and also shares his agnomen. He will fill the earth with equity and justice just as it had been filled with oppression and injustice." 10

Al-Haj Muhammad Zakariya again comments:

إسناده معتبر

Its chain is reliable. 11

As such, the matter is without any doubt. Moreover, it must be noted that Imam al-Askari is "one of the Imams of the Shi'ah" as al-Dhahabi describes him. Therefore, the Shi'ah are the best authorities concerning him and his affairs, just as Muslims generally are the best references on Prophet Muhammad, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi*. Meanwhile, Ja'far The Liar had only exploited the situation of things at that time. Imam Hasan al-Askari had hidden his only child in Madinah, far away from Iraq where he himself lived, because of these words he said:

O Ahmad b. Ishaq! If not for your honour before Allah the Almighty and before His *Hujjahs*, I would not have shown you this son of mine. Verily, he is the namesake of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and also shares his agnomen. **He will fill the earth with equity and justice just as it had been filled with oppression and injustice**.

Being the eleventh Imam, there certainly were some knowledgeable Shi'is who were expecting his son to be the Awaited Mahdi, the Twelfth Imam. The previous Imams before al-Askari had indicated this in their various statements to some of their followers. For instance, Shaykh al-Saduq has this authentic hadith:

حدثنا أحمد بن محمد بن يحيى العطار قال: حدثنا أبي عن محمد بن عبد الجبار عن أبي أحمد محمد بن زياد الأزدي عن أبان بن عثمان عن ثابت بن دينار عن سيد العابدين علي بن الحسين عن سيد الشهداء الحسين بن علي عن سيد الأوصياء أمير المؤمنين علي بن أبي طالب عليه السلام قال: قال لي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله الأئمة من بعدي اثنا عشر ولهم أنت يا علي وآخرهم القائم الذي يفتح الله تبارك وتعالى ذكره على يديه مشارق الأرض.

Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Yahya al-'Assar – my father – Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Jabbar – Abu Ahmad Muhammad b. Ziyad al-Azdi – Aban b. 'Uthman – Thabit b. Dinar – master of the worshippers, 'Ali b. al-Husayn – master of the martyrs, al-Husayn b. 'Ali – master of the successors and commander of the believers, 'Ali b. Abi Talib, peace be upon him:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, said to me: "The Imams after me are twelve in number. The first of them is you, O 'Ali, and the last of them will be the Qaim through whose hands Allah, blessed and exalted be His Mention, will conquer the east of the earth and its west." 12

Al-Haj Muhammad Zakariya says:

إسناده معتبر

Its chain is reliable. 13

This is established in the *sahih* Sunni *ahadith* as well, as we have already proved in this book and in others.

Shaykh al-Saduq documents again:

حدثنا أحمد بن زياد بن جعفر الهمداني قال: حدثنا علي بن إبراهيم بن هاشم عن أبيه عن محمد بن أبي عمير عن غياث بن إبراهيم عن الصادق جعفر بن محمد عن أبيه محمد بن علي عن أبيه علي بن الحسين عن أبيه الحسين بن علي عليه السلام قال: سئل أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام عن معنى قول رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله انى مخلف فيكم الثقلين كتاب الله وعترتي من العترة؟ فقال: انا والحسن والحسين والأئمة التسعة من ولد الحسين تاسعهم مهديهم وقائمهم لا يفارقون كتاب الله ولا يفارقهم حتى يردوا على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله حوضه

Ahmad b. Ziyad b. Ja'far al-Hamdani - 'Ali b. Ibrahim b. Hashim - his father - Muhammad b. Abi

'Umayr – Ghayath b. Ibrahim – al-Sadiq Ja'far b. Muhammad – his father, Muhammad b. 'Ali – his father, 'Ali b. al-Husayn – his father, al-Husayn b. 'Ali, peace be upon him:

Amir al–Muminin ('Ali b. Abi Talib) was asked about the meaning of the statement of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family: "I am leaving behind over you the Two Weighty Things (*al–thaqalayn*): the Book of Allah and my offspring". He was asked, "Who are the offspring?" So, he ('Ali) answered, "I, al–Hasan, al–Husayn and the nine Imams from the offspring of al–Husayn. The ninth of them is their Mahdi and their Qaim. They will never separate from the Book of Allah the Almighty and it will never separate from them until they meet the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, at his Lake–Fount."14

Al-Haj Muhammad Zakariya comments on it:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is sahih. 15

Although these *ahadith* were not widespread – neither among Sunnis nor among Shi'is – due to the political climate of that time, there nonetheless were certainly those who knew it within both sects. They were expecting the twelfth Imam from the offspring of the Prophet to be the true Mahdi. Moreover, it is extremely likely that this information got to the Sunni authorities of that time. Even if they did not believe in it, they still would have been forced by curiosity and political considerations to develop interest in it. Afterall, the *ahadith* could potentially rally people around the twelfth Imam for a huge rebellion against their rule. So, the best way to nib the threat in the bud was to cut off its head – and that was, to kill the son of Imam al–Askari. These realities understandably forced him to hide his son – whom he believed to be the Awaited Mahdi – from everyone except a tiny, trusted few. Shaykh al–Mufid explains it better:

وخلف ابنه المنتظر لدولة الحق. وكان قد أخفى مولده وستر أمره، لصعوبة الوقت، وشدة طلب سلطان الزمان له، واجتهاده في البحث عن أمره، ولما شاع من مذهب الشيعة الإمامية فيه، وعرف من انتظارهم له، فلم يظهر ولده عليه السلام في حياته، ولا عرفه الجمهور بعد وفاته .

