

# IMAME ZAMAN HAZRAT MEHDI (A.S.)

Mulla Haji Mohammadjaffer Sheriff Dewji  
Translated by: Murtaza A. Lakha



Published by: Literary Section Ithnaasheri Union, P.O. Box 2440  
Dar es Salaam.

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**HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S)**

By:

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## TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

When I was invited to translate into English the Gujarati book on our current Imam (a.s.), written by Marhum Al-Haj Mulla Muhammadjaffer Sheriff Dewji, I was astonished for I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth, to undertake such an assignment. Yet, the holy nature of the task forbade my declining. Conscious of my inadequacies, I passed my manuscripts on to no less than three person; Al-Haj Mohamed Gulamhusein Dharsi, my elder brother Al-Haj Mulla Mohamedhusein Ahmed Lakha and Al-Haj Muhsin Alidina, to examine them. So apt, ample and thorough have been their amendments that I am tempted to call this production a joint effort. However, as the original translation is mine, the responsibility for all the faults, frailties and failures herein must exclusively be on me. For having reduced them so considerably, I remain grateful to all of them and, particularly, to Al-Haj Muhsin Alidina, who even perused the final draft and undertook proof-reading.

There has generally been felt the need to awaken awareness of the presence amongst us of our current Imam (a.s.). Although the Gujarati version of this work ran into three editions and was translated into Urdu as well, the demand for rendering it into English was compelling. It is my pious hope that this effort will not only imbue consciousness of his existence and our duties to him, but will also inspire added vigour towards improvement of this work, as well as translation of other works, by the late author.

Murtaza A. Lakha

Dar es Salaam  
April 1982.

## A SHORT LIFE-SKETCH OF THE LATE AUTHOR

The late Al-Haj Mulla Muhammadjaffer Sheriff Dewji, the author of this work, was a household name in east Africa. Born in Zanzibar on 7<sup>th</sup> January 1889, he became, and remained, a dedicated and devoted person to the study and propagation of the Shia Ithnaasheri faith. Although a businessman by profession, he became, in his own right, by his knowledge and industry, a beacon of light for the followers of the faith. Apart from continuous preaching as a renowned zakir and travelling far afield to various parts of Kenya, Uganda, Mainland Tanzania and Somalia delivering majalises, he managed to write a total of 26 books on various religious subjects in Gujarati language besides contributing articles in various communal journals. His leading works include

*Al-Musawat*

*Shahide Islam*

*Tohfa-e-Rizwiyya*

*Sham-e-Hidayat*

*Al-Mahasin: (The Beard)*

*Ru'yat-e-Hilal*

*Diniyat Course, in four parts*

*Rooh (Atma): (The Soul)*

*Awagaban (Reincarnation)*

*Imame Zaman Hazrat Mahdi A.S.*

*Forty Hadiths*

## FOREWORD

In the Name of the Most Merciful and Compassionate Allah.

The Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) has said that:

“One who dies without knowing the Imam of the time, dies the death of an Ignoramus” (Pagan)”

This *Hadith* of the Prophet (s.a.w.) requires us, Shia Ithna-asheri Muslims, to know our Imam of the time, Hadhrat Imam Muhammad Mahdi (a.s), *Al-Qaim*, *Al-Muntazir*.

In order to know a person, we need to be introduced to him. Thus, this book penned by one of the renowned Khoja authors, the late Mulla Muhammadjaffer Sheriff Dewji, is our introduction to our current Imam (a.s).

But the Qur’an enjoins us to “Obey Allah, His Prophet and the *Ulul Amr...*” Thus, taken together, the Qur’an and *Hadith* require us to know and obey our current Imam (a.s)

This book also indicates our duties to our Imam (a.s.) during his concealment. One such duty is to propagate the faith by building Madrasahs, publishing religious books and carrying out active missionary work.

The Literary Section of Ithnaasheri Union, being mindful of its duties and taking cognizance of its resources, has sought to undertake publishing religious works.

As a first step, the Section has decided to start modestly by translating an essential basic text: The life, concealment, re-appearance and rule of our Imam-e-Zaman (a.s)

The Gujarati original by the Late Mulla Muhammadjaffer was a natural choice and the translator, Al Haj Murtaza A. Lakha, the most appropriate person to do the job.

It is with a deep sense of gratitude that the Ithnaasheri Union acknowledges the sterling effort made by Al Haj Murtaza Lakha in translating this work.

The Union wishes to acknowledge its obligations to M/s. Nayani Stores for undertaking the printing of this work.

The Union offers this book to the Mu'mineen in our endeavour to evoke greater interest in, add to the knowledge about, and help stimulate further research and publication of various issues touched upon by the author.

Finally Ithnaasheri Union humbly beseeches our Imam-e-Zaman (a.s) to accept this humble token of our devotion to him, and for his constant help and guidance to us to remain on the right path following the Qur'an and Ahlul Bait.

Hassan G. Hirji  
Hon. Secretary  
Literary Section  
Ithnaasheri Union  
DAR ES SALAAM  
1981

# IMAME ZAMAN HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.)

*In the Name of Allah the Merciful the Beneficent*

## INTRODUCTION

This book has not been written for a discussion or controversy with members of other religions or sects of Islam, Rather, it is meant for members of my community, particularly the upcoming youth so that they can understand and appreciate fully, the facts about their legitimate Imam, the Imam of our time, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), his Imamate, his disappearance and eventual reappearance. It is only to establish the legitimacy of the Twelve Imams, that this book contains extracts and illustrations from books of faith of the other sects of Islam as well as other religions.

