

Chapter 5

The Mahdi and his Birth

A group of scholars, amongst them being the learned and mystic traditionist Muhammad Khawaja al-Bukhari in his book *Fasl al-Khitab* (as per what has been written on page 387 of *Yanabi' al-Mawadda*) have reported:

Hakimah, the daughter of Imam Muhammad al-Jawad (a.s.), and the paternal aunt of Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-'Askari (a.s.), loved him (al-Hasan) and would pray for him and beseech Allah to make her succeed in meeting the Imam's son. Thus it was the night of 15th Sha'ban, 255 A.H. when she visited Imam al-Hasan, who said: "O aunt, stay (with us) tonight. We have a matter that concerns us". So she remained there. It was the time of dawn when Narjis (mother of Imam al-Mahdi) felt uneasy. Then Hakimah hastened towards her and a few moments later Narjis delivered a blessed child while circumcised.

When Hakimah saw the child she took him in her arms and went towards Imam al-Hasan (a.s.) who embraced him and rubbed his blessed hands over his back and eyes and then placed his mouth over his mouth. Thereafter he recited the *Adhan* (call to prayer) in his right ear and *Iqamah* (establishment of prayers) in his left ear, then said: "O aunt, take him to his mother." Hakimah obeyed and took the child back to his mother.

Hakimah says: 'Once again, I visited Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-'Askari's house, and I saw the baby before him in a yellow garment, covered with radiance and light. Love for him overwhelmed my heart and I said: "O my Master, have you any knowledge of this blessed child"? He replied: "O aunt, he is the same awaited one about whom we have been given glad tidings." Then, I threw myself on the ground and prostrated in thanksgiving for that'.¹

The author says: "What we have narrated before and what we shall narrate later on necessarily proves his birth and those traditions comprise several parts. One of the parts indicates that he is the twelfth successor (*khalifah*) while another shows that he is the twelfth legatee (*wa'i*). Still another portion indicates that he is the twelfth Imam and leader and another indicates that he is the ninth from the

progeny of al-Husayn (a.s.). Others reveal that he is the fourth from the offspring of al-Ridha (a.s.) and yet others reveal that he is the son of Imam Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-'Askari. Another part indicates his occultation and the fact that he is concealed from the public view and cannot be recognized.

These *mustafidha* (traditions with several narrators) and in fact, *mutawatir* (traditions with numerous chains of transmitters) traditions clearly stipulate and or necessarily indicate that the awaited Mahdi is the immediate son of Imam Abu Muhammad Al-Hasan al-'Askari. Moreover this indication is so manifest and evident that no one has any doubt in it and none disputes it.

Now we say: Based on this, we are bound to accept one of the following:

Firstly, that we reject the afore-said traditions due to the unsoundness and weakness in their chains of transmission and in indication and as a result deny the afore-mentioned claims.

Reply: Anyone who has reviewed the traditions and gone through the books of *Rijal* (distinguished scholars) can never ever imagine such an affair because a number of leading traditionists have clearly stated the authenticity of some of them and have given evidence of their credibility and acceptability. In fact, al-Hakim, who is the leader of this art has himself recorded some of them and said: They are authentic according to the criteria of al-Bukhari and Muslim, has reckoned them to be correct.

As far as rejecting the traditions due to their indication, man's conscience itself bears testimony against this rejection.

Secondly, renouncing and abandoning those traditions and not acting upon them.

Reply: This would be independent reasoning (*ijtihad*) in the face of authentic and explicit texts. Rather, just as you were told before, most of the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah have clearly stipulated the successive transmission of these traditions and compendiously reckoned their issuance to be decisive. Thus, resorting to this rejection will amount to refutation of the Holy Prophet (S) and rejection of what has come from him through successive transmissions, while Allah has said:

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَى إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَى

Nor does he speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed (53:3-4)

Thirdly, believing that Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-'Askari is still alive and will continue to exist till the end of time when Allah has foretold the birth of the Mahdi.

Reply: Here too, we cannot consider this to be correct because both the Shi'a and Sunnis are unanimous over this fact that Abu Muhammad Al-Hasan al-'Askari passed away in the year 260 A.H.

If we assume that Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari is still alive, why can't we assume the same for the Mahdi and believe him to be living. If a decree on such a matter is permissible then there exists no difference

between these two cases, so that we may say that it is possible in the case of al-Hasan al-‘Askari but not so for the Mahdi.

Fourthly, believing that Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-‘Askari has passed away, as per the consensus of the Shi'a and Sunnis. However, Allah (All Glory be to Him) with the Power that He possesses, shall revive him at the end of time for the birth of the Mahdi.

Reply: There is no proof, which gives evidence to the truthfulness of this saying that al-Hasan al-‘Askari will be brought back to life at the end of time, although that is possible in relation to Allah's absolute Might and that He is Powerful over all things. However, the opposing party denies the continuation of the Mahdi's life, regarding it as an improbable matter and contrary to the custom (as is in vogue amongst us), so being brought back to life after death and restored after extinction, would be even more improbable and unusual than continuation of life. In addition, the restoration of Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-‘Askari's life after his demise is a profession of the belief in *Raj'ah* (return to life), which the Shi'a hold, while the opposing party does not profess this belief.

Fifthly, believing that Abu al-Qasim Muhammad al-Mahdi (a.s.) has been born and is still living. Moreover, he is being given sustenance and is living just like other people live, until the time when Allah wishes him to fill the earth with equity and justice just as it had been filled with cruelty and oppression. Thus, He shall command him to emerge and inspire him to bring about a complete reform and universal peace. This is exactly what we, the group of Imamiyah, believe and the proof of his being alive will be mentioned in what follows.

Among those things, which necessarily and explicitly prove the birth of the Mahdi, are the statements of a number of Sunni scholars, traditionists and historians in this regard. We may mention the names of some of them:

- (1) Shaykh Muhiy al-Din al-‘Arabi in *al-Futuhat* as mentioned in *Is’āf al-Raghibin*.
- (2) Shaykh ‘Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha’rani in the book *Al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir*.
- (3) Ibn Wardi. a historian, in his *Tarikh* as mentioned in *Nur al-Absār*.
- (4) Shaykh Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Kanji in his book *Al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib al-Zaman*.
- (5) Ibn Hajar al-Haythami in the book *al-Sawa’iq al-Muhriqa*.
- (6) Sibt ibn Jawzi in the book *Tadhkirah al-A’imma*.
- (7) Shaykh Muhammad ibn Talha in *Matalib al-Su’l*.
- (8) Shaykh Nur al-Din ‘Ali in *al-Fusul al-Muhimma*.
- (9) The noble Sayyid Abu ‘Abd Allah Muhammad Siraj al-Din in the book *Sihah al-Akhbar*.

- (10) The famous historian Ibn Khallikan in *Wafayat al-A'yan*.
- (11) Ibn al-Azraq, a historian, in his *Tarikh* as mentioned by Ibn Khallikan.
- (12) The mystic Shaykh, Sayyid Al-Hasan al-'Iraqi as mentioned in *Al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir*.
- (13) Shaykh 'Ali al-Khawas as mentioned in the afore-mentioned book.
- (14) The mystic scholar, Shaykh Muhammad Khawaja in *Fasl al-Khitab* as narrated in *Yanabi' al-Mawadda*.
- (15) Sayyid Mu'min al-Shablanji in *Nur al-Absar*.
- (16) The mystic scholar, Shaykh Qunduzi in *Yanabi' al-Mawadda*.
- (17) The learned genealogist Abu al-Fawz Muhammad Amin al-Baghdadi al-Suwaydi in *Saba'ik al-Dhabab*.
- (18) The learned genealogist of recent times Sayyid Husayn al-Rafa'i, a contemporary professor of al-Azhar University, in his book *Nur al-Anwar*.
- (19) Shaykh Ahmad Jumah – on the basis of his poems and as quoted in *Yanabi' al-Mawadda*.
- (20) Shaykh al-'Attar al-Nisaburi – on the basis of his poems.
- (21) Shaykh Jalal al-din al-Rumi – on the basis of his poems. Besides them, many others too have confirmed this matter.²

Verily, Mahdi's birth is unanimously agreed upon by both the Shi'a and the Sunnis and they are in accord with each other on this matter.

Thus, there exists no difference between the two groups. Rather its firmness is as clear as a fire kindled over the tip of a flag or as bright as a sun present during the day. Those who refer to their books and writings (Sunni references) will realize that they are all unanimous over this matter that Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-'Askari had a son by the name of Muhammad whose title is al-Mahdi and agnomen is Abu al-Qasim, and he was the only son of his father.

This is notwithstanding the fact that they have had minor differences amongst themselves about the Mahdi as can be seen from the sayings of Ibn Khallikan and some other Sunni scholars. Ibn Khallikan says: 'The Shi'a think that the Mahdi is the son of Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari.' After this, he said: 'The continuation of the Mahdi's life till now is something unusual and improbable'.

When the birth of Abu al-Qasim Muhammad al-Mahdi, son of al-Hasan al-'Askari is proved (which was done so from the Prophetic traditions which are *mutawatir* and the sayings of the Infallible household

members who are more knowledgeable than others and the excessive stipulations of mystics and scholars who have reckoned the Awaited Mahdi to be the very child which we have mentioned) it will automatically be verified that the Mahdi (a.s.) has already been born and not that he will be born in the future.

Moreover, with regard to his birth, what appears to be more correct is that he was born at dawn, on 15th Sha'ban 256 A.H. Thus, at the time of his father's demise, he had passed five years of his age.