He (i.e. al-Askari) left behind his son, the Awaited One, for the true government. He had hidden his birth and concealed his affair, due to the difficulty of the time and the severity of the search for him by the ruler of the time, and his hard efforts in investigating his affair. When it (i.e. information) spread concerning him from the *madhhab* of the Shi'ah Imamiyyah, and he (al-Askari) realized their wait for him, then he did not expose his birth, peace be upon him, during his lifetime, and the majority did not know him (i.e. his son) after his death. 16

Ja'far The Liar capitalized on this unfavourable situation to seek the Imamah for himself and to seize the

inheritance of his brother. He did not succeed at all in his efforts to crown himself the Imam. However, he was able to throw confusion into the ranks of some Shi'is by his insistence that his brother died heirless. Those trustworthy companions of Abu Muhammad who had seen his son during his lifetime, or had heard about him (i.e. the son) from him (i.e. Abu Muhammad), preserved the true Imami Shi'ism after him through their speeches, narrations and other efforts. A lot of others, however, were blown away by the wind of doubt in the long, heated confusion that ensued.

Thus, as things stand, there is no unified Sunni position of the birth of Imam al-Hujjah. Some of them affirmed that he was truly born while others deny this fact. Meanwhile, it is documented in authentic Shi'i riwayat that Imam al-Hasan al-Askari did testify to the birth of his son before some trusted companions, and also showed him to some of them. Unfavourable conditions at the time prevented him from disclosing his son's birth or whereabouts to the general public. His dishonest brother, Ja'far The Liar, exploited the situation to create the false theory that he (al-Askari) died without a child, in order to usurp properties and positions. A number of Sunni 'ulama seized on this to feed their rejection of the Twelfth Imam; and this trend has continued since the first lie. But, Allah protects His religion and gives it resilience and strength.

The second Sunni objection – which is even more ridiculous than the first – is this claim of Ibn Taymiyyah:

The Imamiyyah who claim that he had a son say that **he (the son) entered the cellar in Samara while he was still young**. Among them are those who say that his age (at that time) was two. Among them are also those who say it was three. And among them are those who say it was five years.

Is it true that the Shi'ah Imamiyyah make any such statement, that their last Imam entered a cellar in Samara near Baghdad (or anywhere else) while he was still young? This, indeed, is a *very* widespread claim among the Ahl al–Sunnah. It is almost impossible to find any of them who writes about the Twelfth Imam without mentioning it. The correct Shi'i opinion, however, is that none knows the location of the Imam except some special members of his family. Of course, everyone knows that cellar! Al–Kulayni reports:

محمد بن يحيى، عن محمد بن الحسين، عن ابن محبوب، عن إسحاق بن عمار قال: قال أبو عبد الله عليه السلام: للقائم غيبتان: إحداهما قصيرة والأخرى طويلة، الغيبة الأولى لا يعلم بمكانه فيها إلا خاصة شيعته، والأخرى لا يعلم بمكانه فيها إلا خاصة مواليه .

Muhammad b. Yahya – Muhammad b. al-Husayn – Ibn Mahbub – Ishaq b. 'Ammar:

Abu 'Abd Allah, peace be upon him, said, "The Qaim will have two disappearances: one of them will be short and the other will be long. In the first disappearance, none will know his location in it except his special Shi'ah; and in the other, none will know his location in it except his special relatives." 17

Al-Majlisi says about it:

موثق

Muwaththaq 18

Al-Haj Muhammad Zakariya also comments:

Its chain is sahih or muwaththaq. 19

Explaining the *hadith*, al-Majlisi states:

(except his special relatives) meaning, his servants, family and children. 20

Those are the only ones who know his location. Naturally, that CANNOT be the cellar which is known to all and sundry!

Meanwhile, Imam al-Hujjah regularly comes out of his location to attend *Hajj* rites. Al-Kulayni further documents:

Muhammad b. Musa b. al-Mutawakil, may Allah be pleased with him - 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far al-Himyari:

I heard Muhammad b. 'Uthman al-'Umari, may Allah pleased with him, saying: "By Allah, the Master of this Affair surely attends the pilgrimage every year. So, he sees the people and recognizes them. They too see him but do not recognize him."21

Al-Haj Muhammad Zakariya also comments:

Its chain is sahih.22

Our opponents claim that our Imam entered their imaginary cellar as a child, and never came out of it, and will only come out of it upon his reappearance. But, how is that reconciliable with the *sahih* Shi'i *hadith* – which is believed by the Shi'ah – above? Besides, if the Shi'ah had truly believed that the Mahdi was in a cellar, would they not have always massed together at its entrance near every *Hajj* season to witness him come out of it? "What then is the matter with you; how do you judge?"23