As the concept of Imamate is one of the five roots of our religion, its certitude and sincere faith in it are mandatory. Just as it is obligatory to understand, be certain about, and hold faith in, the concept of Unity of Allah, His Justice, the Prophethood of The Prophet and the Day of Judgement, it is, likewise, necessary and imperative to repose firm faith in Imamate. This entails knowing, accepting, and believing without doubt in, them as the successors and vicegerents of the Prophet. The last of them, the Twelfth Imam, the Imam of our time, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) is alive on this earth but is concealed from our sight. When Allah will so command him, he will reappear and will then fill the earth with peace and justice as it will have been fraught with injustice and tyranny and he will spread the only true religion, Islam.

The crux of the controversy amongst the 73 sects of Islam is on the question of Imamate. On the remaining questions of Unity of Allah, the Prophethood, the Holy Book and the Day of Judgement, all the sects are agreed (except for the Kadianis, Bahais and the few sects which have sprung up only in the last century or two). Yet this aspect of Imamate is of paramount importance.

All Muslims are unanimous in believing the tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) that “One who dies without recognising the Imam of his time dies the death of a pagan”; therefore, the death of a non-Muslim. Again there is a unanimously accepted tradition from the Holy Prophet that “My followers will be divided into 73 sects, and all but one of them will be led astray to Hell.”

It is not possible that all the 73 sects should be true and legitimate, for each one of them sees the others as false. Hence, it is the duty of each Muslim to search for and accept the true and legitimate sect, for in accordance with the tradition of the Prophet cited above, a person who dies without recognising the Imam of his time dies a non-Muslim and all his deeds, prayers, fasting, etc become valueless. As the concept of Imamat is the one on which the sects part paths, it raises a very serious and important question.

Islam has established five criteria to identify the true and legitimate sect. Any Muslim, therefore, striving sincerely and solely for the purpose of attaining the pleasure of Allah and his salvation, and is ready and willing to abandon obstinacy and previously held notions, should surely be able to discover the true and legitimate religion with ease. Allah states in His Book: “Those who strive for Us will certainly be guided unto Our true and straight path.” (29:69)

The five criteria are:

1. The Holy Qur’an.
2. The genuine tradition from the Holy Prophet not inconsistent with, or contrary to, the dictates of the Holy Qur’an.
3. History.
4. Knowledge of actual occurrences. For example, if one claims that the Pope of Rome visited India and held a discussion with Muslim religious leaders there, then any proof that the Pope of Rome has never visited India would falsify the claim as a patent lie; and finally,
5. Reasoning.



In comprehending and appreciating the true meaning of the Holy Qur'an, the genuine traditions, history and the actual occurrences, the role of reason is predominant. The size of this book does not permit a detailed treatment of these aspects.

Since the disappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.), in the last one thousand years, hundreds of Muslims have made claims to Prophethood, Imamat and even of being the Mahdi. Numerous imposters claiming to be the Mahdi have sprung in Arabia, Iran, India and Africa but surely all of them could not have been true in this claim, for the Holy Book, traditions and history prove that there can be but one Mahdi. Hence all the remaining claimants are undoubtedly false. They are apostates and have falsely reviled Allah and His Prophet. Moreover, one strong pointer in the search for the true faith that will lead to salvation, is the fact that all the sects of Islam unanimously uphold the five members of the Prophet's family; namely himself, Ali, Fatimah, Hasan and Husayn (Peace be upon them all), as pure, on the right path and worthy of highest reverence and adoration. So it is beyond argument that their commands, traditions and teachings are true and lead towards salvation. No Muslim can hold them, or their teachings, unacceptable. Thus, it is the duty of each Muslim to ascertain and discover the practices of the five, their commandments, and teachings, to determine the true faith.

It is possible to trace the practices, deeds and commandments of these five, not only from the books of the Shia Ithna-asheri authors but also from the celebrated books of Sunni authors.

Members of each sect of Islam claim to accept the five as truthful, and claim to be their followers. Yet such claims by all the conflicting sects can only mean that the commandments of the five were different for each of the sects, which is contrary to reason, and hence unacceptable. This book will attempt to clarify the stand of these five, as well as provide explanation of the true religion and recognition of the Imam Mahdi (a.s.), the Imam of our time.

Furthermore, with regard to the pious five, the well known and unanimously accepted tradition of the Prophet is: "I leave amongst you, two precious entities, the Book of Allah and my Ahlul Bait. So long as you adhere firmly to both of them, you will never go astray." The Holy Family of the Holy Prophet described and declared, by Allah Himself in the Qur'an, as holy and free from any impurity, must undoubtedly not only be on the right path themselves, but must logically be the leaders towards the right path. Thus, their followers who love them and adhere to their teachings and commandments, and bear enmity against their foes and assassins, must undeniably be of the true sect worthy of salvation.

All the sects of Islam accept the Qur'an as the final word of Allah revealed upon the Prophet, and regard themselves under duty to comply with its dictates (except for the Kadianis who object to the language in a portion of the Qur'an, and claim that the Book being in Arabic is for Arabs only). However, when a visitor enters a city, be it in bright daylight or in glittering light at night, being unfamiliar with the city he/she will be unable to get anywhere without a guide of that city. Similarly, the Holy Qur'an is like the light from the sun, and one needs a guide to explain the Holy Book and to direct us to the right path. Just as a guide must be a person who is well versed with the city, so is there the necessity that Imams must be vested with true and complete knowledge of the Holy Book by Allah Himself and His Prophet. Thus did the Prophet, in the tradition cited above, unequivocally state that he left behind two precious entities, the Holy Book and His Holy Progeny, and if one adhered firmly to both of them, one would never go astray.