The Mahdi's name, title and agnomen

Al-Tirmidhi in vol. 2 of his *Sahih* (page 270) narrates from 'Abd Allah ibn Mas'ud that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

"The world shall not cease to exist until a person from my progeny (Ahl al-Bayt) shall rule the Arabs. His name is the same as mine."³

In the same place of the afore-mentioned book he narrates from Abu Hurayra that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

"If there remains not more than a day from the life of the earth ... a person from my progeny who carries the same name as mine shall appear."⁴

Thereafter al-Tirmidhi writes: "This is an acceptable and authentic tradition."

Ibn Hajar in his *al-Sawa'iq* (page 98) narrates from Ahmad, Abu Dawud and al-Tirmidhi and all the three from the Holy Prophet (S) who said:

"The world shall not end until a person from my progeny (Ahl al-Bayt) shall come and rule. His name shall be similar to my name."

The author of *Is'aaf al-Raghabin* too has narrated the same.⁵

The author of *'Iqd al-Durar* in the second chapter narrates from *Sunan* of Imam Abu Bakr al-Muqri and he from 'Abd Allah ibn Mas'ud that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

"The world shall not come to an end until a man from my progeny (*ahl bayti*) shall rule it."

In the same chapter of the afore-said book, he narrates from *Sifah al-Mahdi* of Hafiz Abu Na'im and the *Sunan* of Abu 'Amr al-Muqri and they two from 'Abd Allah ibn 'Umar who said: The Holy Prophet (S) said:

"A person from my progeny (*ahl bayti*) shall emerge. His name is similar to mine and his character too is the same as mine. He shall fill the earth with equity and justice."

Again, in the same chapter of the afore-said book, he narrates from Hafiz Abu Na'im who in turn narrates from Hudhayfa ibn al-Yaman that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“If there remains not more than a day from the life of the earth, God will make a person to appear who carries the same name as mine and whose character is the same as mine. His agnomen is Abu-‘Abd Allah.”⁶

Yet again, in the same chapter of the afore-said book, he narrates from ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Umar that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“A person from my progeny shall emerge at the end of time. His name and agnomen will be the same as my name and agnomen. He shall fill the earth with justice just as it had been filled with cruelty and oppression”.

These are only a few of the noble traditions which mention about the name and agnomen of Imam Mahdi.

The author of *‘Iqd al-Durar* has specially earmarked a chapter for this matter. Thus, these and some other traditions together with their lengthy exegesis (which was already mentioned and will be mentioned in future) reveal that his name is Muhammad, his title is al-Mahdi and his agnomen is Abu al-Qasim and this is a well-known matter. However, on the basis of only one or two traditions his name has been mentioned to be Ahmad. Apparently, it has been the independent reasoning of its narrator and a mistake committed from his side. Nevertheless it is an isolated and irregular (*shādh*) hadith and there are many traditions contrary to it.

The author of *Tadhkirah Khawāṣṣ al-Ummah* while mentioning the children of Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-‘Askari says:

Amongst them is Imam Muhammad son of al-Hasan, son of ‘Ali, son of Muhammad, son of ‘Ali, son of Musa, son of Ja’far, son of Muhammad, son of ‘Ali, son of Husayn, son of ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib. His agnomen is Abu ‘Abd Allah and Abu al-Qasim and he is the successor, the *Hujjah* (Proof), Master of the age, the *Qā’im* (Upholder) and the awaited one (*al-Muntadhar*). He shall be the last Imam.

The author of *Matalib al-Su’l*, after mentioning the place of birth of Imam Mahdi (may the blessings of Allah be upon him and his holy forefathers) says: “His name is Muhammad, his agnomen is Abu al-Qasim and his titles are *al-Hujjah* (Proof) and *Khalaf al-Salih* (virtuous successor). He has also been called *al-Muntadhar* (the awaited one).

Ibn Hajar in his book *al-Sawa’iq*, after mentioning the circumstances of Imam Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-‘Askari writes:

“He did not leave behind any 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 and he has been called as *al-Qā’im al-Muntadhar*”.

The author of *Nur al-Absar*, after mentioning about the Mahdi says: “His name is Muhammad and his agnomen Abu al-Qasim. The Imamiyah have given him such titles as *al-Hujjah*, *al-Mahdi*, *al-Khalaf al-Saleh*, *al-Qṣīm*, *al-Muntadhar* and *Sahib al-Zamān*. The most famous amongst them is *al-Mahdi*.⁷

A subtle point: Amongst the strange events (even if we do not say it is coincidental) is that amongst the immediate sons of the Imams, none has been bestowed with the title of *al-Mahdi* except this Imam *al-Qṣīm Al-e-Muhammad* (a.s.). Surely, they were a family which spread for a period of over two hundred and forty years. They had many children and repeatedly heard this blessed title of ‘*al-Mahdi*’.

Nevertheless amongst their immediate children there was none who was called by the title of *al-Mahdi* because, this was something against the custom. It is possible to say that Allah, the Exalted may have dissuaded them from this matter in order to safeguard the position of the Mahdi (a.s.).

The Mahdi and the names of his father and mother

What seems evident from the previous traditions (mentioned in chapter No. 4) is that the Mahdi, the Awaited one, is the son of Abu Muhammad Imam al-Hasan al-’Askari (a.s.). The Shia Imamiyah and majority of the Sunni scholars unanimously believe that his honorable father’s name is *al-Hasan*.⁸

Verily, it is in some of the rare and uncommon traditions that the name of Imam Mahdi’s father is mentioned to be the same as the Holy Prophet’s father.

Abu Dawud in his *Sahih* (vol. 4 pg. 78) has narrated from Zurra from ‘Abd Allah a tradition from the Holy Prophet (S) as such:

“If there remains not more than a day from the life of the earth, God will extend that day until a person from my progeny shall appear and... His name is the same as mine and his father’s name is the same as my father’s name.”

The author of *Iqd al-Durar* has narrated this tradition (in the second chapter) from a group of traditionists among them al-Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud and al-Bayhaqi.

He said: ‘This tradition has been mentioned by Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal in his *Musnad*. However he has not mentioned the sentence: “His father’s name is the same as my father’s name”.

The author says: I have come across a group of traditions which contain this sentence: “The name of his father is the same as my father’s name”. What is apparent is that it originated from Abu Dawud because of his precedence in time.

Thus, we say: Al-Shablanji, in *Nur al-Absar* (page 231) has narrated the afore-mentioned tradition of the Holy Prophet (S) from Abu Dawud and he from Zurra, from ‘Abd Allah, from the Prophet (S) but without this sentence. Then he (al-Shablanji) said: “According to one report, (the Prophet said): “His father’s name is the same as my father’s name”.

This difference in narration from Abu Dawud raises doubts about what he has reported, and the unreliability of his report. Even if we assume this tradition to be firm, it is (still) against and contrary to the numerous *mustafidhah* traditions which are more authentic (from the view – point of the chain of transmission) and obvious (from the viewpoint of reasoning) than the previously mentioned tradition. Therefore, one should not pay attention to this tradition at all.

In this regard ‘Ali ibn ‘Isa al-Arbali in *Kashf al-Ghumma* says: The Shi'a do not consider this tradition to be correct because the name of the Mahdi and his father's name too has been proved for them (as per authentic reasons). The Sunni scholars have mentioned that the narrator of the tradition would add on material to the traditions. Thus it can be assumed that he has added something to this tradition, and it should be said that this sentence (i.e. the Holy Prophet saying: “His father's name is the same as my father's name”) is an addition.

The author of *Al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib al-Zaman* says:

‘Abu al-‘Abbas ibn Abu al-Karam al-Khath’ami has related to us from ‘Umar ibn Mu’ammar al-Baghdadi, from Abu al-Fath ibn Abu al-Qasim ibn Abu Suhayl al-Karukhi, from Abu ‘Amir ibn al-Qasim and others; they said: Abu Muhammad al-Maruzi related to us from Abu al-‘Abbas ibn al-Marzabani who narrated to us from Hafiz Abu ‘Isa from ‘Abd al-Jabbar ibn al-‘Alq’ al-‘Attar from Sufyan ibn ‘Uyayna and he from ‘Abd al-Salih and he from Zurra and he from ‘Abd Allah and he from the Holy Prophet (S):

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“A person from my progeny who carries the same name as mine, shall become the Master (of this earth).”

‘Abd al-Salih said: Abu Salih related to us from Abu Hurayra who said: “If there remains not more than a day from the life of the earth, God will prolong that day until a person becomes the owner of this earth.”

The author of *Al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib al-Zaman* says: “This tradition is an authentic one and Hafiz Muhammad ibn ‘Isa al-Tirmidhi has narrated it in this way in his *Sahih*.”

He continues: ‘Allama al-Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Laghwi sent a letter for me in Damascus and after I met him in Baghdad he said: Nasr ibn Abu al-Faraj al-Husari has related from Abu Talib Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Abu Zayd al-‘Alawi and he from Abu ‘Ali al-Tustari and he from Abu ‘Umar al-Hashimi and he from Abu Ali Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn ‘Umar al-Lu’lu’i al-Basri who narrated from Hafiz Abu Dawud Sulayman ibn al-Ash’ath al-Sijistani, from Musaddad, from Yahya ibn Sa’id, from Sufyan, from ‘Abd al-Salih, from Zurra, from ‘Abd Allah from the Holy Prophet (S) who said:

“The world shall not cease to exist until a person from my progeny who shall carry the same name as mine becomes the Master amongst the Arabs.”

