

## Chapter 4

### The Mahdi and his Distinction

In the first chapter of *'Iqd al-Durar* the author narrates from Abu Ayyub al-Ansari who said: 'The Holy Prophet (S) told Fatimah (may Allah's peace be upon her):

"Our Prophet is the best of the Prophets and he is your father. Our martyr is the best of the martyrs and he is Hamza, your father's paternal uncle. And from us is the one who possesses two wings and will fly with them to whatever part of the paradise he wishes. He is your father's paternal cousin Ja'far. And from us are the two *sibt* (offspring) of this Ummah, al-Hasan and al-Husayn and they are your sons. And from us shall come the Mahdi".

Thereafter he writes: 'Hafiz Abu al-Qasim al-Tabarani has narrated this tradition in his *Mu'jam al-Saghir*.<sup>1</sup>

The author says: What honor and greatness Allah has bestowed upon the awaited Mahdi, so that by virtue of his great and truthful grandfather's saying, he got the honor of being amongst the family from whom Allah has removed uncleanness and purified them a (thorough) purification!

### The Mahdi and his lofty position

The author of *'Iqd al-Durar* narrates (in the first chapter) from Abu 'Abd Allah Na'im ibn Hammad who narrates from Ibn 'Abbas who said: 'In his first look, 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus Christ) looked at what would be bestowed upon the *Qa'im* from the progeny of Muhammad and then said: "O Lord, grant me the position of *Qa'im* of the family of Muhammad (ﷺ- Muhammad)."'

It was said to him: "He shall be from the offspring of Ahmad". Thereafter, he looked for the second time and found the same as that he had first seen. He asked (Allah) the same and heard the same reply. He looked for the third time and saw exactly what he had seen before. He requested the same and once again received the same reply.

Also, the author of *'Iqd al-Durar* narrates from Sa'lim al-Ashal: I heard Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Ali

(may Allah be satisfied with them) narrate (a tradition) similar to that, except that he would say: “Musa ibn ‘Imran looked..”.

May my life be sacrificed for you, O awaited Mahdi, O *Qa'im* of *Al-i-Muhammad*! What is this sublime position which Allah has bestowed upon you and distinguished you with, so that both the one addressed by Allah, Musa ibn ‘Imran, and the Spirit of Allah, ‘Isa ibn Maryam (a.s.), despite their exalted position, wished to attain your sublime status, but Allah, the Exalted, did not accede to their request? They both beheld your sublime position and looked at your lofty station, and the honor and exaltedness with which Allah had distinguished you. They were overcome with admiration for it and requested Allah for such a position, but the reply they received was that it was a station singled out for the *Qa'im* of *Al-i-Muhammad*.

Then they looked at the consequences that would result from the existence of the Mahdi and his emergence i.e. the raising of the true creed (of faith) in the East and West, the establishment of equity and justice and the extermination of cruelty and oppression. They requested Allah to make these occur under their patronage and make them the consequence of their mission of propagation. However they were told that this sublime position was exclusively for *Qa'im* of *Al-i-Muhammad*.

## The Mahdi and ‘Isa

Al-Bukhari in his *Sahih*, vol.2, pg. 158, narrates from Abu Hurayra, and he from the Holy Prophet (S) who said:

“How will you be when the son of Maryam shall descend amongst you and your Imam shall be from you.”

The same tradition with similar reference has also been narrated by Muslim.

The author of *Iqd al-Durar* narrates, in the first chapter, from the book *Manaqib al-Mahdi* of Hafiz Abu Na'im al-Isbahani who narrates from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri who narrates from the Holy Prophet (S) as such:

“From us is the one behind whom ‘Isa ibn Maryam shall pray.”<sup>2</sup>

Traditions in this regard are many and what we have narrated about his Imamate, distinction and leadership are adequate.

Al-Kanji in his book *al-Bayan*, after mentioning traditions on Salat (prayers) says: If someone says:

The authenticity of traditions that ‘Isa (a.s.) shall stand for prayers behind the Mahdi (a.s.) and will fight along with him and will kill Dajjal in the presence of the Mahdi, and the Mahdi (a.s.) will have precedence over ‘Isa at the time of prayers and precedence in jihad (holy war) are all well-known.

The authenticity of these traditions is established with the Ahl al-Sunnah and the Shi'a too have narrated them in a similar manner.

Therefore, all the Muslims, whether Shi'a or Sunni, are unanimous and united over the evidence of the Mahdi's existence which means that except for the sayings of Shi'a and Sunnis, the sayings of other sects is immaterial. In spite of such consensus on this matter and its authenticity we ask: Amongst the two (i.e. the Mahdi and 'Isa) who has precedence over the other in prayers and battle?!

We reply: The Mahdi and 'Isa are both leaders, one is the Prophet and the other is the Imam; although in a congregation the one who is the Imam shall be the leader over the other who is the Prophet. Besides, none of the two fear from reproach (of others) seeking the path of Allah and both are immaculate from all types of sins such as deceit, showing off (the good deeds) and hypocrisy. Moreover, none of the two will invite the others towards an act which is outside the ruling of the Shar'iah (religious laws) and against the wish of Allah and His Prophet.

When such is the affair, then the Imam (who is the Mahdi) is superior to *ma'mum* (the follower, who is Isa) because, Muhammad's Shari'ah has commanded as such. The proof of this is what the Holy Prophet (S) has said:

“The one whose recitation of Qur'an is better (than others) shall lead the people. If it is equal amongst all, then the wisest shall lead and if still they are equal, the most learned shall lead. If yet they are equal, the one who has taken precedence over the others in Hijrah (migration) shall lead and if again they remain the same, the one with a handsome face shall lead”.

Thus if the Imam realizes that 'Isa is superior to him, it is not permissible for him to take precedence over 'Isa according to the Shari'ah, since Allah has kept the Imam pure and clean from every abominable act.

Similarly if 'Isa realizes that the Mahdi is superior to him, it is not permissible for him to allow the Mahdi to follow him because, Allah has protected him from pretension, hypocrisy and showing-off. Rather, when the Imam is certain that he is more learned than 'Isa it is permissible for him to take precedence over 'Isa. Similarly when 'Isa becomes certain that the Mahdi is more learned than him, he will allow the Mahdi to take precedence and he himself will follow him. This was regarding superiority in prayers.