That an Imam should always be openly and publicly seen, and that an invisible Imam cannot be an Imam, or cannot beneficially provide guidance, or assistance, is an untenable argument. If it were not possible to accept the existence of the Imam simply because he cannot be seen, then the existence of Allah Himself, who is not seen in this world nor will be seen in the Hereafter, would not have been acceptable either.

Yet His existence is the basic teaching of all religions. What is more, a number of creations of Allah are invisible but their existence is undeniable. For example, the unseen human soul enters the foetus in the mother's womb and at the time of death it leaves the human body unseen. The existence of the soul is accepted by total humanity though it is not seen. Moreover, air and angels are invisible and yet their existence is unquestioned.

The great Prophet of Islam was obliged to hide himself for three years in a cave. Likewise Prophet Moses, Solomon, Abraham and Jesus, all on some occasions found necessary to remain hidden. That Prophet Khizr and Elias are still alive on this earth for thousands of years, is a reality accepted by all Muslims, although being invisible they are not noticed.

Furthermore, the devil Iblis and his followers and also Jins live on this earth and are invisible. Dajjal and Agog and Magog communities are accepted to be in existence although they are not seen. The Holy Qur'an itself enjoins faith in invisible entities and the relevant verses will be quoted at many places in this book. The conditions that will obtain in the grave, the Day of Judgement, Heaven, Hell, the Scales, the *Sirat*, the Empyrean (*Arsh*) and the Throne (*Kursy*), etc are all invisible and yet are unanimously believed in, not only by all Muslims, but also by Christians, Jews and Hindus. There is thus no logic in questioning the invisibility of an Imam.

The Bohra Community believe their Imam Tayyab disappeared from sight in 524 A.H. and for the last 876 years is invisible. So they cannot regard the disappearance of the Twelfth Imam for 1100 years as impossible. Similarly, the Aga Khani Ismailis have narrations in their books of some of their Imams having remained out of sight.

Thus, the birth of the present Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and his continued existence and disappearance, being established from the Holy Qur'an, traditions of the Holy Prophet, history, and reason cannot be denied

on the mere argument that he is not visible. The important question however, that arises is how, by being out of sight and unapproachable, can he serve the religion of Islam and Muslims and why does he not reappear to eradicate blasphemy?

These are the questions which will be probed fully in this book, in chapters to come, so that it becomes manifest that despite the concealment of the Imam, Islam and Muslims derive numerous benefits and advantages from him.

Our Aga Khani Ismaili brothers and missionaries contend that the Qur'anic phrase '*Imaamum-Mubeen*' means 'The Manifest Imam' and so, they argue, it cannot refer to an Imam behind a curtain. But the word 'Mubeen' does not only carry the meaning "openly visible." It is a word found in numerous places in the Qur'an and carries various meanings. For example,

1. The phrase has been employed in Chapter 36 (Yasin), verse 12: "And we have recorded everything in a clear writing." In English/Arabic dictionaries the word 'Mubeen' carries the meanings "Manifest, clear and evident";
2. In the same chapter of Yasin, in verse 60, the word 'Mubeen' appears thus: "Surely he is your open enemy." The verse expressly mentions Satan as the open enemy and yet it is beyond debate that the devil is not visible. It is, therefore, clear that the word does not carry a restricted meaning of only what is visible to the naked eye;
3. In the same chapter, verse 24 reads: "In that case I shall most surely be in clear error." Here 'error' is qualified by the adjective 'Mubeen', (clear). Again, it is beyond argument that an error is not a matter that can be seen;
4. In the chapter on "The Bee", chapter 16, at the end of verse 35, appear the words: "...thus did those before them; is then anything incumbent upon the apostles except a plain delivery of the message?" The word "delivery" is qualified by adjective 'Mubeen' (plain) and delivery is again intangible;

5. The word is also found in chapter 26, on the Poets, in verse 195, which reads: “In plain Arabic language.” A language is obviously not a thing noticeable by the naked eye;
6. Again, the chapter Yasin verse 17 is: “And nothing devolves on us but a clear deliverance of the message.” A message is not something noticeable by the eye;
7. Again, in the chapter on The Bee, verse 4 reads: “We create men from a small life germ and lo! he is an open contender”.

It is therefore obvious and clear that to restrict the meaning of the word ‘Mubeen’ only to what is openly visible is fallacious, particularly when it has been established that even Prophets have renounced in concealment, and the Bohra and Aga Khan Ismaili communities believe that some of their own Imams have been in concealment.

In the order of succession of the Aga Khani Imams, at least three, Wafi Ahmed, Taki Mohamed and Raza Abdullah remained in concealment. Moreover, hardly any information is available on the lives and biographies of many of their 48 Imams.

Finally, the qualifications of an Imam are clearly set out in the Holy Qur’an and the traditions. These will be discussed elsewhere. What is relevant here is to mention the essential prerequisites to the reappearance of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) so that if those qualifications, as are prescribed by the Holy Book and the traditions, are not found in a person claiming to be the Mahdi, he would not be accepted as such by any Muslim. These are:

1. The blessed name of the Mahdi is Hazrat Muhammad (a.s.) and his father was Hazrat Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.). These facts are established by traditions and Islamic history. Thus, those with names like Gulam Ahmed, Mohamedali Baab, Bahauddin or any other name cannot possibly claim to be the Mahdi.
2. Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) lives to this day, and has not yet emerged because all the signs that will manifest themselves at the time of

his reappearance, as clearly described in the Qur'an and Muslim traditions, have not yet appeared.