- 1. Abu al-'Abbas Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Halim b. Taymiyyah al-Harrani, Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah (Muasassat Quriubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muhammad Rashad Salim], vol. 4, pp. 87-88
- 2. Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Uthman al-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam al-Nubala (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risalah; 9th edition, 1413 H) [annotators of the thirteenth volume: Shu'ayb al-Arnau® and 'Ali Abu Zayd], vol. 13, pp. 121-122, # 60
- 3. Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Uthman al-Dhahabi, Tarikh al-Islam wa Wafiyat al-Mashahir wa al-A'lam (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi; 1st edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. 'Umar 'Abd al-Salam Tadmuri], vol. 20, p. 15
- 4. Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Muhammad b. al-Nu'man al-'lkbari al-Baghdadi, al-Irshad fi Ma'rifat Hujjaj Allah 'ala al-'lbad (Beirut: Dar al-Mufid; 2nd edition, 1414 H), vol. 2, pp. 336-337
- 5. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 336
- 6. Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Uthman al-Dhahabi, Tarikh al-Islam wa Wafiyat al-Mashahir wa al-A'lam (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi; 1st edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. 'Umar 'Abd al-Salam Tadmuri], vol. 19, p. 113
- 7. Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. Ya'qub b. Ishaq al-Kulayni al-Razi, al-Usul min al-Kafi (Tehran: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah; 3rd edition, 1388 H) [annotator: 'Ali Akbar al-Ghiffari], vol. 1, p. 328, # 2
- 8. Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi, Mir-at al-'Uqul fi Sharh Akhbar Al al-Rasul (Tehran: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah) [annotator: Sayyid Muhsin al-Husayni al-Amini], vol. 4, p. 2
- 9. Muhammad Zakariya, al-Sahih wa al-Mu'tabar min Akhbar al-Hujjah al-Muntazar (Majmu'at al-Rasid; 1st edition, 1434 H), p. 24, # 14
- 10. Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b. Babuyah al-Qummi, Kamal al-Din wa Tamam al-Ni'mah (Qum: Muasassat al-Nashr al-Islami li Jama'at al-Mudarisin; 1405 H) [annotator: 'Ali Akbar al-Ghiffari], p. 384, Ch. 38, # 1
- 11. Muhammad Zakariya, al-Sahih wa al-Mu'tabar min Akhbar al-Hujjah al-Muntazar (Majmu'at al-Rasid; 1st edition, 1434 H), pp. 27-29, # 19
- 12. Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b. Babuyah al-Qummi, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha (Beirut: Muasassat al-A'lami li al-Ma®bu'at; 1st edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Husayn al-A'lami], vol. 2, pp. 66-67, # 34
- 13. Muhammad Zakariya, al-Sahih wa al-Mu'tabar min Akhbar al-Hujjah al-Muntazar (Majmu'at al-Rasid; 1st edition, 1434 H), p. 17, # 7
- 14. Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b. Babuyah al-Qummi, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha (Beirut: Muasassat al-A'lami li al-Ma®bu'at; 1st edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Husayn al-A'lami], vol. 2, p. 60, # 25
- 15. Muhammad Zakariya, al-Sahih wa al-Mu'tabar min Akhbar al-Hujjah al-Muntazar (Majmu'at al-Rasid; 1st edition, 1434 H), p. 18, #8
- 16. Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Muhammad b. al-Nu'man al-'lkbari al-Baghdadi, al-Irshad fi Ma'rifat Hujjaj Allah 'ala al-'lbad (Beirut: Dar al-Mufid; 2nd edition, 1414 H), vol. 2, p. 336
- 17. Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. Ya'qub b. Ishaq al-Kulayni al-Razi, al-Usul min al-Kafi (Tehran: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah; 3rd edition, 1388 H) [annotator: 'Ali Akbar al-Ghiffari], vol. 1, p. 340, # 19
- 18. Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi, Mir-at al-'Uqul fi Sharh Akhbar Al al-Rasul (Tehran: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah) [annotator: Sayyid Muhsin al-Husayni al-Amini], vol. 4, p. 52
- 19. Muhammad Zakariya, al-Sahih wa al-Mu'tabar min Akhbar al-Hujjah al-Muntazar (Majmu'at al-Rasid; 1st edition, 1434 H), p. 16, # 5

- 20. Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi, Mir-at al-'Uqul fi Sharh Akhbar Al al-Rasul (Tehran: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah) [annotator: Sayyid Muhsin al-Husayni al-Amini], vol. 4, p. 52
- 21. Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b. Babuyah al-Qummi, Kamal al-Din wa Tamam al-Ni'mah (Qum: Muasassat al-Nashr al-Islami li Jama'at al-Mudarisin; 1405 H) [annotator: 'Ali Akbar al-Ghiffari], p. 440,Ch. 43, # 8
- 22. Muhammad Zakariya, al-Sahih wa al-Mu'tabar min Akhbar al-Hujjah al-Muntazar (Majmu'at al-Rasid; 1st edition, 1434 H), pp. 31-32, # 22
- 23. Qur'an 10:35

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