Jihad (the holy war), is giving one's life before the one who has an inclination towards Allah through this means. If it is not such, then nobody has the right to take part in Jihad in front of the Holy Prophet (S) and someone other than him. The verity of this saying are the following Divine words: –

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنْ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ ۖ يُفَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ ۖ وَعَدَا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالْقُرْآنِ ۚ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَاسْتَبَشِرُوا بَبَيْعِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُمْ بِهِ ۖ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

***Surely Allah has bought of the believers their persons and their property for this, that they shall have the garden; they fight in Allah's way, so they slay and are slain; a promise which is binding on Him in the Torah and the Injil and the Quran; and who is more faithful to his covenant than Allah? Rejoice therefore in the pledge which you have made; and that is the mighty achievement (9:111)***

Another point is that the Imam is the representative of the Holy Prophet amongst the people, and 'Isa (Jesus) cannot take precedence over the Holy Prophet. Similarly, it is not permissible for him to take precedence over his representative.

## **The Mahdi and the Ummah**

In the third chapter of *'Iqd al-Durar* its author narrates from Abu 'Umar al-Maqri and he, from Hudhayfa bin al-Yaman and he, from the Holy Prophet (S) who while speaking about the incident of Sufyani and his wicked deeds said:

“At that time, a cry shall be heard from the heavens: ‘O people, verily Allah has severed the hands of the oppressors, hypocrites and their followers from you and made the best from the Ummah of Muhammad (S) to be your guide. Join him in Mecca, for indeed he is the Mahdi.’”

Allah has exclusively eulogized the Islamic Ummah in His Holy Book and attributed this Ummah with qualities if they were to take pride in one of them they would be justified let alone if they took pride in all of them.

His first statement:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا

***And thus We have made you a medium (just) nation... (2:143)***

Second:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

***You are the best of the nations raised up for (the benefit of) men... (3:110)***

Third:

لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

**...that you may be bearers of witness to the people.. (2: 143)**

Fourth:

هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ

**He has chosen you. (22:78)**

Fifth:

هُوَ سَمَّاكُمْ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ

**..He named you Muslims since before...(22:78)**

Besides these, there are other traditions and writings which have come with regard to their superiority and if there was no other superiority but the relationship and kinship with the Holy Prophet of Islam (S) it would be sufficient pride for them.

Verily, the Islamic Ummah is that very Ummah in which exists specimens of martyrs of Karbala as well as the battles of Badr and Uhud; amongst them being Hamza, the Chief of the Martyrs.

In them are the likes of those who accompanied the Prophet in battles and fought with their lives and properties in the way of Allah. In them are examples like Salman, Abu Dharr, Miqdad and Ammar, Talha, Zubayr, Abu 'Ubaydah and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas. Moreover, the tradition, which we had mentioned says:

“The Mahdi is the best of Muhammad’s ‘Ummah”.

Therefore, speaking about his superiority, suffice it is to mention this very fact that he is the best among the Islamic Ummah.

The author of *'Iqd al-Durar* narrates (in the seventh chapter) from the *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad and the *al-'Awali* of Hafiz Abu Na'im and these two from 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas who said: 'The Holy Prophet (S) said:

“Destruction is not for a nation (Ummah) in which I am the first of it, 'Isa the last and Mahdi the middlemost”.

Ibn Hajar in his *al-Sawa'iq* narrates from Abu Na'im who narrates from Ibn 'Abbas that the Holy Prophet (S) said: – “A nation whose first is myself; whose last is 'Isa ibn Maryam and center one Mahdi will never be destroyed.”

The same tradition can be found on page 151 of *Is'af al-Raghibin*.[3](#)

The author of *'Iqd al-Durar* has narrated (in the seventh chapter) from the *Sunan* of Nisa'i and he from Anas ibn Malik who said: 'The Holy Prophet (S) said:

"Destruction is not for a nation of which I am the first, the Mahdi the middlemost and the Messiah the last."

Al-Kanji in his book *al-Bayan*, after narrating the afore-said tradition says:

'This tradition is *hasan* (good) and Hafiz Abu Na'im and Ahmad ibn Hanbal have narrated it in their books *al-Awali* and *Musnad* respectively. His saying that 'Isa shall be the last,' does not mean that 'Isa will remain alive after Mahdi because as it has been proved, the Mahdi is the Last Imam and except for him, no other Imam has been mentioned by them, and it is not possible for the people to remain without an Imam.

'If it is said that 'Isa shall remain after him as an Imam of the Ummah, we reply:

That cannot be said because it has been clearly stated that there will be no good after him (the Mahdi). If 'Isa remains amongst the people, it cannot be said that there is no good among them.

It also cannot be said: 'Isa is his vicegerent because his dignity is much higher than the position of vicegerency. It can also not be said he is independent in Imamate as the ignorant people shall start imagining Muhammad's nation to have changed and converted into a Christian nation and this is unbelief. (*kufr*).

'Therefore, it is necessary to interpret the tradition in this manner that Muhammad (S) was the first leader and the first inviter to the Islamic Shari'ah and the Mahdi is the middlemost inviter. This interpretation appears to be correct to me. It is also possible to interpret the Mahdi's middle stage as his superiority and betterment over the others because he is the Imam and 'Isa shall descend after him and confirm his position of Imamate. Moreover he shall become his associate and helper in his affairs and declare to the people the integrity of whatever Imam claims. Therefore Isa is his last confirmer'.

The author of *Kashf al-Ghumma* after mentioning what we have narrated from the book of *al-Bayan* regarding the interpretation of this tradition says:-

'If, by middlemost of the Mahdi is meant his superiority then it is apprehended that he will be better than 'Ali too and I can find no person believing in this talk. However, we may interpret this as such: The Holy Prophet (S) was the first inviter and the Mahdi was the middlemost because he followed the Prophet (S) and was of the people of his nation. He was nearer than his other followers and better placed in the center than those living on his path. However, since 'Isa was the leader of another nation and would invite (the people) at the end of time towards a Shar'iah other than his (i.e. Islam), thus it is proper that he is called the last inviter towards Islam. And Allah knows best.'