3. One of the necessary preconditions to his reappearance is the emergence of Dajjal and his death at the hand of the Imam. Although some claimants to Mahdihood have come and gone, as yet no Dajjal has come. The Kadiani Mirza referred to the British railway as the tailless donkey of Dajjal and then he and his followers rode on that donkey (Train)! Moreover, instead of one Dajjal, he identified numerous Christians as Dajjal. Never can Muslims accept such a person as their Mahdi.
4. Soon after the reappearance of the Mahdi, the world will flourish with peace and justice. Such conditions have not prevailed to date, long after the claims to Mahdihood made so far. On the contrary, oppression, evil and injustice have progressively had firmer hold on the earth.
5. The Prophet Jesus will descend from the heavens and attend on Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). This has not yet happened. Mirza Kadiani and other claimants to Mahdihood have falsely claimed to have been Jesus too!
6. According to Muslim historians and traditions, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), who will emerge at the moment appointed by Allah, is the son of the Eleventh Imam, Hasan Askari (a.s.), and will be a descendant of Imam Husayn (a.s.), the son of Janabe Fatimah (s.a.), the daughter of the Holy Prophet. He will be the ninth descendant of Imam Husayn and the Twelfth Imam in the order of succession.
7. That Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will be of such pious and holy lineage is unanimously accepted by all Muslims. Thus, all claimants not from this family, who have made the claim of being the Mahdi in Arabia, Pakistan, Iran and Punjab were all impostors.
8. Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will possess the important symbols held by previous Prophets, such as the ring of Prophet Solomon, the stick of Prophet Moses, the stone of Prophet Moses which, when he hit it with his stick, caused twelve streams to flow and the standard of the Holy Prophet. None of the claimants hitherto has possessed any of them. How then could they profess such a claim?

## **QUR'ANIC VERSES ON THE IMAMAT, DISAPPEARANCE AND REAPPEARANCE OF IMAM OF OUR TIME HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.)**

1. "Alif, Laam, Mim. This Book, there is no doubt in it, is guide to those who guard against evil. Those who believe in the unseen..." (2:1-3)

There are many verses in the Holy Book concerning belief in the unseen, but they have been omitted to maintain brevity.

2. "Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good deeds that He will most certainly appoint them successors on earth as He appointed successors those before them, and that certainly He shall establish for them their religion (Islam), which He has chosen for them, and that certainly He will, after their fear, in exchange, give them security, they shall worship Me; and not associating aught with Me; and whoever disbelieve after this, these it is who are the wicked ones." (55:55)
3. "He it is who sent His Apostle with the guidance and the true religion, that he make it overcome the religions, all of them, though the polytheist may be averse." (61:9)

The Holy Prophet, during his lifetime, was not able to overcome all the religions or the polytheists. Thus, this promise has yet to be fulfilled and will be accomplished during the reign of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.).

In a commentary on the above verse, an eminent Sunni, Imam Fakhrudin Razi, reports from Abu Huraira that the Holy Prophet said that the promise made by Allah in this verse, to grant supremacy to Islam over all religions, will be realised when Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will re-emerge, and all men will embrace Islam. Many such traditions appear in Sunni commentaries and books.

4. "And certainly We wrote in the Book after the reminder that, as for the land, My righteous servants shall inherit it." (21:105)
5. "And certainly Allah made a covenant with the children of Israel, and We raised up amongst them 12 chieftains"; (5:12)

*Sahih Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*, both leading Sunni authoritative works, quote from the Holy Prophet that "so long as the chain of my 12 successors (Caliphs) is not completed, the world will continue (to exist) and they will be the Twelve Imams."

6. "(Remember) the day when we will call every people with their Imam." (17:71)
7. "And We made of them Imams who guided mankind by Our command and we revealed unto them the doing of good and keeping up of prayer and the giving of alms and Us alone did they serve." (21:73)

Thus the Imams have been ordained to perform good deeds, to keep up prayer, pay zakat, worship Allah and to guide people accordingly. Therefore, it is only such people who undertake such actions and guide others accordingly, who can be true Imams; not those who act to the contrary.

8. "And We made them Imams who call to the fire; and on the day of resurrection, they shall not be assisted. And We have caused curse to follow them in this world, and on the day of resurrection they will be amongst the hideous people." (28:41)
9. "The grand night is better than a thousand months. The angels and Jibrael descend in it by the permission of their Lord for every affair. Peace! it is till the break of the morning." (97:3-5)



The angels descend into the earth for every affair, but where do they descend, and to whom are the affairs directed, and do they descend but not accomplish the affairs? It is thus proved that on the earth there is a representative of Allah, and successor of the Prophet, performing the functions of an Imam. Every year on the grand night angels descend and attend upon him with all the affairs from Allah. According to the Holy Qur'an, traditions and reasoning, such a perfect man most befitting for angels to attend upon, and convey the affairs of Allah to, is none other than Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). Elsewhere in this book, it will be established that indeed none other than Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) can make such a claim.