The author of *Al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib al-Zaman* adds: “This tradition is an acceptable and correct

tradition and Abu Dawud has narrated it in his *Sunan* in the same manner which we have narrated.”

Abu Dawud said: ‘Uthman ibn Abu Shayba narrated from al-Fadhl ibn Dakkin, from Qatar from al-Qasim ibn Abi Murra, from Abu Tufayl, from ‘Ali and he from the Holy Prophet (S) who said: “If there remains not more than a day from the life of the earth, God will appoint a person from my progeny to fill the earth with justice just as it had been filled with oppression.”

The author says: Abu Dawud has mentioned this tradition in the same manner in his *Sunan*.

The author of the book *Manaqib al-Shafi'i* has mentioned the afore-said tradition and then said: The narrator has added the following sentence to this tradition and said: “If there remains not more than a day in the life of the earth, God will extend the day until He sends a person from my progeny who has the same name as mine and whose father has the same name as my father’s name, appears and fills the earth with equity and justice just as it had been filled with cruelty and oppression”.

The author says: Al-Tirmidhi has narrated the afore-said tradition but not the sentence of the Holy Prophet (S) saying: “..whose father has the same name as my father’s name”.

However Abu Dawud has mentioned the afore-said sentence. In most of the traditions which are object of reliance of most of the experts (of traditions) and narrators, only this sentence can be found where the Holy Prophet (S) says: “His (i.e. the Mahdi’s) name is the same as mine.” The sentence that the Holy Prophet (S) said: “His father’s name is the same as my father’s name” is an addition made by the narrator.

If the afore-said sentence is correct it would mean that the Holy Prophet (S) has said: “The name of the Mahdi’s father is the same as my son, al-Husayn and his agnomen is Abu ‘Abd Allah”.

He has set the agnomen as a name so as to allusively speak of this fact that the Mahdi would be from the progeny of al-Husayn and not from the progeny of Imam al-Hasan. It is (also) possible that the Holy Prophet (S) may have said: “The name of the Mahdi’s father is the same as my son, al-Hasan’s name.” The name of the Mahdi’s father too was al-Hasan but the narrator thought ‘my son’ (*ibni*, ابني) to be ‘my father’ (*abi*, ابى) and hence changed it to *abi* (ابى). Thus it is necessary to interpret and explain this tradition in the manner which we have done so as to combine together all the traditions.

This interpretation which was said with regards to the previously mentioned tradition is not correct.

The final word on this is that Imam Ahmad, with his faithful recording and precision in traditions, has mentioned the afore-said tradition in several places of his book *Musnad* in this manner that the Holy Prophet (S) only said: “His (the Mahdi’s) name is the same as my name.”

‘Allamah Abu Muhammad ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Muhsin al-Ansari related to us (with the chain of transmission leading to) Zurra who narrated from ‘Abd Allah that the Holy Prophet (S) said: “The world shall not be destroyed” or he said: “The world shall not terminate until a person from my

progeny who carries the same name as mine shall become the master amongst the Arabs.”

In the book of *Manaqib al-Mahdi*, Hafiz Abu Na’im has gathered together the chains of transmission of the afore-said tradition from a great number of people who have all narrated from گیم ibn Abu al-Nujud and he from Zurra and he from ‘Abd Allah and he from the Holy Prophet (S).

Amongst them are: Sufyan ibn ‘Uyayna, whose traditions we have mentioned, and there are various chains of transmission from him; Qatar ibn Khalifa with various chains of transmission from him; also al-A’mash, Abu Ishaq Sulayman ibn Firuz al-Shaybani, Hafs, ibn ‘Umar, Sufyan al-Thawri, Shu’ba and Wasit ibn al-Harith, with various chains of transmission from each of them.

Also amongst them are: Yazid ibn Mu’awiya Abu Shayba, from whom are two chains of transmission. Amongst them is Sulayman ibn Qaram with various chains of transmission; Ja’far al-Ahmar, Qays ibn Rabi’ and Sulayman ibn Qaram and Asbaؑ who are all in one chain of transmission. Amongst them is Salam Abu al-Mundhir. Amongst them are Abu Shahab Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Kanani, ‘Umar ibn ‘Ubayd al-Tanafusi, Abu Bakr ibn ‘Ayyash, Abu al-Hijaf Dawud Abu al-‘Awf and ‘Uthman ibn Shabrama, with various chains of transmission from each of them; and ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Abi ‘Uyayna.

Amongst them is Muhammad ibn ‘Ayyash who has narrated from ‘Umar and al-ؑmiri through various chains of transmission. He has mentioned the chain of transmission and said: ‘Abu Ghassan has narrated to us from Qays that Qays narrated to us’ but has not narrated his connection.

Amongst them is ‘Amr ibn Qays al-Mala’i, ‘Ammar ibn Zurayq, ‘Abd Allah ibn Hakim ibn Jubayr al-Asadi, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd Allah ibn Bashar, Abu al-ؑwaؑ, and Sa’ad ibn al-Hasan ibn Ukht Tha’laba.

Amongst them is Ma’adh ibn Hisham who said: ‘My father narrated to me from گیم.’

Amongst them is Yusuf ibn Yunus, Ghalib ibn ‘Uthman, Hamza al-Zayyat, Shayban, al-Hakam ibn Hisham. They narrated the afore-said tradition from someone other than گیم who narrated from Zurra i.e. they narrated from ‘Amr ibn Murra from Zurra.

All these narrators have narrated that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“His (the Mahdi’s) name is the same as my name,” with the exception of what has been reported from ‘Ubayd Allah ibn Musa from the one who made an addition in the afore-said tradition and narrated it from گیم. Only the one who has made this addition in the tradition has narrated that the Holy Prophet (S) said: “His father’s name is the same as my father’s name”.

A wise person will not hesitate to conclude that this additional sentence lacks credibility, together with the fact that almost all these leading Sunni traditionists have narrated against the afore-said sentence. And Allah knows best.

This concludes what has been mentioned in *Al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib al-Zaman*.

The author says: It is apparent in *Al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib al-Zaman* that al-Tirmidhi has not narrated

this additional sentence. However previously we have been acquainted with what was said by the author of *'Iqd al-Durar*, and what is evident from him and from the books of *Matalib al-Su'l* and *Fusul al-Muhimma*, that Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Bayhaqi, Abu 'Umar, al-Muqri and Abu Na'im have all narrated the afore-said additional sentence; and you have comprehended the truth about it.

The author of *Matalib al-Su'l* says:

'If someone remonstrates and says: We agree that when these false attributes are discovered they would be a sign and proof. It would then become necessary to act upon them and prove them for the one who is endowed with them. However we do not believe that these signs and proofs could be applied to *Khalaf al-Salih* Muhammad (a.s.) because, amongst the false attributes, is the sign and proof that the Mahdi's father should carry the same name as the Holy Prophet's father and Prophetic hadiths too (just as they have narrated) stipulates this matter.'

However, this attribute (i.e. the Mahdi's father bearing the same name as the Holy Prophet's father) cannot be found in the existence of the Mahdi because the name of the Mahdi's father is al-Hasan and the name of the Holy Prophet's father is 'Abd Allah. What connection exists between al-Hasan and 'Abd Allah? Therefore, this attribute which is only a part of the signs and proofs cannot be applied to the Mahdi and when one part of the cause is not proved the entire cause too cannot be proved, since the rest of the attributes are not enough for proving this decree. This is because the Holy Prophet (S) has not substantiated this decree except for the one in whom all the attributes (where one of them is the similarity of his father's name) is found and this matter cannot be true of *al-Hujjah al-Khalaf*. Thus, this decree too cannot be established for him and it is an extremely doubtful matter.

Before giving a detailed reply to this problem it is necessary to express two matters so that we may achieve our aim:

First: – In the Arabic language it is a common practice to use the word 'father' for forefathers. The Holy Qur'an too speaks of this matter and says:

مَلَةُ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴿٤﴾

...The faith of your father, Ibrahim... (22:78)

Also, quoting Yusuf, it says:

وَاتَّبَعْتُ مِلَّةَ آبَائِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ

And I follow the religion of my fathers, Ibrahim and Ishaq... (12:38)

The holy Prophet (S) too has clearly stipulated this matter as can be seen in the tradition of *Mi'raj*

(ascension). The Holy Prophet (S) asked: “Who is this”? He replied: “Your father, Ibrahim”. Thus it can be observed that the word *ab* (اب father) is applied to forefathers.

Second: – The word ‘name’ too is used instead of ‘agnomen’ and ‘attribute’, and it has been used by eloquent speakers and mentioned in traditions. This can be observed in the tradition where al-Bukhari and Muslim have narrated from Sahl ibn Sa’d al-Siqidi who narrated from ‘Ali (a.s.) that the Holy Prophet (S) named him (‘Ali) ‘Abu Turab’ and there was no name more loved by him than it. Thus the word ‘name’ has been used for ‘agnomen’.

A poet too has pinpointed this matter in the following poem:

أجل قدرك أن تسمى مؤمنته ومن كانك فقد سماك للعرب

The words (و من يصفك) have also been narrated.

Thus this poet has used ‘name’ instead of agnomen and attribute and this rule is prevalent in the Arabic language.