The author says: The details regarding these two noble traditions which we have mentioned is that we say: The word of negation *lan* (لن) denotes nullity forever. That is to say, if this letter appears in a sentence, it shall render it ineffective (it shall not occur). 'Destruction' in tradition either refers to worldly

torments just as some of the previous nations got afflicted by it) or deviation after receiving guidance and blasphemy after having belief (just as it occurred with some of the previous nations). Or it refers to disconnection of the field of social life. Just as a person dies, a nation too dies and fades away.

As Allah says:

﴿وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ﴾

### ***Every nation has its term.. (7:34)***

The meaning of *wasat* (وسط) or *awsat* (اوسط) is its apparent meaning which is that which is between the first and last. It does not refer to the best of the Ummah because in the second tradition the word ‘middle’ occurs before words ‘first’ and ‘last,’ and because the word *fi* (في) (in the first tradition) and the occurrence of the word *wasat* (وسط) as an adverb. Thus one cannot interpret *wasat* to mean ‘the best’.

The Holy Prophet (S) being the ‘first’ of the Ummah is apparent. The Mahdi being the ‘middle’ is because he was born in the year 256 A.H. and he is living until he appears by the will of Allah. ‘Isa is the ‘last’ of the Ummah because he shall descend and return to earth after the emergence of Mahdi. Thus, the words ‘first’, ‘last’ and ‘middle’ have been used in the literal sense for these three personalities and not in any other sense.

After becoming aware of what we have written we say: What the Holy Prophet (S) meant by this saying, although Allah knows best, is that how can a nation that is encompassed, in the beginning, middle and end, by sacred personalities such as these, be destroyed? Therefore, it is by the blessing of these three personalities that Allah has refrained from sending worldly chastisement, or that deviation will not occur for them as a result of the teachings and training of these three personalities (either directly or indirectly) or that by being attentive to people like them and their reformatory instructions, a nation shall not be destroyed and will not lose its social life.

## **The Mahdi and Paradise**

The author *‘Iqd al-Durar* narrates (in the seventh chapter) from Ibn M<sup>aj</sup>jah, al-Tabarani, Abu Na’im and some others who in turn narrate from Anas ibn Malik that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“We, the seven sons of ‘Abd al-Muttalib are the chiefs (*sad<sup>iq</sup>*) of the people of Paradise: I, my brother ‘Ali, my paternal uncle Hamza, Ja’far, al-Hasan, al-Husayn and the Mahdi.”<sup>4</sup>

Ibn Hajar in *al-Sawa’iq* (page 112) narrates from Ibn M<sup>aj</sup>jah, and he from Anas that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“We, the sons of ‘Abd al-Muttalib are the chiefs of the people of Paradise: I, Hamza, ‘Ali, Ja’far, al-Hasan, al-Husayn and the Mahdi.”

In *Nahj al-Balagha*, 'Ali (a.s.) says: "Know that ***“whoever is wary of Allah, He shall make a way out for him.*** (65:2) from seditions, and (make) a light (to help him) out of darkness. He will keep him forever in whatever (condition) he wishes. He will make him reside in a station of honor with Him, in an abode He has made for Himself; its canopy is His Throne, its light His radiance, its visitors His angels and its friends His Messengers." (Sermon 183)

The author says: Paradise is a place, which Allah has prepared for His obedient servants. Thus its inhabitants are the best ones and its residents are the most righteous ones. In them are the Prophets, the Messengers, the veracious believers and the martyrs. With these, the Mahdi (a.s.) is amongst the seven chiefs of Paradise and the great chief over here refers to the greatness of spirituality and not greatness in age.

The author of *Nur al-Absar* on page 229 writes: 'Ibn Shayrawiya in his book *al-Firdaws* reports from Ibn 'Abbas who said: The Holy Prophet (S) said:

"The Mahdi is the peacock of the inhabitants of Paradise."

The author of *Yanabi' al-Mawadda* too has narrated a tradition similar to this one from *Kunuz al-Daqa'iq* quoted from Ahmad ibn Hanbal.[5](#)

The author says: – Comparing Mahdi with a peacock amongst the inhabitants of Paradise (while knowing who its inhabitants are) is a beautiful expression of his excellence which is the specialty of Mahdi and no other human being.

Verily, whatever is derived from Mahdi's existence and his emergence such as Divine majesty and beauty, greatness and glory is such an affair, which has not occurred for any of the Prophets or Messengers. Why should not it be so when traditions which are abundant (*mustafidhah*) clearly stipulate that he shall fill the earth with equity and justice, and the earth will be radiant with the light of its Lord, and his dominion shall encompass the East and the West?

These signs of beauty and majesty are specialties of the awaited Mahdi, and he will be among the inhabitants of Paradise like the peacock in comparison to other birds.

## [The Mahdi and Obedience](#)

The author of *Iqd al-Durar* narrates in chapter 3 of section 4 from Abu 'Abd Allah Na'im ibn Hammad and he, from Jabir ibn 'Abd Allah who said: – A person once visited Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Baqir and said: Take these 500 dirhams from me for the Zakat (alms-tax) on my wealth. Abu Ja'far said: "You take it and give it to your Muslim neighbors and those brethren who are in dire need". Thereafter he said: "When Mahdi from our Ahl al-Bayt shall emerge, he shall distribute wealth equally and act justly with the people. Therefore, whoever obeys him has obeyed Allah and whoever disobeys him has disobeyed Allah".

The author of *'Iqd al-Durar* narrates in the fourth chapter, section 3, from Hafiz Abu 'Abd Allah Na'im Ibn Hammad that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“A caller will call out from the heavens in Muharram: Know that, the chosen one of Allah amongst His servants is so and so. Thus listen to him and obey him.”<sup>6</sup>

The same tradition has come in the seventh chapter of the afore-said book and its author mentions that by so and so is meant the Mahdi.

The author of *Yanabi' al-Mawadda* narrates (on page 435) from Ibn M<sup>u</sup>jah who in turn narrates from Ibn 'Umar who narrates from the Holy Prophet (S) who said:

“An angel shall cry out from the heavens and will urge the people towards him and say: Verily the Mahdi has emerged. Obey him.”