## THE APPOINTMENT OF IMAMS, THEIR QUALIFICATION AND DUTIES OF OFFICE

*Imam* is an Arabic word meaning ‘head’, ‘leader’, ‘chief’ and ‘guide’. His appointment is made by Allah who notifies his Prophet who, in turn, announces the appointment of his successor to his followers.

Allah states in the Qur’an: “And Your Lord creates and selects whom He pleases, to choose is not theirs; glory be to Allah and exalted be He above what they associate with Him.” (28:68)

There are many verses in the Qur’an to the effect that an appointment of an Imam is by, and from, Allah himself. For example, in relation to Hazrat Adam, Allah states “And when Your Lord said to the angels: ‘I am going to place in the earth a Khalif’.” (2:30)

With regard to Dawood, Allah states in the Qur’an: “O Dawood, surely We have made you a ruler in the land, so judge between men with justice.” (38:26)

With reference to Ibrahim, the Qur’an states: “And when His Lord tested Ibrahim with certain words, he fulfilled them. He said surely I will make you an Imam of men”. Ibrahim said: “And of my offspring?” My covenant does not include the unjust, said He.” (2:124)

From the above verses it becomes evident that a Prophet makes an appointment of his *Imam* only upon commandment of Allah; otherwise he has no authority to appoint an *Imam*; for an *Imam* must, by nature of his office, be omniscient and a *Ma’sum* (pure, sinless and infallible).

The Qur’an mentions several types of Imam, thus:

1. “And We made them Imams to guide people by Our Command and we revealed unto them the doing of good and the keeping up of prayer and giving of the alms. and Us alone did they serve.” (21:73)

2. “And We made them Imams who call to the fire; and on the Day of Judgement they will not be assisted.” (28:41)

The following are a few quotations from Sunni authorities on the meaning of *Imam* and his qualifications.

A reknown Indian Molvi in his book, *Mazahibul Islam*, states at page 106, “An Imam, as the representative of the Prophet (s.a.w.), is on his behalf, a ruler of the general public to protect them in their worldly affair, provide guidance in their spiritual duties, perpetuate religious knowledge, uphold the Islamic precepts, enjoin towards good deeds, dissuade from evil, declare a religious war against non-believers and impose punishment according to the sharia, etc. etc.”

Moreover, amongst Sunnis, the word *Imam* is also used in its common meaning. Any person proficient in traditions or Islamic jurisprudence can be called an *Imam*; for example, Imam Ghazali, Imam Shafi, Imam Abu Hanifa. However, they recognise that, to be a representative of the Prophet (s.a.w.), and act on his behalf and in his name, an Imam must possess certain qualifications. He must be:

1. A Muslim;
2. Male;
3. Free (not a slave);
4. Intelligent;
5. An Adult (not a minor);
6. Pious, (not an open sinner);
7. From the Quraysh clan;
8. Without any physical disability such as deafness, dumbness or blindness etc;
9. Learned in the Islamic Sharia.

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Imam of the Aga Khanis, Shah Mustansir Billah writes about qualifications of saints in his book *Fidi Aad Jawan-mardi*. This book is considered among the highest authority by Aga Khanis and is

included in the list of the writings of saints. One edition of the book was published in the Hindu year 1961 by Laljibhai Devraj, in Persian but printed in the Sindhi script. At page 94, the qualifications of saints are set out thus: "O believers, know that a *peer* (Saint) should be consistent; secondly, always remembering and conscious of God and his preoccupation must be to think, address and preach about truthfulness. He must first admonish himself and then others." Again from pages 94 to 96 he states "a true *peer* (saint) is he who is truthful, competent, not arrogant, not a liar, not of bad intentions in his earnings and dealings, not greedy of worldly attainments, keeping away from undesirable places and illicit means, patient, simple, truthful and pious."

Finally, only one Shia Ithna-asheri tradition is quoted on the qualifications of an Imam. Hasan bin Fazal reports from his father that Imam Raza (a.s.), the Eighth Imam, has set out 30 qualifications for an Imam:

1. An Imam should be a person who, in his time, is the most learned of all persons;
2. He should be a leader of all people and their Judge;
3. He should be the most patient of all persons of his time;
4. He should be more pious than any other person and more God fearing than any other person;
5. He should be the bravest of all;
6. He should be the most religious and the greatest devotee of all;
7. He should be the most generous of all persons;
8. He is born duly circumcised;
9. He is born clean and pious;
10. He can see what is behind him without turning, in the same way that he can see what is in front of him;
11. There is no shadow of his person;
12. Immediately on his birth, he places both his palms on earth;
13. He bears witness aloud to the Unity of Allah and Prophethood of Muhammed (s.a.w.);
14. He does not have nocturnal emission;

15. He may appear physically asleep but remains mentally alert;
16. Angels call upon him and converse with him;
17. The armour of the Holy Prophet fits exactly on his body;
18. His urine or excretion is never seen by any person. They are swallowed by earth, have no odour but emit the fragrance of ambergris (*ambar*) and musk (*kasturi*);
19. He controls the lives of men;
20. He is more benevolent to other men than even their own parents;
21. He is most humble in his supplication and worship of Allah;
22. He is foremost in the fulfilment of the commands of Allah;
23. He diligently refrains from all acts prohibited by Allah;
24. All his prayers to Allah are always accepted and nothing that he asks Allah is refused by Him. If he asks that a hard stone be split, it splits;
25. He has in his possession the weapons of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) together with his sword Zulfikar;
26. He has a book which contains a full list of all his followers, including those yet to be born, to the Day of Judgement;
27. He possesses another book which contains a full list of all his enemies;
28. He possesses a parchment called *Jamiah* which is some 70 yards long, which contains the knowledge of all the affairs of the World;
29. He has a big parchment made of the hide of a goat, and a smaller parchment made of the hide of a sheep, called the great and small *JAFAR*, containing all the religious laws and commands to the extent of embodying even the minutest provision of a rule that would apply if one scratched another with one's nails;
30. He possesses a book handed down from Janabe Fatimah (s.a.)