Now that the two afore-mentioned matters have become clear, know that the Holy Prophet (S) had two grandsons, Abu Muhammad al-Hasan and Abu ‘Abd Allah al-Husayn. Since the *Hujjah al-Khalaf al-Salih* Muhammad (a.s.) was from the progeny of Abu ‘Abd Allah al-Husayn and not from the progeny of Abu Muhammad al-Hasan and the agnomen of al-Husayn is Abu ‘Abd Allah, therefore the Holy Prophet (S) has used the word ‘name’ (اسم) in place of agnomen and used the word ‘father’ (اب) in place of forefather.

It is as if the Holy Prophet (S) said: “His (the Mahdi’s) name is the same as mine. He is Muhammad and I too am Muhammad, and the agnomen of his forefather is the same as my father’s name because his forefather is Abu ‘Abd Allah and my father (too) is ‘Abd Allah”.

He (S) explained it in this manner so that these brief words could be comprehensive enough for explaining the attributes and he himself has had briefly announced that the Mahdi is from the progeny of Abu ‘Abd Allah al-Husayn.

Therefore, (with this explanation) the afore-mentioned attributes have been put in order and all of them can be applied to the *Hujjah al-Khalaf al-Salih* Muhammad (a.s.).

This explanation is clear and sufficient enough to overcome this ambiguity. So ponder over it. (End of quote from *Matalib al-Su’l*).

The author says: Apart from the reasons which the author of *Al-Bayan* and Ibn Talha in *Matalib al-Su’l* have narrated, there are other aspects too as follows: –

Firstly, Allama Majlisi in the 13th volume of his book *Bihar al-Anwar* says: Some contemporaries have

said: With regard to the afore-said tradition there are other aspects too, like the fact that Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari's agnomen was Abu Muhammad and 'Abd Allah's (i.e. Prophet Muhammad's father) agnomen was Abu Muhammad. Thus these two agnomens are in accord with each other and (amongst the Arabs too, just as it will come later on) the agnomen too is in the name. (i.e. the Arabs use agnomen instead of name).

Secondly, some of the contemporary learned scholars have said in the margin of the book of *Al-Bayan*: The best way to reply to this matter is to say that the wording of the tradition is perhaps in this manner: – 'The Mahdi's name is the same as my name and my father's name'.

This is because many traditions in the book *al-Ghaybah* say: The Mahdi possesses three names, one of which is 'Abd Allah, and the Holy Prophet's father's name too was 'Abd Allah. In some of the traditions previously mentioned, the Holy Prophet (S) has said: 'The Mahdi's name is the same as my father's name'. Moreover, on the subject matter of this tradition too, it has come that (the Holy Prophet) said: "The Mahdi's name is the same as my name and my father's name".

The narrator, not grasping the meaning of the tradition and not even imagining that the Mahdi (may Allah hasten his emergence) possesses two other names, and wishing to correct the tradition (as per his own reflection) has added the afore-said sentence: "The Mahdi's name is the same as my father's name" to the tradition. Previously, we came to know that the afore-said tradition lacked any defect because the Mahdi possesses three names. Thus it can be seen that the aforementioned tradition does not contradict our traditions in any way. This is the best reply and I have not found anyone objecting to it as it appears to be clear and obvious.

Thirdly, the afore-said scholar in the margin of the afore-mentioned book says: It is possible that the Holy Prophet (S) may have said: – "The Mahdi's name is the same as mine and his son's name is the same as my father's name." This is because in some of the traditions the name of the Mahdi's son has been mentioned to be 'Abd Allah and in the third section of this book it will be stated that the Mahdi's agnomen is Abu 'Abd Allah. Thus a change has occurred and the word of (عیل) (his son) has been converted to (علیل) (his father).

Fourthly, Mawla Muhammad Ridha al-Imami al-Mudarris al-Khatun Abadi, a researcher and scholar writes in his book *Jannat al-Khulud* (which contains all that hearts desire and pleases the eye) as such: "Our Master Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari (a.s.) has two names – One is al-Hasan and the other 'Abd Allah".

On the basis of the saying of this scholar, the problem is solved and is in accord with the tradition of Abu Dawud and all other traditions. Although some of the subject-matter of the book of *Jannat al-Khulud* is not found in any other book, yet its author is a person who is a scholar as well as a researcher, and perhaps God may enlighten us to discover the source of his reference and sayings.

Allama Sayyid Shahab al-Din al-Najafi who is one of the spiritual leaders of Qum narrated for me as

such: “The Qazwini scholar, Agha Radhi al-Din (may his dust be fragrant) has mentioned in *Kurrah al-ṣifāt* the same as that mentioned by the author of *Jannat al-Khulud*.

The conclusion that we can derive from these traditions is this that the most preferable reply would be to stick to one of the following:

- (1) The chain of transmission of this tradition (i.e. the Holy Prophet saying: the Mahdi’s father carries the same name as my father’s name) appears to be weak because, it comprises such men who are not reliable and authentic. Rather, they belong to the unknown group. On the contrary, they are those people who are famous as the fabricators of traditions. If there was no one amongst them except the (زناده) (i.e. the one who is amongst the narrators of this tradition) suffice it was to render this tradition weak.
- (2) The text of this tradition is disturbed (*mudhkaribah*) because Imam Ahmad Hanbal has narrated the same tradition in his *Musnad*, just as it can be seen in ‘Iqd al-Durar, without mentioning this sentence of the Holy Prophet (S) that “the name of the Mahdi’s father is the same as my father’s name.”
- (3) This tradition has been narrated by Abu Dawud (who is the original source) in different ways. This is because some have narrated this tradition along with the afore-said sentence while others have narrated without this sentence.
- (4) This tradition is opposite and contrary to the numerous traditions which, from the viewpoint of chain of transmission are more authentic and from the view-point of expression are more manifest. Rather, this tradition contradicts a number of other traditions.
- (5) If this tradition is interpreted in either of the above four ways (which have been interpreted against its apparent form and to me is inconceivable) it is still better than rejecting it outright.

The author of *Nur al-Absar* says: – ‘The Mahdi’s father was Abu Muhammad al-Khalis ibn ‘Ali al-Hadi ibn Muhammad al-Jawad ibn ‘Ali al-Ridha. The Mahdi’s mother was a slave-girl who was called Narjis, and it is said she was called as Ṣayqal, and it is also said that she was called Sawsan’.

It is mentioned in *Tadhkirah al-Khuwan al-Ummah*: ‘His father was Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-’Askari ibn ‘Ali ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Ali al-Ridha. His mother was a slave-girl who was named Sawsan’.

The author says: “The truth is that Imam al-Hasan al-’Askari’s mother was called Hadith, and what is well-known is that Sawsan was one of the names of the Mahdi’s mother.”

The author of *Matalib al-Su’l* says: “The Mahdi’s father was al-Hasan al-Khalis ibn ‘Ali Mutawakkil ibn Muhammad al-Qāni’ ibn ‘Ali al-Ridha... His mother was a slave-girl called Ṣayqal and it is said she was called Hakimah.”

The author says: I do not know who has said this because the lady by the name of Hakimah was the

daughter of Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Jawad and paternal aunt of the Mahdi's father and she was present at the time of the Mahdi's birth.

The Mahdi and his long life

It was verified from the previous traditions that the awaited Mahdi who shall emerge at the end of time and will fill the earth with equity and justice just as it had been filled with cruelty and oppression is none other than Abu al-Qasim Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-'Askari (a.s.). It was also proved that he was born in the night of 15th Sha'ban, 256 A.H. which establishes that he has lived a long life of more than one thousand and one hundred years, and Allah knows best about the time of his emergence and his demise.

Although longevity is something unusual amongst the people yet, as per the nature it is a possible phenomenon. Moreover, there exists proofs and reasons for the long life of Mahdi (a.s.). In other words, the prolongation of Mahdi's life is amongst the possible affairs and proofs confirm this point. Thus one is helpless in accepting and acknowledging this matter.

The author of *Tadhkirat al-Khawāṣṣ al-Ummah* says:

The entire Imamiyah sect believe that the *Khalaf al--Hujjah* is living and receiving his sustenance. For proving him to be alive they set forth the following reasons:

First reason: A group of people such as Khizr and Ilyas have lived a long life and it is (still) not known for how many years they have been living. Every year they meet each other.⁹

It is mentioned in the Torah that Dhu al-Qarnayn lived for 3000 years. However Muslims believe that he lived for 1500 years.

Muhammad ibn Ishaq says: – 'Awaj ibn 'Anaq lived for 3600 years.¹⁰ Awaj ibn 'Anaq, whose father's name was Subhan and mother's name was 'Anaq, was born during the Prophet Adam's time and continued to live until Musa (a.s.) killed him. Al-✉ahh✉k lived for 1000 years.¹¹ ✉ahmuras too lived for 1000 years.

Amongst the Prophets, we may mention such names as Hazrat Adam, Nuh, Shith and others who lived for 1000 or more years.¹² Qayn✉n lived for 900 years.¹³ Mahl✉il lived for 800 years.¹⁴ Nufayl ibn 'Abd Allah lived for 700 years. The soothsayer Su✉ayh, whose name was Rabi'a ibn 'Umar lived for 600 years. '✉mir ibn al-✉arb who was the ruler amongst the Arabs, lived for 500 years; so also Taym Allah b. Tha'laba and S✉m b. Nuh. Al-Harb ibn Madh✉dh al-Jarhami lived for 400 years. It was he who said:

كان لم يكن بين الحجور إلى الصفا

Arfakhshad too lived for 400 years. Qays ibn S✉'ada lived for a period of 380 years.¹⁵

Ka'b ibn Jamjama or Jamma al-Dawsi lived for 390 years. Salman al-Farsi lived for 250 and according to some other sources for 300 years.