## The Mahdi and the Truth

The author of *'Iqd al-Durar* narrates (in the seventh chapter) from the *Mu'jam* of Abu al-Qasim al-Tabarani, *Manaqib al-Mahdi* of Abu Na'im al-Isbahani and Hafiz Abu 'Abd Allah Na'im ibn Hammad who in turn narrate from Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) that the Holy Prophet (S) said: –

“When the caller shall cry out from the heavens that the truth is in Muhammad's household (ﷺ-i Muhammad), Mahdi shall emerge at that time”.<sup>7</sup>

In the afore-mentioned book, section 3, Chapter 4, its author narrates from Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) as such: “When the caller shall call out from the heavens: ‘Indeed the truth is with ﷺ-i Muhammad’, the Mahdi shall come forth”.

The author of *Durar al-Musawiyah* writes: Ahmad ibn Musa ibn Mardawiya narrates through various channels from 'A'isha, the wife of the Holy Prophet (S) that he said:

“The truth is with 'Ali and 'Ali is with the truth. The two will never separate until they meet me at the fountain.”

The author says: The son appears to be so similar to the father that the Holy Prophet (S) made this remark with regards to both of them.

## The Mahdi and the Caliphate

The author of *'Iqd al-Durar* narrates (in the eighth chapter) from Hafiz Abu Na'im from 'Abd Allah ibn 'Umar that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“The Mahdi shall emerge and above him will be a cloud in which will be an angel calling out: Verily, this is the Mahdi, the caliph (*khalifah*) of Allah, so follow him.”

The author of *Nur al-Absar* has narrated the same tradition on page 231 from Abu Na'im, al-Tabarani

and others who in turn have all narrated from ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Umar.<sup>8</sup>

The author of *Is‘af al-Raghibin*, on page 153, says: ‘Traditions mention that at the time of his emergence, an angel shall cry out over his head: “This is the Mahdi, the *khalifah* of Allah, therefore obey him”. Then the people will yield to him’.

The author of *Yanabi’ al-Mawadda* narrates on page 447 from *Fara’id al-Simtayn* from Abu Na’im from Ibn ‘Umar that the Holy Prophet (S) said: –

“The Mahdi shall emerge and an angel above him shall cry out: This is the Mahdi, the representative (*khalifah*) of Allah. Therefore follow him.”<sup>9</sup>

## The Mahdi and Allegiance

The author of *‘Iqd al-Durar* narrates (in Section 3, Chapter 9) from the *Sunan* of Abu ‘Amr Uthman ibn Sa’id al-Maqri and *Al-Fitan* of Hafiz Abu ‘Abd Allah Na’im ibn Hammad who in turn narrate from Ishaq ibn ‘Awf who said: ‘On the flag of the Mahdi shall be written: allegiance is for Allah ( **البيعة لله** )’.

The author of *Yanabi’ al-Mawadda* too has narrated from *Fasl al-Khitab*, pg. 435, from Nawf that he said: “On the flag of the Mahdi shall be written: allegiance is for Allah”.<sup>10</sup>

## The Mahdi and the Angels

The author of *‘Iqd al-Durar* narrates (in the eighth chapter) from Abu ‘Amr ‘Uthman ibn Sa’id al-Maqri in his *Sunan*, who in turn narrate from Hudhayfa ibn al-Yamān that the Holy Prophet (S) while speaking of the Mahdi and the allegiance paid to him between *Rukn* and *Maqam* said: “Jibra’il (Gabriel) shall be in front of him and Mikā’il on his right. The inhabitants of the heavens and earth, the beasts and birds shall rejoice at his presence.”<sup>11</sup>

The author of *Is‘af al-Raghibin* writes on page 152 as such: – ‘It has come in traditions that Allah, the Exalted, shall support the Mahdi with three thousand angels<sup>12</sup> and the people of Cave (*Ahl al-Kahf*) shall be among his helpers.

## Mahdi and People of the Cave

The author of *‘Iqd al-Durar* writes in the seventh chapter: Imam Abu Ishaq al-Tha’labi in his exegesis of the Holy Qur’an, said with regards to the incident of the people of the Cave: ‘They took their places of sleep and remain therein until the end of time when the Mahdi shall emerge. Then Allah will revive them, and then they shall return back to their sleeping places and will not rise until the Day of Judgment’.

The author says: In the same exegesis, under divine saying of:

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا

***Do you suppose that the Companions of the Cave and the Inscription were among Our wonderful signs? (18:9)***

it is mentioned that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“Verily the Mahdi (a.s.) shall greet the people of the Cave. Allah, the Exalted, shall revive them and then they shall answer his greetings. Thereafter they shall return to sleep and will not rise until the Day of Judgment. [13](#)

The author says: ‘Perhaps the reason that Allah will revive them is that they may give allegiance to the Mahdi. The author of *Is’af al-Raghibin* has said that according to certain traditions they shall be among the helpers and companions of the Mahdi.

## **The Mahdi is the Proof (Hujjah) of Allah**

The author of *Yanabi’ al-Mawadda* narrates (on page 448) from the book *Fara’id al-Simtayn* from al-Hasan ibn Khalid who said: ‘Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha (a.s.) said:

“He who has no piety, has no religion.

***Indeed the most honorable of you in the sight of Allah is the most God-wary among you (49:13).***”

Thereafter he said: “The fourth from my offspring is the son of the chief of slave-girls. Through him, Allah shall cleanse the earth of every cruelty and oppression. He is the one whose birth people will doubt and for him there will be an occultation. When he shall emerge, ***the earth will be illuminated by the light of its Lord (39:69)*** and the scale of justice will be established amongst the people such that no one will oppress the other.

Verily, he is the one for whom the earth will roll up and he has no shadow. He is the one for whom a caller from the heavens will call out and all the inhabitants of the earth will hear: Be aware that the Proof (*Hujjah*) of Allah has emerged at the House of Allah. Therefore follow him as truth is in him and with him.”

## **The Mahdi and the completion of religion**

Ibn Hajar in his *al-Sawa’iq* (page 97) narrates from Abu al-Qasim al-Tabarani that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“The Mahdi is from us. Religion shall find its completion through him just as it found its expansion through us.”

The same tradition has been mentioned in *Is’af al-Raghibin*, page 148.