If all these thirty (30) qualifications are not present in a person, then, in accordance with Shia Ithna-asheri faith, he cannot be regarded as an Imam under any circumstances.

Undoubtedly it is the duty of the Prophet (s.a.w.) and his Twelve successors to conduct themselves in accordance with the command of

Allah and the rules ordained in the Holy Qur'an, to guide Muslims to act accordingly, and not to alter divine rules in the slightest manner whatsoever. In this regard a few verses from the Holy Qur'an are reproduced:-

1. "Nor does he speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed." (53:3-4)
2. "...and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed those are they that are the unbelievers." (5:44)
3. "...and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed they are the unjust." (5:45)
4. "...and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed they are the transgressors." (5:47)
5. "Then we have made you follow a course in the affair therefore follow it and do not follow the low desires of those who do not know." (45:18)
6. "And if he had fabricated against Us some of the sayings, We would certainly have seized him by the right hand, then We would certainly have cut off his aorta. And not one of you could have withheld Us from him." (69: 44-47)

When even the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) had no authority to add to, alter or contradict the revelations of Allah as portrayed in the Holy Qur'an, then no doubt the Imam (a.s.) can, by no means have such authority. All the Imams (a.s.) are guides for the followers; to teach them the commands of Allah as taught by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). It is therefore necessary that the knowledge of Imams (a.s.) about the Holy Qur'an and the traditions should be superior to that of all the Muslims.

## IMAMAT AND KHILAFAT

The appointment of the Khalifa and Imam was made by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) solely on the command of Allah. There is therefore no room for involvement of the people in such an appointment. Allah states in the Holy Qur'an: "And your Lord creates and appoints whom He pleases; they have no choice in the matter; Glory be to Allah, and exalted be He above what they associate (with him)." (28:68)

In the Holy Qur'an Allah had designated the Prophets Adam and Dawood as Khalifa only; His representatives on earth. "O Dawood, surely We have made you a ruler in the land." (38:26)

However, He appointed Ibrahim not only his Prophet and Khalifa, but also to the exalted position of an Imam. "Surely I will make you an Imam." (2:124)

According to the well-known tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), there would be Twelve successors after him. The eminent leading scholars of the Sunni sect have accepted the authenticity of this tradition, and have reproduced it in their books as well. In Islamic history, the Omayyad, the Abbassis, and their successors were only temporal rulers. They had never been appointed by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.); in fact, according to some traditions, he had proclaimed them as usurpers.

Undoubtedly, the true successors and Khalifas of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) are the Twelve Imams who, like the Holy Prophet himself, were from the dynasty of Hashim of the Quraysh tribe, and superior to, and bestowed with authority over all creations. They possessed knowledge, and power to perform miracles and all the qualities found in the Prophet (s.a.w.). Like him, they were pure of every sin and impurity. These are the Imams described by Allah in the Holy Qur'an as "the truthful persons of authority and pure." The Sunni scholar, Fakhruddin Razi, states in his *Tafsir-e-Kabir*, volume 3, page 357 (Egyptian edition), that the verse

commanding, “Follow Allah, His Prophet and those in authority.” (4:54), stipulates that those in authority whose obedience has been ordered, should be sinless and infallible; otherwise it would mean that Allah has ordered obedience to the whims of those who could err in delivering the commands to Allah.

The identity of those Twelve Imams, the successors of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), is established from a few of the traditions reported in Sunni Books:

Sheikhul Islam, Sheikh Suleiman Hanafi Nakshbandi Balkhi Kanduzi, who died in 1294 A.H., and who was the most revered Saint of the Sultan of Istanbul (Turkey), Abdul Aziz Khan, writes in his book *Yanabi ul Mawaddah*, at pages 369-71 (as translated into English):

“A Jew, by the name Naasaal, visited the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and asked him to clear some of the doubts he entertained, promising that if he was satisfied with the explanation from the Prophet (s.a.w.), he would embrace Islam. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) permitted him to present his questions. He first asked on the unity of Allah and His qualities, and received replies which satisfied him. He then asked on the succession to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), for each Prophet had declared his successor before his death, e.g. Hadhrat Musa appointed Yusha bin Noon. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) replied “My successor is Ali Ibne Abi Talib, after him my two grandsons Hasan and Husayn, and after them nine Imams who will be descendants of Imam Husayn (a.s.) will be my successors.” The Jew asked for the names of the Nine Imams and the Prophet announced, “After Husayn will be his son Ali Ibnal Husayn, and after him his son Muhammad Ibne Ali (Baqir), and after him, Ja‘far Sadiq, and after him, Musa Kazim, and after him, Ali Ridha, after him, Muhammad Taqi, after him, Ali Naqi, after him Hasan and after him his son Muhammad Mahdi. These will be my nine successors in this order.”