The author of *Matalib al-Su'l* writes:

'The Mahdi was born during the rule of Mu'tamid 'ala'llah, and has been concealed till now due to fear (from the enemies). Thus it is not possible to say how long he lived, because the one who is concealed and there is no news from him, (then) his occultation and absence of news from him is no reason to believe that his life has come to an end. The Power of Allah is vast. The decree and favors of Allah upon His servants are great and having universality.'

It is necessary for the eminent scholars to perceive the realities of objects of power (i.e. the creatures) of Allah. However, there exists no way for recognizing the essence of Allah's Power and those trying to do so will be left in bewilderment. One of the verses of the Holy Quran says:

وَمَا أُوتِيْتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

... ***You are not given aught of knowledge but a little.***" (17:85)

It is not innovation and it is not improbable that some sincere servants of Allah may have lived long lives or that their lives have been prolonged until now. Allah has prolonged the life of many of His chosen ones and friends, and also His expelled ones and enemies. Amongst His pure ones, we may mention the names of 'Isa and Khidhr. Moreover there were many other Prophets (like Hazrat Nuh) who each lived for a 1000 years.

Amongst the expelled ones and enemies we may mention Satan and Dajjal and others like the tribe of Qid among whom were those who lived for approximately 1000 years. The same was the case with Luqman. All these examples reveal the extent of Allah's Power by which He has given such long life to some of His servants. So what is wrong in saying that the Mahdi's age (too) has been prolonged until his emergence'?

Man's Long Life

There is no doubt that if principles for healthy living are observed, and religious and medical directives are followed, it is not impracticable to live a lengthy life. The reverse is also true (i.e. non- observance of the afore-said rules will result in reduction in one's life-span).

On this basis, the number of deaths in some countries is much less at present than former times and the number of aged people is more than the previous years. Of course it should not be unsaid that since the principles for safeguarding health are better observed today than former years we see such magnificent results. For this reason, some important companies have been established which ensure man's health

and give guarantee for his limited life under special regulations and fixed limit, which have been enacted according to the principles of safeguarding health.

As a result of following such principles we see the desired effects out of our conscience. If it was not such, the attention of the wise would not have been focused on them.

Since the observance of these principles ensures a person's health and prolongation of life it necessarily follows that the more their observance the longer will be a person's life. What we see out of our conscience (like difference in health and age and difference in the mode of life) is the best proof and evidence to what we have written.

Therefore, whenever society enjoins practices that engender good health, people's ages shall be prolonged to the extent which Allah wishes. The principles of these practices are of three types:

First: The first step to observing these rules is when the human being is in the loins of his father and then is transferred to his mother's womb, where he grows and develops, and then after birth the period of being suckled by his mother. The parents' observance of the principles of health during this stage is the first step for ensuring a child's health. How often we see a child dying during his infancy or childhood because of his parents suffering from some disease and or their heedlessness in applying the means of sound health and non-observance on their part of his (i.e. the child's) hygienic principles. Thus the parents in such cases are the cause of this crime, and they are responsible for depriving their child from living a natural and normal life. Would that the parents deem it necessary upon themselves to follow such rules and regulations and as a result save themselves from such blame!

Second: Observance of those things which are the basis of man's life like the air that he breathes, the food that he eats, the water that he drinks, the clothes that he wears and the environment in which he lives. This is because observance of the means and rules of sound health in each of these five affairs with respect to quantity, quality, age, strength, weakness, time and place are the most important channels having influence over the health and long life of man.

How many a person has been overtaken by death and has died before dying naturally. The reason for giving away one's life which by nature, is loved by every living creature is the non-observance of one of the afore-mentioned five affairs. A number of physicians and doctors have emphasized that majority of the people who die do not die a natural death. Rather the main cause has been the external factors, which come into existence by not observing the rules of sound health with regards to the afore-mentioned affairs. Farid Wajdi Effendi has narrated the statements of some of the physicians and doctors in his book *Dīrah al-Ma'rif*.

Third: External occurrences and incidents and contact with natural phenomenon like unusual heat and cold, pain and maladies, misfortunes and difficulties, grief and sorrow and actions and movements. All these greatly influence a person's health and life-span. How often it has occurred that a person has died of heat or cold or has perished because of pain and illness. How many a person's life has been

shortened due to misfortunes and difficulties or he has turned old due to grief and sorrow. Besides, a great number of people's life do obliterate and break up due to severity of their actions and bodily movements. If these factors do not play any role in man's death then, his life would certainly be long enough.

If man observes the rules for health as per the afore-said three principles; then nothing can prevent him from living for hundreds and rather thousands of years in this world by the will of Allah! [16](#)

No matter how much we ponder over this point and probe into some of the appropriate books, we cannot find any objection and reason against this matter. Rather, too often a person doing research into this matter has come across some facts forcing him to testify in the subject of longevity.

The mysteries of life and the faculties which have been deposited in man's existence is always hidden and unknown. Today, medical science with all its advancement has not become cognizant with all those mysteries and has not perceived its realities the way it should have done so. Some of our friends who are doctors have confirmed this point.

One of them says: Often it occurs that a patient is brought to me and as per the medical rules, I see him close to death. Rather his chance of survival is one percent and I lose hope of his recovery. When on the same day or the next day I visit him again, I see him well and fine and the probability of his dying becomes one percent. On the other hand, how often it has occurred that I come across another patient whose case is just the opposite of the first patient.

Indeed, to live for hundreds of years is something unusual and uncommon, meaning that gathering together and obtaining the means of a sound health from all the aspects (which we previously pointed out) is very rare – and does not occur for majority of the people in most of the periods and places. However if those means are gathered together, it is possible for man's lifespan to prolong habitually and naturally. So, the problem lies in gathering together and making available the means (of sound health) and not in the means of a lengthy life.

When you become fully conversant with what we have previously mentioned and become aware of the article written in the magazine "Al-Muqtataf" you will realize that God's statement in Sura 'al-سَّعِيدٍ' with regards to the story of Yunus (a.s.) is something customary:

فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ لَلَّبَثَ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَى يَوْمٍ يُبَعْثُونَ

But had it not been that he was of those who glorify (Us), he would certainly have tarried in its belly till the day when they are raised. (37: 143–144)

Thus it is possible for man to live in the depth of the sea till the Day of Judgment. Why shouldn't it be so when Allah has Power over all things?

Views of the Magazine ‘Al-Muqtataf’

The magazine ‘Al-Muqtataf’ published an article in part 3 in the year 1359 under the title “Does man live in this world forever?”

It said: What is life and what is death? Has death been destined for every living being?

Every grain of wheat is a living substance having a place in its own cluster. That cluster too is grown from another grain and that grain too comes into existence from another cluster and so on. As such, prying into the history of six thousand or more years becomes easy. Grains of wheat which have been found amongst the remains of ancient Egyptians and Assyrians reveals this fact that ancient Egyptians and Assyrians used to sow wheat and make bread out of its flour.

The wheat which is available with us at present has not been created from nothing (لا شيء). Rather this wheat has come into existence from that ancient wheat in a concatenated manner. Thus this present wheat is one part of another living wheat and that one from another one and so on until it goes back to six or seven thousand years or rather hundreds of thousands of years.

These grains of wheat which turn into bread and do not have any movement and growth are in reality living entities like all other living creatures. Nothing is deficient in them but a little water. Thus life and existence of wheat have been for thousands of years – right from ancient times until now. This also applies to all types of plant possessing seed or fruit. Even the animals are not excluded from this rule. This is because all insects, fishes, birds, beasts, mosquitoes and even human beings, who are the greatest of all creatures, are reckoned to be a part of their own parents and their parents a part of their parents and so on.

Man leaves behind a generation and that generation is one living part from his own self just as the seed of one plant or tree is a part of that particular plant or tree. In this living part, there exists very small particles like those particles which have given shape to the organs of parents, and the organs of this part are the very food which he eats. Thus a date-seed becomes a tree which shall possess branches and leaves and dates, and an olive-seed turns into a tree which shall have branches, leaves and fruits. All plants, eggs of insects, fishes, birds, beasts, mosquitoes and even human beings can be inferred in this manner.

All the afore-mentioned examples are so well known that not even two persons can be found who will dispute over it. Sometimes it happens that a tree itself lives for 1000 or 2000 years but man does not live for more than 70 or 80 years. In rare cases, he may live for 100 years and the gastric particles remain alive and grow in order to preserve the generation. However, all the parts die as though death has been destined for them. Centuries have passed since man has thought of relieving himself from the claws of death or at least increasing his lifespan. This is especially true so at present when man wishes to fight various diseases and plagues with medicines. It has still not been ascertained that for example someone

has lived for 120 years in recent times.

However, reliable scholars say: – The entire body-tissue of an animal is so endurable that it has no end and it is possible for man to live for thousands of years provided no accident severs his age. This opinion is not merely a conjecture. Rather it is something practical and has been confirmed by experiments.

One of the surgeons was able to cut off a part of an animal and then keep it alive for many years more than the animal itself could have normally lived. That is to say, the very existence of that cut-off part finds connection with the nourishment that is given to it. Thus it is possible that that part may live forever if ample nourishment is given to it.

The afore-said surgeon is Doctor Alexis Carrel who worked in the Rockefeller Institute, New York. He conducted this experiment on a part of an embryo of a hen, and it grew and remained alive for more than eight years. The afore-said doctor and others like him have experimented on the human parts such as the organs, muscles, heart, skin and kidney and have come to this conclusion that the said parts develop and remain alive so long as they are given ample nourishment.