Sayyid Mu'min ibn al-Hasan al-Shablanji in *Nur al-Absar*, page 231, narrates from 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him) who said:

I said: "O Messenger of Allah, is the Mahdi from us, the family of Muhammad, or from other than us"? He replied: "No. Rather he shall be from us. Through him, Allah shall bring the religion to its completion just as He had expanded it through us." [14](#)

This matter is further strengthened by numerous (*mustafidhah*) traditions which give indication to this fact that religion shall not come to its stage of completion until twelve Caliphs come and pass over it. As research shows, you already know what Ibn Abi al-Hadid narrated about the consensus of the Muslims on this fact and that is the duties shall not cease but with Mahdi. Thus he is the last of the legatees and the religion of Islam shall terminate in him, just as his forefather was the last of the Prophets and the religion commenced with him.

## The Mahdi is the Twelfth Caliph

The author of *Yanabi' al-Mawadda* narrates (on page 447) from the book *Fara'id al-Simtayn* from Sa'id ibn Jubair who narrates from Ibn 'Abbas that the Holy Prophet (S) said: –

“Verily my Caliphs and successors after me are the Proofs (*hujaj*) of Allah upon the people and they are twelve in number. The first of them is 'Ali and the last of them is my son the Mahdi.”

The author says: All those reasons and arguments which give indication to this fact that the Caliphs after the Holy Prophet (S) are twelve in number and are all from Quraysh or Bani Hashim, give indication to the afore-mentioned matter too. All those reasons have been collected by Ahmad Hanbal in his *Musnad*, and by other Sunni scholars and experts of traditions. The reasons which they have collected cannot be conformed but to what we, the Shi'a Ithna 'Ashar, say: The successors to the Holy Prophet (S) are twelve in number where the first of them is 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, Amir al-Mu'minin and the last of them is Muhammad ibn al-Hasan the Mahdi (a.s.). May Allah place us amongst his followers and helpers.

## Mahdi is the Twelfth Wasi (Legatee)

The author of *Yanabi' al-Mawadda* narrates (on page 486) from the *Manaqib* of al-Khawrazmi who narrates from 'Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha who narrates from his father and he from his father that the Holy Prophet (S), while relating his own merits and the merits of his Ahl al-Bayt, and something about his ascension (to heaven) said:

“O my Lord, who are my legatees (*awsiya*)?” A voice called out: “O Muhammad, your legatees are those whose names have been written over the enclosure of My Throne (*'arsh*)”.

Therefore, I looked and witnessed twelve lights; on each light was a green line on which was the name of one of my legatees, the first of them was 'Ali and the last of them the Q<sup>u</sup>'im”.

In the afore-mentioned book, its author narrates (on page 486) from the *Manaqib* of al-Khawrazmi and

he from Abu Sulayman, that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“The night when I was being taken towards the heaven... (and he narrated the same tradition so far as Allah says): “O Muhammad, do you wish to meet them”? I replied: “Yes my Lord.” Then Allah said: “Look towards the right of the Throne (*‘arsh*).”

As I looked I suddenly saw ‘Ali, Fatimah, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn, Muhammad ibn ‘Ali, Ja’far ibn Muhammad, Musa ibn Ja’far, ‘Ali ibn Musa, Muhammad ibn ‘Ali, ‘Ali ibn Muhammad and al-Hasan ibn ‘Ali with Muhammad al-Mahdi ibn al-Hasan amongst them, like a glittering star.

Thereafter He said: “O Muhammad, they are My Proofs (*hujaj*) upon My servants and they are your legatees.”

In the same book, the author narrates (on page 487) from *Fara’id al-Simtayn*, from Sa’id ibn Jubayr, from Ibn ‘Abbas that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“Verily, my legatees and the Proofs (*hujaj*) of Allah upon the people after me are twelve in number. The first of them is my brother and the last of them is my son.”

It was said: “O Messenger of Allah, who is your brother”? He replied: “‘Ali.”

Again he was asked: “Who is your son”? He replied: “Al-Mahdi.”

Again, in the same book, the author narrates (on page 487) from Ibn ‘Abbas that the Holy Prophet (S) said: –

“I am the Chief of the Prophets and ‘Ali the Chief of legatees. Verily the legatees after me are twelve in number. The first of them is ‘Ali and the last is the Mahdi.”

## **Mahdi is the Twelfth Imam**

The author of *Yanabi’ al-Mawadda* narrates (on page 492) from the *Manaqib* of al-Khawrazmi that Abu ‘Abd Allah al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali said: “Once when I visited my grandfather, the Holy Prophet (S), he made me sit on his lap and said: “Allah shall select from your loins nine Imams (leaders), the ninth of whom shall be the *Qa’im*. All of them are the same in rank and position before Allah.”

In the same book, the author narrates (on page 493) from the afore-said book of al-Khawrazmi who narrates from ‘Ali (a.s.) that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“The Imams after me are twelve in number. The first of them is you O ‘Ali, and the last of them shall be the *Qa’im* through whom Allah shall liberate the East and West”.

## **Mahdi is the Imam of the Age**

‘Ali (a.s.) in *Nahj al-Balagha* says: – The earth shall not remain vacant of God’s *Hujjah* and *Qa’im*. He is either manifest and well-known or concealed and fearful (of his enemies). It is narrated from al-Taftazani that he said: ‘Ali (a.s.) said: The earth will not be devoid of an Imam who will rise for Allah with a Proof, whether openly and well-known, or fearful and unknown”.

In this regard, there is another tradition, which is famous amongst Shi'a and Sunnis and as far as the authenticity of this tradition is concerned, there exists no controversy between the two sects. In this tradition, the Holy Prophet (S) says:

“The one who dies and does not recognize the Imam of his age has died the death of ignorance.”

We ask: “Who is the one who is the Imam of this time?”

This is a question which requires an answer, and I do not see any correct reply that is in conformity with the proofs, and whose correctness is witnessed by reports and traditions, except our statement: He is the awaited Mahdi.

We have the following evidence for that:

The first evidence: Traditions clearly stipulate this fact that he is the Caliph (vicegerent) of Allah and the Divine *Hujjah* (Proof) and what can be understood by these two attributes, is that its possessor must be an Imam i.e. one who is a deputy of the Holy Prophet (S) since Imamate according to us (the Shi'a) is only the guardianship of religious and worldly affairs on behalf of the Holy Prophet (S).

It is apparent from the traditions which we have mentioned before, that awaited Mahdi, is the same Abu al-Qasim Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-'Askari. When it is proved that the Mahdi will be the Caliph and *Hujjah* of Allah on the day of his emergence, it is also proved that at present too, he is the Caliph and *Hujjah* of Allah. His being the Imam is also according to this meaning, because amongst the Muslims, there is no one who reckons the Imam to be separate from the Caliph and *Hujjah*.