The Jew then requested the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) to describe to him how his first three successors Ali, Hasan and Husayn would die. The Prophet



(s.a.w.) replied, “Hazrat Ali will be assassinated with a sword, Hasan will be poisoned and Husayn will be killed while hungry and thirsty for three days.” The Jew then asked where these three martyrs would live and the Prophet (s.a.w.) replied. “They will live with me in Heaven.” The Jew recited the Holy testimony, became a Muslim, and said, “O Prophet of Allah, undoubtedly all those whom you named are your successors. They have been described in detail in the books of the previous Prophets and also in the Covenant of Moses. It is vividly stated in them that there will be a Prophet in the last days by the names Ahmed and Muhammad, and who will be the last of the Prophets, and after him there will follow no Prophet. He will have Twelve successors; the first of whom will be his cousin and son-in-law, the second and the third of his successors will be brothers. The first successor will be assassinated with a sword, the second poisoned, and the third will be killed along with his children and companions, all being hungry and thirsty in a desert. They will bear all these calamities with patience and will be rewarded by Allah with exalted positions, and will provide salvation to their friends and followers from the fire of Hell. The remaining nine successors will be descendants of the third successor, so that in all they will be Twelve, like the figure of the *Asbat*.”

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) then asked him if he knew the *Asbat*. He replied, “Yes, they were twelve; and amongst them was Lawa bin Barkhya who disappeared from the Israelites, then reappeared and fought the Emperor of Karastya and killed him.” The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) continued, “Verily, what happened with the Israelities will be repeated with my followers. My Twelfth successor will disappear. In those days, the times will be such that Islam will remain in name; the Qur’an only a ritual and will not be practised. When such darkness will have pervaded the earth, my Twelfth successor will reappear and re-establish Islam, equity and justice. Fortunate will be the followers who will obey him, and the wrath of Allah awaits those who will disobey him.”

Again, in the same book, at page 371, in Chapter 77, on the traditions

of the Twelfth successor, he writes under the heading *Tahkik* (Confirmation): “It is reported by Jabir bin Samra, a companion of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), that he has said, ‘Islam will last so long as my Twelve successors will remain, and they will all be from the Quraysh.’” The books of Bukhari, Muslim and Tirmizi report this tradition in identical terms. Moreover, Yahya bin Hasan states in his book *Umdah*, that twenty traditionists have reported a tradition from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) that there will be Twelve successors all from the dynasty of the Quraysh. The leading Sunni authors Bukhari and Hamid have each reported three traditions and Tirmizi also reports one tradition in the same vein. Muslim writes that Abdi Saad, a companion of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), wrote to Samra asking him for any tradition he might have heard from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). In reply, Samra wrote that on the Friday on which Aslami was stoned to death, the Prophet (s.a.w.) said that Islam would survive to the Day of Judgement, and that there would be Twelve successors after him, all from the clan of Quraysh. A number of traditions in the same vein have been reported in the Sunni books, all confirming that there would be Twelve successors to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). Indeed, the Twelve successors mentioned can only refer to the Twelve Imams accepted by the Shia Ithna-asheries. They can have no connection with the Omayyad Khalifas, as they were not twelve in number and, except for Omar bin Abdulaziz, they were all tyrants. Moreover they were not from the dynasty of Hashim as has been declared in the numerous traditions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). By the same token, they cannot be the Abbasi Khalifas for they too, were not twelve in number and were tyrants and enemies of the family of the Prophet (s.a.w.).

So the twelve successors declared by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) are certainly the Twelve Imams (a.s.) from the progeny of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and who, in their respective times, were unparalleled in their knowledge, prayers, piety and bravery.

None other than the Twelve Imams (a.s.) qualify in terms of the traditions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).

Again, the same book in chapter 78 at page 374 quotes, “In the book *Faraid us-Simtayn*, it is stated that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has declared that whoever does not believe in the reappearance of Mahdi (a.s.) is an infidel, and whoever does not believe in the re-appearance of Jesus from the heavens is also an infidel, and whoever does not believe in the emergence of the one-eyed Dajjal is also an infidel.”

Moreover, in the same book, a tradition is reported from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) from Ibne Abbas, that he said, “There will be Twelve successors after me who will be the Hujjat of Allah on His creation. The first of them will be Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and the last of them will be Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). At that time the earth will brighten and his rule will prevail throughout the earth.”

All the Muslims are unanimous, Shia and Sunnis, in the belief that there would be twelve successors of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). It is clear from the celebrated traditions already set out that the true Twelve successors, according to the traditions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), are the Twelve accepted by the Shia Ithna-asheris commencing with Imam Ali (a.s.) and culminating with the Twelfth Imam Hazrat Muhammad Mahdi (a.s.).

However, two traditions are quoted from Sunni books which list the names of the Twelve Imams from which it will be clear that, to make the figure of twelve, they include Omayya, his son Yazid, etc. who cannot deserve to be termed successors to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).

1. Mulla Alikari in *Sharhe Mishkat* and again in *Sharhe Akber* names the 12 Khalifas of the Sunnis as:  
(1) Abu Bakr (2) Omar (3) Othman (4) Hadhrat Ali (5) Muawiya (6) His son Yazid (7) Abdul Malik bin Marwan and his four sons (8) Walid (9) Suleiman (10) Hasham (11) Yazid (12) Omar bin Abdulaziz.
2. Suyuti in his *Tarikhul Khulafaa* (History of Caliphs) has quoted from the *Sharhe Bukhari* by Sheikhul Islam Ibne Hajar: “According to the

authentic traditions, Muslims are unanimous in their acceptance of the following Khalifas to whom they swore allegiance:

(i) Abu Bakar (2) Omar (3) Othman (4) Hadhrat Ali (a.s.) and after him, as there was no unanimity about succession of Imam Hasan (a.s.), there was a settlement in favour of (5) Muawiya and, after him Hazrat Imam Husayn (a.s.) did not succeed as he was martyred, so (6) Yazid was accepted by consensus and allegiance sworn to him. On his death there was a dispute over his succession, but consensus favoured Abdul Malik but only after Ibne Zubair had been killed. (After Yazid, Marwan ruled for six months and his son Abdul Malik for 21 years, but they both have been excluded from the list of Khalifas). In the report quoted as (1) above, Abdul Malik has been included as the 7<sup>th</sup> Khalifa but excluded in this one.