Even Dr. Dimend Webrel who is a professor of John Hopkins University says:

It has been proved through experiments that the tissue of a human body remains in working order due to nourishing power. Since this saying is based on scientific findings it is highly explicit and significant. Apparently, the first person who conducted this test on the body parts of an animal was Doctor Jacques Loeb who was one of the surgeons of Rockefeller Institute in New York. The said doctor experimented on the birth of a frog from eggs which were not inseminated. He saw that some eggs remained alive for a long period while some died very soon. That led him to experiment on different parts of a frog's body and consequently was successful in keeping alive these parts for a long time.

Later Doctor Warren Lewis and his wife proved that it is the tissue of a bird's foetus can be placed in salt-water and kept alive. When some organic substance is added to it, the tissue tends to grow and multiply. Successive tests have revealed that it is possible for the tissue of any animal to remain alive and grow in saline provided they are given nourishment. However it is still not known whether that tissue remains alive or not after turning old.

Afterwards, Doctor Carrel embarked on further tests and proved that these tissues do not age an animal. Rather the lifespan of these parts is more than the normal lifespan of the animal itself. The said doctor started his experiment in the year 1912 and on this path faced many problems until he and his assistants finally succeeded in proving the following points:

- (1) The afore-said tissues remain alive constantly provided they do not encounter certain occurrences which destroy them like deficiency in food and entry of certain microbes.
- (2) These tissues not only remain alive but grow and multiply just as they grow and multiply inside an

animal's body.

(3) It is possible to know the measure of growth and increase of these tissues and their relation with the nourishment given to them.

(4) Time has no effect on them. That is to say, these tissues do not turn old and weak through the passage of time. In fact the least sign of ageing does not appear in them. Moreover, these tissue grow and multiply in the current year just as they grew and multiplied in the previous years. All these signs reveal that they grow and remain alive if proper care and food is provided to them. Therefore the main factor which causes death is inattentiveness and not ageing.

So, what is the cause of man's death? Why it is that man does not live for more than hundred years and usually lives for only seventy or eighty years?

We may reply as such: An animal's body possesses numerous and diverse parts and these parts have a strong connection with each other, to the extent that the life of one is dependent on the life of the other. Thus, when due to some reason, one part weakens and dies, the other remaining parts also die. In addition to that are microbes which cause illnesses. These reduce man's age and restrict it to seventy or eighty years especially the number of human beings who die during childhood.

What has ultimately been concluded from tests and experiments is as such: The reason why man dies is not because he has completed seventy, eighty or hundred years but because the external factors enter some of his (internal) parts and kill and destroy them and since there exists a relation between these and other parts, the other parts too get destroyed.

Thus, whenever medical science becomes powerful enough to destroy these external factors or at least prevent them from influencing the parts of our body, there can be nothing which can stop man from living hundreds of years just as some species of trees live for this number of years. It is not far when medical and health sciences will attain this lofty achievement and consequently the number of people living an average life will increase or that they will live twice or thrice the normal age.[17](#)

The Mahdi is alive and being given sustenance

When we wish to speak on this topic and prove that the Mahdi, the awaited one, is alive, receiving his sustenance and living a life just like others until the time when Allah gives him permission to emerge and establish the truth and justice and destroy oppression, we are bound to mention before anything else, the following preliminaries:

Firstly, the possibility of man's living hundreds or rather thousands of years and just as you are aware, science and nature do not repudiate this possibility.

Secondly, the awaited Mahdi is the same Abu al-Qasim Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-'Askari ibn 'Ali al-

Hadi ibn Muhammad al-Jawad ibn ‘Ali al-Ridha..., until the end of his lineage, as mentioned previously.

Thirdly, the Mahdi was born on the day which we have previously mentioned, and Imam al-Hasan al-’Askari had no son other than the Mahdi. Rather he is the only child of his father.

Now that you have become aware of these points we say: We have reasons which prove that the Mahdi is alive and is being given sustenance. For an impartial person it suffices him to refer to only one of them:

First: Basically, what is deemed to be expedient is this that the Mahdi is alive. This is because we are sure about his birth but doubt his death. Not even one authentic and reliable person has narrated anything about the Mahdi’s demise. The only thing which can be seen in the expressions of some of the deniers is certain improbabilities and the point that how it is or would be possible for the Mahdi to live such a long life.

Verily, whatever I have reviewed of the sayings of reliable traditionists, historians and genealogists, I could not find in their sayings any stipulation about the demise of the Mahdi. Thus it is not right on our part to pass judgment about the Mahdi’s death after knowing for sure that he is living.

The Mahdi’s long life being merely unusual does not mean that we give up our previous firm belief. Thus it is fair to say that the one who believes in the Mahdi’s death is compelled to produce evidence for it as against the one who says that the Mahdi is alive and is being given sustenance.

However, even if we assume that evidence can be produced, yet one cannot pass judgment on the Mahdi’s demise. Rather one is forced to oppose the evidence with views which are stronger in reference and more manifest in proof.

Second: When the Mahdi’s birth is proved, there remains no alternative but to accept one of the following two matters:

We either accept that the Mahdi (a.s.) is alive and continues to live like all other human beings until the time when Allah shall command him to emerge, or that he has died a natural death and Allah by His Power will revive him at the appointed time. There is no doubt that the first matter is closer to what is customary and to the principles of nature than the second which is more unlikely and far from the natural wont. For this reason, the action of Prophets in bringing the dead to life was considered to be a miracle and not longevity.

Third: The traditions unanimously accepted by both the Sunnis and the Shi'a state that the Caliphs after the Holy Prophet (S) who are the Imams of the Muslims, are twelve in number, and will exist so long as this religion continues. After it has been proven that Mahdi is the twelfth amongst them, then that necessitates the belief that he remains alive. Otherwise what necessarily follows is that there is no Imam amongst the Muslims in this era and their death will be similar to the death of those people living during

the period of Jahiliya.

Fourth: Traditions which speak of Mahdi's occultation and indicate the manner in which people derive benefit from his existence clearly show that the Mahdi is alive and being given sustenance, living like other human beings. Some of those traditions state that the Mahdi is awaited (*muntadhar*) during the period of his occultation, while others specify that the period of Mahdi's occultation will be the same as the period of his age, and a third group of traditions say: Blessed is the one who during the period of occultation of the Mahdi is steadfast in his belief about his Imamate. Besides these, there are other sayings which prove his life and his remaining alive till the day of his emergence.

In fact, it can be said that the very word occultation (*Ghaybah*, غيبة) about the Mahdi and his title 'the hidden one' (*al-gha'ib*, الغائب) are itself a clear testimony of his living because, the words 'occultation' and 'the hidden one' have been placed vis-a-vis the words 'presence' (*hadhur*, حضور) and 'the present one' (*al-hadhir*, الحاضر), not the words 'death' (*al-mawt*, الموت) and 'the deceased' (*al-mayyit*, الميت), or one who will be born, as Ibn Abi al-Hadid has claimed.

Fifth: the clear statements of some of the great Sunni scholars about continuity of the Mahdi's existence.

Amongst them we may mention the name of Shaykh Muhyi al-Din al-'Arabi in his book *al-Futuhat* as narrated by Shaykh 'Abd al Wahhab al-Sh'arani in his book *Al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir*, which we quote from the book *Is'af al-Raghabin*:

'The Mahdi is the immediate son of al-Hasan al-'Askari and the fact that Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari departed this world in the year 260 A.H. necessitates the Mahdi's existence and his continued life till the time of his emergence, or that he dies and then Allah will bring him to life again.. It does not appear that Shaykh Muhyi al-Din had the second possibility in mind'.

Amongst them is Shaykh Abu 'Abd Allah, Muhammad ibn Yusuf ibn Muhammad al-Kanji who in his book *Al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib al-Zaman*, based on what the author of *Is'af al-Raghabin* has narrated on page 227, says:

'One of the points which proves that the Mahdi is alive and still living after going into occultation, and the fact that his continuity is not an impossibility, is the very existence of 'Isa ibn Maryam and and al-Khidhr and Ilyas who are amongst the friends of Allah, and the existence of the one-eyed Dajjal and the accursed Satan who are amongst the enemies of Allah. The existence of these personalities has been substantiated by Qur'an and Prophetic traditions'.

Amongst them is the learned scholar and mystic Shaykh Khawaja Muhammad Parsa who in his book *Fasl al-Khitab*, based on what is mentioned in *Yanabi' al-Mawadda*, page 451, after mentioning the birth of the Mahdi says: 'Allah bestowed wisdom and decisive speech upon the Mahdi in his infancy just as He did in the case of Yahya and 'Isa.'

Khawaja Muhammad Parsa continues: 'Allah lengthened the age of the Mahdi just as He lengthened the

age of Khidhr'.

Amongst them is Shaykh 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani who in his book *Al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir*, as mentioned on page 157 of *Is'af al-Raghibin*, says: 'The Mahdi is the son of Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari and his date of birth is 15th Sha'bān 255 A.H. He is still living until he meets 'Isa ibn Maryam'.

Thereafter he says: 'Shaykh Hasan al-'Araqi narrated this for me after his meeting with Imam Mahdi and the same has been confirmed by my master, Sayyid 'Ali al-Khawāṣṣ'.