In other words, if someone says that the Imam of the Age is not the Mahdi, he is bound to reject one of the following two matters: Firstly that the awaited Mahdi is not Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-'Askari and secondly that the Mahdi shall neither be Allah's Caliph nor *Hujjah* at the time of his emergence.

In this regard, we say: Since both of these points have been proved by the appropriate traditions, there remains no way to reject any one of them let alone both.

The second evidence: In many of the traditions (previously mentioned for our readers) we have been enjoined to obey and follow him and forbidden from disobeying and opposing him. In fact, some traditions state that one who obeys him has obeyed Allah and one who disobeys him has disobeyed Allah. Now, the essential condition for enjoining obedience to him and forbidding disobedience to him, in all cases, is his being an infallible Imam, free from every error and forgetfulness.

Indeed, enjoining obedience to him and forbidding disobedience to him in all cases, indicates to us two things:

Firstly that the Mahdi is infallible. Otherwise enjoining obedience to him would necessitate obedience in all cases, even in sins. Similarly forbidding disobedience to him would lead sometimes to forbidding obedience to Allah. For clarifying this matter we further say: If he is not infallible, it is possible that he

may command us to disobedience of Allah and forbid us from His obedience. Consequently what will necessarily follow is that enjoining obedience to him will amount to enjoining disobedience to Allah and forbidding disobedience to him will amount to forbidding obedience to Allah.

Rather, in case of the Mahdi not being infallible, the statement of the Imam (a.s.) that has been narrated in some traditions: 'Whoever obeys him has obeyed Allah, and whoever disobeys him has disobeyed Allah', necessitates that Allah will sometimes be disobeyed through obedience, and obeyed through disobedience, and that, as is apparent, is unreasonable.

Secondly, enjoining obedience and forbidding disobedience includes all people unconditionally. Thus his obedience becomes obligatory and his disobedience forbidden upon every one, and if there was another Imam this unconditional decree would not be correct because, he would sometimes command opposition to the Imam and forbid his obedience.

The third evidence: Thirdly, there are many traditions which prove that the Mahdi is the twelfth Caliph of the Holy Prophet (S) or his twelfth legatee (*waṣī*) or the twelfth Imam or the twelfth *Hujjah* from the *Hujaj* (Proofs) of Allah. These traditions clearly state his Khilafah, his being a legatee, his Imamate and that he is the Proof (*Hujjah*) of Allah upon His creatures.

Yes, these traditions establish that the awaited Mahdi possesses these virtues and qualities right from the time of his birth until his departure from this world. However, he was silent during the time of his father, al-Hasan al-'Askari and it was obligatory for him to obey his father. But after his father's demise he has been the caliph of Allah and the legatee of His Messenger, and he will be the Imam and the *Hujjah* till the end of his life, and the essential condition for this matter is that he should be an Imam in this period.

The fourth evidence: Fourthly, there are *mustafidhah* and in fact, *mutawatir* traditions from Shi'a and Sunni sources that the Holy Prophet (S) had said that there will be twelve Imams, or Caliphs or legatees (*awṣiyā'*) after him."

In some of those traditions it is mentioned that they are from Quraysh and in others that they are from Bani Hashim, and some say that the first of them is 'Ali and the last is the Mahdi. In other traditions, the names of each of the Imams have been mentioned one after the other. Those wishing to have information about them can refer to the books of tradition especially the *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad and the *Mustadrak* of Abu 'Abd Allah Hakim. Similarly, they can refer to the books which have been written about their virtues like the *Manaqib* of al-Khawrazmi, *Fara'id al-Simtayn* and *Yanabi' al-Mawadda*.

Now, in order to substantiate what we have written we shall set forth some of them from the book *Durar al-Musawiya fi Sharh al-Aqa'id al-Ja'fariya*:

- In his *Sahih*, Muslim reports from Jabir ibn Samurah that the Holy Prophet (S) said: "Religion shall continue to exist consistently till the time when the Hour is established or twelve successors (*khalifah*)

from the Quraysh who are guardians over the people have come and gone”.

‘Ali ibn Muhammad too has referred to this tradition and concludes that nine of them shall be from the progeny of al-Husayn and the Mahdi is one of them.

– ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn Samurah said: “I asked the Holy Prophet (S): ‘Show me the path of salvation.’ He (S) replied: “O son of Samurah. When desires diversify and opinions differ, it is upon you to stick to ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib. Verily, he is the leader (Imam) of my Ummah and my successor (*khalifah*) over them after me...” until he (S) said:

“Surely, from them is the Imam of my Ummah, the two Chiefs of the youths of Paradise, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, and nine descendants from the progeny of al-Husayn, the ninth of them being the *Qa’im* of my Ummah”.

– Ibn al-Maghalzi narrates from Abu Umamah that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“The Imams after me are twelve and all of them are from the Quraysh. Nine of them are from the progeny of al-Husayn and the Mahdi is among them”.

– It has been narrated from Abu Saleh who has narrated from Zayd ibn Thabit that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“The world shall not come to an end until a person from the progeny of al-Husayn emerges to lead my nation. He shall fill the earth with justice just as it had been filled with oppression.”

We asked: “Who is that person”?

He replied: “He is the ninth Imam from the descendant of al-Husayn.”

– Another tradition has been narrated from al-Hasan ibn ‘Ali al-Razi, at the end of which the Holy Prophet (S) says:

“Righteous and infallible leaders shall emerge from the descendants of al-Husayn. Among them is the Mahdi of this Ummah, behind whom ‘Isa ibn Maryam shall pray. He shall be the ninth one from the offspring of al-Husayn.”

The fifth evidence: Fifthly, some traditions have come regarding the occultation of Mahdi and his concealment from the people. These traditions (which will be mentioned later on) clearly stipulate that Mahdi (a.s.) is a leader whose obedience is obligatory – whether in his absence or presence and whether he is manifest or hidden. As such, the Muslims are bound to recognize this quality of his.

Among these traditions is what has been narrated in *Yanabi’ al-Mawadda*, page 488, from Sa’id ibn Jubayr who narrates from Ibn ‘Abbas that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“Verily, ‘Ali is the leader of my Ummah after me and from his progeny shall be the awaited *Qa’im* who shall fill the earth with equity and justice just as it had been filled with cruelty and oppression. I swear by Allah who appointed me by the truth and as the bearer of glad tidings and as a warner, that those whose belief is firm in his Imamate (during Occultation) are scarcer than red sulphur.”

The author of afore-said book narrates from the *Manaqib* of al-Khawrazmi that Abu Ja’far Muhammad

al-Baqir (a.s.) said: The Holy Prophet (S) said:

“Blessed is he who finds the *Qa'im* from my Ahl al-Bayt in a state when he has followed him during the period of his Occultation, before his emergence, and has made friendship with his friends and enmity with his enemies. Such a person is amongst my companions and friends and he shall be the most honorable one of my Ummah before me on the Day of Judgment”.

The same author of the same book quotes on page 494 from the *Manaqib* of al-Khawrazmi and he from Jabir ibn 'Abd Allah al-Ansari that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“O Jabir, verily my legateses and the leaders of the Muslims after me are firstly 'Ali followed by al-Hasan, then al-Husayn, then 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, then Muhammad ibn 'Ali, known as al-Baqir; very soon you shall meet him, O Jabir, and when you do so, send my greetings to him.

“After him shall come Ja'far ibn Muhammad, then Musa ibn Ja'far, then 'Ali ibn Musa, then Muhammad ibn 'Ali, then 'Ali ibn Muhammad, then al-Hasan ibn 'Ali and then the *Qa'im* – his name shall be the same as my name and his agnomen too shall be the same as mine. He is the son of al-Hasan ibn 'Ali. He is the one whom God shall give victory over the East and West. He is the one who shall remain hidden from his friends such that they will not remain steadfast in his Imamate except those whose hearts God has tested for faith.” [15](#)

The author of *Durar al-Musawiyah* writes: 'Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Mahmud al-Hafiz al-Bukhari, known as Khawaja Parsa, in the margin of his book *Fasl al-Khitab* when referring to the birth of the Mahdi says:

“There are innumerable traditions on this subject, and traditions about the virtues of the Mahdi (the one who is the Master of the time; the Hidden one from the public eye, and the one who is existing at all times) are many and in support of each other. Moreover, traditions about his emergence, his illuminating light, his bringing to life the Shari'ah of Muhammad, his battles in the way of Allah and his purifying the world from uncleanness are all decisive.

“His companions are pure from every doubt and sound from every flaw. They are those who have traversed the path of guidance and gone towards research through the channel of truth. Caliphate and Imamate shall end in him and right from the time his father bid farewell to this world he has been the Imam and will remain so until the Day of Judgment. 'Isa shall pray behind him and acknowledge him and will invite the people to follow his creed, which is nothing but the creed of the Holy Prophet.”

Sayyid (Hamid Husayn, the author of *'Abaqat al-Anwar*) in *Istiqsa' al-Iffham* says:

‘A copy of what has been written in this margin has been read out to him (i.e. Khawaja Parsa) and corrected.’

## Messengership in Childhood and His Imamate

Whatever we have written about Mahdi and his characteristics, necessarily proves that he was raised to the position of Imamate and held this glorious position when he was only a young child of five years, not having reached the age of maturity. Is that conceivable, or is it necessary for a Prophet or Messenger or Caliph to have reached the age of maturity?

In this regard, we say: This is a theological issue, and this is not the place to discuss it in detail. However, we say in brief: Based on the truth that Messengership, Prophethood, Imamate and successorship (*khilafah*) lie in the Hands of the Exalted Allah and nobody else has any choice or authority in this regard, this matter is rationally conceivable. There is nothing to prevent it along with the presence of proof, because Allah, the Exalted, is able to combine, in a child, all the requirements for Messengership and Imamate.

Yes, reason accepts this that the Exalted Allah takes someone as His friend and then makes him a Prophet or a Messenger or appoints him as an Imam (leader) and an executor (*waṣī*) while he is a child not having reached maturity. This is because there exists no weakness in the Power of Allah, and the story of 'Isa and Yahya's Prophethood bear testimony in the truth of what we say.

The author of *Basa'ir al-Darajat* narrates from 'Ali ibn Isbāṭ as such:

'I saw Imam Abu Ja'far approaching me. When he came close to me I quickly cast my glance at him and looked at him from head to toe so that I could describe him to my friends in Egypt. Then he went into prostration and said:

"Verily Allah has set forth argumentation in the matter of Imamate just as He had done so in the case of Prophethood and He has said:

وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا

**...And We granted him wisdom while yet a child. (19: 12)**

Also, He has said:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً

**...Until when he attains his maturity and reaches forty years... (46: 15)"**

Thus it is possible that he is given wisdom while he is yet a child, and it is possible that he is given wisdom when he is forty years of age'.

The author of *Yanabi' al-Mawadda* after mentioning the matter of the Mahdi's birth, narrates on page

452 from the book *Fasl al-Khitab* as such: “It has been said that the Exalted Allah granted him wisdom, in his childhood and also made him a sign (ﷺ) for the people of the world, as He, the Exalted, says with regard to one of His Prophets:

يَا يَحْيَىٰ خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ ۖ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا

***O Yahya! Take hold of the Book with strength, and We granted him wisdom while yet a child. (19:12)***

Also, He says:

قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ آتَانِيَ الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا

***They said: How should we speak to one who was a child in the cradle? He said: Surely I am the servant of Allah; He has given me the Book and made me a Prophet. (19:29–30)***

Ibn Hajar in his *al-Sawa’iq* (on page 114) after relating the incident of the demise of Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-’Askari writes: – “He did not appoint anyone as his successor but his son, Abu al-Qasim Muhammad al-Hujjah whose age at the time of his father’s demise was five years. However Allah granted him wisdom at that time.”<sup>16</sup>

At the time of his father’s demise he was five years old and Allah granted him wisdom in his very childhood just as He made Prophet Yahya an Imam in his infancy and appointed ‘Isa as a Prophet in his childhood. Also, al-Shabrawi in *Al-Ithaf*, pg. 79, mentions his successorship to have started at the age of five after his father’s demise and reckons his birth to have occurred in the night of 15th Sha’ban.