Amongst them is Shaykh Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi who, as mentioned in *Yanabi' al-Mawadda*, pg.469, said to his students at the time of his death:

"You may sell my medical and philosophical books and give the money derived from them in charity to the poor. But with regards to my books on exegesis (*tafsir*), hadith and mysticism, preserve them in the libraries; and every night recite seventy thousand times the attestation of Unity (of God) i.e. (ﷺ يٰ ﷺ يٰ ﷺ يٰ) and send my salutations to the Mahdi."

The author says: This saying of Shaykh Sadr al-Din does not necessarily prove the existence of the Mahdi because he must have spoken these words under this impression that perhaps his students will witness his emergence. However the first saying is more evident.

Amongst them is Shaykh Sa'd al-Din al-Hamawi, as mentioned on page 474 of *Yanabi' al-Mawadda*, narrating from the book of Shaykh Aziz ibn Muhammad Nasafi, who while classifying Allah's saints says:

'Allah, the Exalted, chose twelve 'Wali' (custodians) from the Ahl al-Bayt for this Ummah (nation) and made them the successors to the Holy Prophet (S)..... the last of the saints who is the last successor of the Holy Prophet and the last custodian and the twelfth representative is the Mahdi, Sahib al-Zaman'.

Amongst them is Shaykh Shahab al-Din al-Hindi, well-known by the title of 'Malik al-'Ulama'. In his book *Hidayah al-Su'ad*, as mentioned in the book *Durar al-Musawiya*, he says: "The ninth Imam from the offspring of Imam al-Husayn is Imam Hujjat Allah al-Qā'im al-Mahdi. He is hidden, and he has a long life just like 'Isa, Ilyas and Khidhr, amongst the believers, and Dajjal and al-Sāmīri, amongst the infidels.

Amongst them is Shaykh Muhammad famous as Khawja Parsa who said in the margin of his book *Fasl al-Khitab*, in addition to what has been mentioned from him in *Durar al-Musawiya*: 'Caliphate and Imamate shall end in the Mahdi. He is the Imam right from the time of his father's demise until the Day of Judgment. 'Isa shall pray behind him and acknowledge him and will invite the people towards his school of thought which is the school of thought of the Prophet (S)'.

Amongst them is the famous traditionist Shaykh Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, the author of *Fath al-Bari fi Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*. In his book *Al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar fi 'Al-mūt al-Mahdi al-Muntadhar*, according to what has been mentioned in *al-Futuhat al-Islamiyah*, vol.2, pg. 320, he said:

‘Sound traditions have determined for us the belief of the Mahdi’s existence. The Mahdi is the same person whose emergence shall coincide with the emergence of ‘Isa and Dajjal. By the Mahdi is meant this very personality and those before him were not the Mahdi at all.’

Amongst them are some other learned scholars and mystics who have written such sayings and sentences about the Mahdi in the form of poems and odes in Arabic and Persian, as mentioned in *Yanabi’ al-Mawadda* and other books. These poems speak of the Mahdi’s existence and the fact that he is a living personality receiving his sustenance from his Lord. They have depicted the Mahdi with such positions as *wilayah*, Imamate, Caliphate and deputyship on behalf of the Holy Prophet (S) and that he is the channel of divine blessings.

Those wishing to know more should refer to books written by our scholars in this regard especially the book *Kashf al-Astar fi al-Gha’ib ‘an al-Andh̄r* written by Haj Mirza Husayn al-Nuri al-Tabarsi (may his dust be fragrant) – the Master of the ‘Mujtahids’ and the last of the inspired traditionists. The contents of this book are such that it would quench the thirst of a thirsty person and cure the sickness of a sick person.

The Mahdi and those who have seen him

Under this title we shall set forth three fine narratives as a means of cooling the heart and not in the form of reasoning and argumentation.

Firstly, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha’rani in his book *Tabaqat al-Urafa*’ while writing about Shaykh Hasan al-‘Araqi says:

‘I went along with Sayyid Abu al-‘Abbas al-Huraythi to meet Shaykh Hasan al-‘Araqi. The latter said: ‘Should I narrate to you the story of my life right from its beginning until now, in such manner as if you have been my intimate friend right from childhood?’ I replied: ‘Yes, please do.’

He said: ‘I was a youth amongst the craftsmen of Damascus. On Fridays, we used to occupy ourselves in playing, drinking and gambling. It was on one of those Fridays that I received some sort of an inspiration from Allah that: Have you been created for such deeds? Therefore, I gave up my usual activities and fled away from my companions. They pursued me but could not find me. I entered the mosque of Bani Umayyah and saw a person on the pulpit who was speaking about the Mahdi. Hearing this, I yearned to meet him. There was not a single prostration that I performed without asking Allah to fulfill my wish for meeting him. One night, while being engaged in the recommended prayers, I saw all of a sudden someone sitting behind me. He rubbed his hands over my back and said: “O my son, the Compassionate Allah has granted your wish. I am the Mahdi, what do you want?”

I said: “Will you come with me to my house?”

He replied: “Yes.” Then we went together and on the way he said: “Make a place vacant for me so that I can be alone.” I made a place vacant for him and he stayed with me for seven days and nights’.

The author of *Yanabi' al-Mawadda* narrates on page 455 (an incident) from the book *Kashf al-Ghumma* of Shaykh 'Ali ibn 'Isa al-Arbali who in the view of the Shi'a and the Sunnis is a reliable person. The said author relates as such: People narrate stories and incidents about the miracles of Imam al-Mahdi (may Allah be pleased with him) which describing them would take a long time. However I shall narrate two of them which are closer to our time and which have been narrated to me by a group of reliable brothers.

First: There lived a man named Isma'il ibn al-Hasan in the city of Hilla, between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. My brothers narrate from Isma'il that there appeared a boil on his left thigh, which was the size of the fist of one's hand. Doctors who looked at his boil expressed their inability to cure it, so he went to Baghdad to see the foreign physicians who said that there was no cure for it. Thereafter, Isma'il left for Samarra and visited the graves of Imam 'Ali al-Hadi and Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari (may Allah be pleased with them). Later he entered the cellar (*sardab*). There he beseeched the Compassionate Allah and sought help from the Mahdi.

Then, he entered the Tigris River, took the ritual bath and put on his clothes. Suddenly he saw four riders coming from the direction of the city of Samarra. One of them was an old man holding a spear in his hand while the other was a youth wearing colorful clothes. The one holding the spear was coming from the right flank while the other two were coming from the left flank. The youth with colorful clothes was coming from the center.

This youth asked Isma'il: "Will you go tomorrow to your family?" Isma'il replied: "Yes". He said: "Come close to me so that I can see what ails you". Isma'il went close to him. He bent down and pressed his thigh with his blessed hand and then sat back on his saddle. The old man who was holding a spear in his hand said: "You have been cured, Isma'il. This is the Imam".

The four riders left and Isma'il too followed them. The Imam said: "Return!" Isma'il replied: "I shall never part from you." The Imam said: "It is for your own good that you go back." Isma'il replied: "I shall not part from you under any circumstances." The old man said: "Have you no shame! Your Imam has twice commanded you to go back and yet you disobey?" Ismail stopped. After Imam went forward a few steps, then turned back to him and said: "Isma'il, when you reach Baghdad, the Caliph Abu Ja'far Mustansir Bi'llah will forcibly summon you. When he offers you something, refuse to accept it. Also tell our son Razi al-Din to write on your behalf to 'Ali ibn 'Awadh. I have directed him to give you whatever you wish."

After this the Imam left with his companions and Isma'il's eyes were fixed on them until he could see them no more. He sat on the ground for some time and started to weep because of his separation from them.

He then went to Samarra where the people surrounded him and said: "Why do we see you so much changed? What has happened?? Ismail said: "Do you know who those riders were who had left the city and gone towards the river"? They said: "They were from the nobles and are the owners of cattle".

Isma'il said: "They were Imam and his companions. The one dressed in colorful clothes was Imam and it was he who rubbed his blessed hand over my boil".

They said: "Allow us to see for ourselves". When Isma'il displayed his thigh to them there was not even a scar left to be seen. They started tearing his clothes (to take as blessings) and then took him to a safe house so that others could not reach him. Later, the Caliph's representative came and inquired about this incident and asked his name, his background, his native place and the purpose his exit from Baghdad in the first week.

The next morning after reciting his prayers, Isma'il left the city of Samarra before a huge crowd. On the way he reached a place where people had gathered in great numbers and were inquiring about his name, genealogy and the place from which he came. When they saw and recognized him by the afore-said signs, they began to tear his clothes and took them away as blessings. The Caliph's representative wrote a detailed report on this incident and dispatched it to Baghdad. The minister called in Sayyid Radhi al-Din to inquire from him the authenticity of this incident.

When Radhi al-Din (who was one of Ismail's companion and had been Ismail's host before leaving for Samarra) and some others saw Isma'il they dismounted from their animals. When Ismail showed his thigh to them and they could not see any trace of the wound. Radhi al-Din fainted, and after gaining consciousness, he caught hold of Isma'il's hand and took him to the Minister. Radhi al-Din cried and said: "He is my brother and the most beloved of all men to me".

The Minister inquired from Isma'il about that particular incident and he in turn described it in length. The Minister ordered the doctors who had previously seen Isma'il's thigh to come forward. When they arrived he asked: "When did you last see his wound"? They replied: "Ten days ago". The Minister displayed Isma'il's thigh and when the doctors saw no trace of it, they said: "This is the act of the Messiah". The Minister said: "We know who has performed this act".

The Minister took Isma'il to the Caliph who asked him to give an account and Isma'il explained in detail what had occurred. When the Caliph presented Isma'il with a sum of one thousand dinars, the latter said: "How dare I take even a little of this offer." The Caliph said: "Whom do you fear?!" He said: "The one who cured me because he has forbidden me from accepting anything from you." On hearing this, the Caliph began to cry.

'Ali ibn 'Isa says: I was once narrating this incident to a group of people who were around me. Shams al-Din, who was Isma'il's son, was also present, but I had then not recognized him.

Shams al-Din said: "I am Isma'il's son."

I said: "Had you seen the wound on your father's thigh"?

He replied: "At that time, I was only a child. However I had heard this matter from my parents, relatives and neighbors and saw the place of wound after it had been cured. I could not find any trace of the wound and hair had grown on that spot".

'Ali ibn 'Isa further says: I inquired about this incident from Sayyid Safi' al-Din Muhammad ibn Muhammad and Najm al-Din Haydar ibn Amir too and they informed me of this incident and said: "We had seen Isma'il before and after his recovery."

Moreover his son related to me that his father after his recovery, went to Samarra forty times so that he would perhaps get the honor of visiting him once again.

Second: Sayyid Baqiqi Athwah 'Alawi Hasani related to me that his father Athwah did not acknowledge the existence of the Mahdi. He would often say: "Whenever the Mahdi comes and cures me, I will confirm the people's saying" (about the Mahdi). When we had all gathered for the 'Isha' (night) prayers, we heard a shriek from our father. We went close to him and he said: "The Imam passed from here at this very moment. Look out for him." We went in search for him but could not find anyone. We returned back and then our father said:

"Someone approached me and said: 'O Athwah! I replied: "At thy service." He said: "I am the Mahdi. I have come to cure you." He stretched out his hand, pressed my thigh and then left".

The narrator says: After this incident, he used to run like a deer and there was not a trace left.

'Ali ibn 'Isa says: I inquired about this incident from Sayyid Baqiqi's son and he too admitted it.

1. A detailed tradition with almost similar contents has also been narrated in Rawdat al-Safa, vol.3, pp.18–19.

2. Abu al-Fida in his Tarikh, vol.2, pg.45, 'Abd Allah al-Shabrawi in Al-Ithaf, pg. 179, Muhammad ibn Shuhna in Rawsh al-Manadhir (in the margin of Muruj al-Dhahab) vol.1, pg. 294, Abu al-Fallah al-Hanabli in Shadharat al-Dhahab, vol. 3, pg.150, Muhammad ibn Khawand Shah in Rawsh al-Safa', vol. 3, pg. 19, Abu al-'Abbas Ahmad al-Qarmani in Akhbar al-Duwal, pg. 117, Shaykh Sa'ad al-Din al-Hamawi (as per what has come in Yanabi' al-Mawadda, pg. 395), Shaykh Salah al-Din Safadi (Yanabi' al-Mawadda, pg. 393) and Shaykh Abd al-Rahman al-Bastami (Yanabi' al-Mawadda, pg. 337).

Besides these names, those which have been mentioned by Nuri in his Kashf al-Astar are Sayyid Jamal al-Din, author of Rawsh al-Ahabab, Ahmad Bayhaqi Khusrojardi Naishaburi, Hafiz Abu al-Fath Muhammad ibn Abu al-Fawaris, Shaykh 'Emir ibn 'Emir Basri, 'Abd al-Haq Dahlawi, Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman Jammi, Qasim Shahab al-din Malik al-Ulama, Ibn Khashshab, Hafiz Abu Muhammad Ahmad al-Baladhuri, 'Abd Allah al-Mutairi author of Riyaq al-Zahira, Mulla Husayn Kashifi, Naṣir ibn 'Ali Jahzami al-Nasri (as mentioned in Najm al-Thaqib), Qasim Jawad Sabati, Mulla 'Ali Qari, Shaykh Sadr al-din al-Qunawi, Al-Nasir li Din Allah Ahmad, the Abbasid Caliph, Mufez ibn-Ahmad well known as 'Akhtab-ul-Khutaba' Khawrazmi and others whom al-Qunduzi and Nuri have mentioned in their books Yanabi' al-Mawadda and Najm al-Thaqib.

3. 'Arf al-Wardi, pg.59.

4. 'Arf al-Wardi, pg.59.

5. The author of 'Arf al-Wardi (page 58) too has narrated the same. Thereafter he writes: Al-Tirmidhi says: – This an acceptable and authentic tradition.

6. The author of Rawsh al-Safa', vol. 3, pg. 18, narrates from Ibn Mas'ud that the Holy Prophet (S) said: "If there remains not more than a day from the life of the earth, God will prolong the day until a person from my progeny who carries the same name as mine, shall appear and fill the earth with equity and justice just as it had been filled with cruelty and oppression."

7. Author of Rawsh al-Safa' (vol..3, pg. 18) writes: "Abu al-Qasim is his agnomen and the Imamiyah call him al-Hujjah, al-Qasim, al-Mahdi and Sahib al-Zaman. In the same place, he mentions his name and agnomen to be the same as that of

the Holy Prophet (S) Abu al-Fida in his Tarikh (vol. 2 pg. 45) and al-Shabrawi in Al-Ithaf (page 179) have also narrated the same.”

8. Tarikh Abu al-Fida, vol. 2, pg. 45, Tarikh Farmani, pg. 117, Al-Ithaf of al-Shabrawi, pg. 179, Rawḍah al-Manadhir (in the margins of Muruj al-Dhahab) vol. 1, pg. 294, Saba'ik al-Dhahab of Suyuti, pg. 78, Shadharat al-Dhahab, vol. 2, pg. 150, and Wafayat al-A'yan of Ibn-Khallikan, vol. 1, pg. 451.

9. Author of Qarmani writes (on page 44): Mas'udi says Khir is Alexander's cousin and the vanguard of Dhu al-Qarnayn's army living during Hazrat Ibrahim's time. He drank from the well-spring of life so that he has remained alive till today, and will continue to live till the sounding of the trumpets.

10. Qarmani, pg.50.

11. Qarmani, pg.348.

12. Author of Qarmani (on page 20) has quoted Wahab as saying that Adam lived for 1000 years and as per Torah has mentioned his life to have lasted for 900 years. On page 22 he has mentioned Nuh's life to have lasted for 1000 years and that of Shith for 912 years.

13. Torah (Verse 14 – Journey of Genesis) has mentioned 910 years.

14. The author of Qarmani (page 20) mentions his age to have been 965 years and the Torah (Verse 17 – Journey of Genesis) has mentioned 895 years.

15. Ibn Hajar in Iṣabah, vol. 5, pg. 255, has written the same.

16. – About death the Holy Quran (Verse 2 Chapter 6) says: He it is who created you from clay, then He decreed (i.e. a certain) term; and there is a term (i.e. a uncertain one) named with Him.

Thus man's term (i.e. death) is of two types. One is certain and cannot be changed or postponed under any circumstances. The other is uncertain which by some means or the other like strengthening of blood-kinship, breaking off ties of relationship, etc., is subject to change. In this regard Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al-Riḍa (a.s.) said: 'Strengthening blood-kinship prolongs the (decreed) short life, and breaking off ties of relationship shortens the (decreed) long life'. On this basis, a person can live for hundreds or thousands of years only if his term (of death) is an uncertain one and those who have lived for three thousand years and below are those whose term had been an uncertain one and secondly all the means of a sound health had been prepared for them.

17. The magazine Al-Hilal (part 2, pg. 196) has published an article from Doctor Jauki under the title 'Long Life' and says: 'Death does not occur because life has become exhausted and reached its natural level. Rather, most of the deaths are caused by poison'. Thereafter he says: 'Majority of us get poisoned and it is not that we die.'

Verily life welcomes eternity and what has been worn out can become afresh provided these fresh faculties too do not get poisoned. However, we strive to poison ourselves because whatever we eat and drink are all contaminated with poison. Most of the people reaching the age of fifty tend to gradually commit suicide. They tear apart their own graves with their teeth because they tend to eat whatever they like and their food contains little poison, which weakens and destroys the arteries. Soon the signs of senility become visible'.

Tantawi Jawhari in vol. 17, pg.224, of his exegesis under the verse:

وَمَنْ نُعِمِّدُ فَنُنَكِّسُهُ فِي الْخَلْقِ

And whomever We give a long life, We cause him to regress in creation... (36:68)

has written the following article taken from the afore-said magazine.

Everything indicates the possibility of long-life and making anew the strength of old people. Professor and Doctor Fured Nuf whose name is well known amongst all, is not a physician but like a Prophet who gives glad tidings. He believes in the possibility of long life exceeding a hundred years and the possibility of regaining back one's youth. His belief is based on the results of experiments conducted on animals and till now he has conducted six hundred experiments.

He further says: Today, we are happy that the 20th century shall not elapse until the possibility of youthful force is restored

and the signs of senility removed from the faces.

Again, in vol. 17, pg. 226, Jawhari has written the following article under the title “For how many years we must live?” taken from the afore-said magazine:

‘Hufland in his book “The art of living a long-life” says: Truly man is born while (from the viewpoint of structural form and physical powers) being ready and capable of remaining alive for two centuries’.

Thereafter he writes: ‘Hufland is not the only one to have expressed this view. Rather all those who have been teaching the subject of ‘Nature’ have believed in the afore-said view. Moreover the discussion of “possibility of long-life” is the most sparkling discussion amongst them’.

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