Ibn Khallikan too (in *Wafayat al-A’yan*, vol. 1, pg. 451) has mentioned the birth of the Mahdi to be on the 15th Sha’ban 255 A.H. Suyuti in *Saba’ik-al-Dhahab* (page 78) has mentioned his age at the time of his father’s demise to be five years.

Also Abu al-Fida, vol. 2 pg. 45, mentions the birth of the Mahdi to have occurred in the year 255.

<sup>1</sup>. The author of Yanabi’ al-Mawadda on page 185 has narrated from Dhakhir al-’Uqba, from the ‘Arba’in’ of Hafiz Abu al-’Ala al-Hamadani.

<sup>2</sup>. Kanz al-’Ummal vol. 7 pg. 187. Also, Suyuti narrates in ‘Arf al-wardi, pg 65, Ibn Abi Shuaiba that the Holy Prophet (S) said: ‘The Mahdi is from this ‘Ummah’ and he is the same one behind whom shall pray ‘Isa ibn Maryam’. On the same page, he has narrated a tradition with similar contents from Ibn-Majah, al-Ruyani, Ibn-Khuzayma, Abu Awaane, al-Hakim and Abu Na’im from the Holy Prophet.

Also, he narrates on page 81 from Hudhayfa and on page 83 from Jabir and the author of Al-Hawi al-Fatawi on page 167 narrates from ‘Uthman ibn Abi al-’As, Abu Umamah al-Bahili, Ibn Sireen ,and each in turn from the Holy Prophet, a tradition with content that ‘Isa will follow the Mahdi in prayers.

<sup>3</sup>. In Tarikh Ibn ‘Asakir (vol. 2 pg. 62), Sirah al-Halabiya (vol. 1 pg. 156), ‘Arf al-Wardi (page 64) of Suyuti and Al-Hawi al-Fatawi (page 156) the words ‘how shall it be destroyed’ is written instead of ‘It will not be destroyed’. The author of Yanabi’

al-Mawadda (page 375) narrating from Fara'id al-Simtayn and the author of Kanz al-'Ummal (vol. 7 pg. 187) have said that after the word of Mahdi, the Holy Prophet (S) added the words: 'from my progeny'.

4. The authors of 'Arf al-Wardi (page 58) and Yanabi' al-Mawadda (page 223) have narrated the same from Ibn Serri, Daylami and Ibn M'jah.

5. 'Arf al-Wardi, pg.83.

6. Kanz al-'Ummal, vol.7, pg. 189; 'Arf al-Wardi, pg.76.

7. Kanz al-'Ummal, vol.7, pg. 185; 'Arf al-Wardi, pg.68.

8. 'Arf al-Wardi, pg.61.

9. A similar tradition has been narrated in 'Arf al-Wardi, narrating from Abu Na'im. Also, on page 76 he writes: 'Ammar says - 'A caller shall cry out from the heavens: Verily, your Chief is so and so and he is the Mahdi. He shall make the earth flourish and fill it with justice. He further adds: At the time when Sufyani shall engage in a battle with the Mahdi, a caller shall cry out from the heavens: Know that the friends of Allah are the companions of the Mahdi.

10. The author of 'Arf al-Wardi has narrated the same (on pg.85) from Ibn Sireen.

11. The author of 'Arf al-Wardi has narrated the same tradition (on page 83) and instead of the phrase 'on his right' the phrase 'will follow him' has been written.

12. 'Arf al-Wardi, pg.73.

13. The author of Sirah al-Halabiya, in vol. 1, pg. 18, says: As per research, some of the exegetes have mentioned that People of the Cave are all non-Arabs and they shall not speak but in Arabic and they are the ministers of the Mahdi.

14. The author of 'Arf al-Wardi has narrated, on pg.61, the same tradition from Na'im ibn Hammad and Abu Na'im and on the afore-said page, narrated a tradition with similar contents from al-Tabarani. The author of Muruj al-Dhahab in vol. 1, pg. 15, while narrating a lengthy tradition from Amir al-Mu'minin (a.s.) writes: He said: The Proofs (hujjah) will terminate in our Mahdi, the one who is the last Imam and the savior of the Ummah...

15. Al-Hamawayni al-Shafi'i in Fara'id al-Simtayn (Chapter 32) while narrating from Jabir ibn 'Abd Allah al-Ansari with regards to a Sahifa [God's saying about Imams and their number] which he had seen in the possession of Sayyidah al-Zahra' (a.s.) writes that after mentioning the name of al-Hasan he said: So he perfected it with his son Muhammad who is the Mercy of this Universe and he is the beauty of Musa, worth of Isa and patience of (Job) Ayub (Nasaheh al-Kafiya, pg.22)

He further writes: Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) told Jabir: "Narrate from us what you have seen from the Sahifa (scroll)". Thereafter Jabir described the incident of Sahifa of Fatimah al-Zahra (a.s.) and all that it contained such as the name of each of the Imams in order and the names of their fathers and mothers till the name of Imam al-'Askari. Thereafter he said: Abu al Qasim Muhammad ibn al-Hasan is one who is the Hujjah (Proof) of Allah upon His servants and surely he shall be the Q'im, and his mother is a lady by the name of Narjis (Nasaheh al-Kafiya, pg. 23).

The same author in the afore-said book narrates on page 24 from Ibn 'Abbas that the Holy Prophet (S) mentioned to a Jew the names of each of the Imams in order until he reached to the name of Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari (a.s.) and then said: When al-Hasan shall pass away, his son Hujjah ibn al-Hasan Muhammad al-Mahdi shall become the Imam and they are twelve in number."

This tradition has also been narrated by Shaykh Saduq in Kamal al-Din (Chapter 28), Shaykh Tusi in Ghaybah, al-Tabarsi in al-Ihtijaj, Shaykh Mufid in Ikhtisas, Muhammad ibn Ya'qub in al-Kafi and al-Numani in his Ghaybah.

16. Tarikh al-Qarmani (page 117): His age at the time of his father's demise was five years and Allah granted him wisdom at that very time just as He granted wisdom to Yahya when he was only a child.

Also, Muhammad Khawand Shah in Raw'at al-Safa' (page 18) writes: The birth of Imam Mahdi (peace be upon him), who is similar in name and agnomen to the Holy Prophet (S), secretly took place on the night of 15th Sha'ban, 255 Hijri.