After Yazid, the four sons of Abdul Malik are regarded as successors namely (7) Walid (8) Suleiman (9) Yazid (10) Hasham and after them (11) Omar bin Abdul Aziz (referred to as number 12 in the tradition (1) above) (12) Walid Ibne Yazid Ibne Abdul Malik bin Marwan (according to the tradition cited as (1) above he would be the 13<sup>th</sup> Khalifa!).

However, it is established from all the celebrated Muslim works and authentic traditions that the Twelve Imams followed by the Shia Ithna-asheris are the true Twelve successors amongst whom Hadhrat Ali (a.s.) is the first and Hadhrat Mahdi (a.s.) the last.

## TRADITIONS ON THE IMAM OF THE PRESENT TIME: HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.)

A number of well-known Sunni scholars have written about Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) in their books. Seventeen of them are:

1. Sheikh E Kamil Abdul Wahab Sha'ram;
2. Mulla Ali Akber bin Asadullah Mawdudi;
3. Mulla Nurudin Abdulrehman bin Ahmed Jami;
4. Khaja Muhammad Parsa, Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Mahmoud el Hafizi;
5. Sheikh Abdul Haq Muhaddisse Dehlawi;
6. Allama Sheikh Jamaluddin Muhaddis;
7. Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Yusuf Kanji, Shafi'i;
8. Mufti Kamauluddin Abdulla, Shafi'i;
9. Allama Sheikh Nuruddin bin Sabag, Maliki;
10. Shah Waliyullah Muhaddis Dehlawi;
11. Allama Hamwayni, Shafi'i; the author of *Faraid us-Simtayn*;
12. Sheikh Ata Naishapuri;
13. Sheikh Kabir Shamshudin Tabrizi;
14. Sheikh Neimkillah el Walli;
15. Sheikh Kamil Arif Matuk Misri;
16. Sheikh Saad bin Hamawi;
17. Sheikh Suleiman bin Ibrahim Balkhi Kanduzi - the Sheikhul Islam of Istanbul, and author of famous Sunni book *Yanabi ul Mawaddah*.

All the above authors have mentioned in their works, that the son of Hazrat Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), is alive and is in concealment. Apart from the above, numerous other scholars have also written in the same vein in their books.

1. In *Jamee ul Usul*, it is reported on the authority of Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood and Tirmizi quoting Abu Huraira that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated: From among my followers one group will declare jihad (holy wars), and will be victorious in all of them. Jesus will

then descend from the heavens and the leader of that group, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), will invite him to lead congregational prayers but he will reply, “You are the authority on Allah’s Creation, and being of the Progeny of the Holy Prophet, Allah has bestowed upon you dignity and excellence over all the faithfuls of the current age.” Kanji, the Shafi’ite, has also reported this tradition, and has cited it as authentic.

2. Hafiz Abu Naim and Tibrani have reported in their work *Muazzame-Akber* that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated “After me there will be Khalifas of whom some will turn out to be rulers while some tyrannical kings. Thereafter, from my Progeny, the promised Mahdi will emerge and fill the world with justice and equity.”
3. A revered scholar of the Sunni faith in India, Obeidullah Amratsari, states in his book *Arjahul Matalib*, at page 472, that Sheikh Abu Abdullah and Muhammad bin Yusuf Kanji Shafi’i, in their book *Al Bayan Fi Akhbare-Sahibuz Zaman*, have written that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) is living and in concealment, and that there are many grounds to establish this fact. For example, Hazrat Isa, Hazrat Idris and Hazrat Ilyas are Prophets who have been alive for thousands of years. And even amongst the enemies of Allah, Dajjal, and Iblis are also alive now for a protracted period; so it is no surprise that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) should still be alive after 1100 years.
4. Ibne Hajar Hanafi Makki, in his book *Sawaeke Muhrika*, at page 481, writes that the name of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) is Muhammad with the appellation ABUL QASIM, and titles Hujjat, Mahdi, Saleh, Qaim, Muntazar and Saahibuz Zaman. At the time of the demise of his father, Hazrat Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), he was 5 years of age. In his very childhood, Allah bestowed upon him knowledge and wisdom. He is entitled Qaim because he is living but concealed, and his exact abode is not known.
5. In the same book, at page 102, it is reported that Hazrat Mahdi

(a.s.) will reappear just before the rearrival of Hazrat Isa. In many traditions, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will be from his family and that after his re-emergence, he will rule for seven years and establish justice on earth and soon after him Hazrat Isa will descend, and Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will kill Dajjal.

Many such traditions are to be found in the famous books of the Sunnis, and yet some Sunni Scholars (ulemas) believe that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) is yet to be born, and thereafter will spread justice on earth. However, in view of the numerous traditions, proofs and historical evidence that he was born on 15<sup>th</sup> of Shabaan 255 AH., it is meaningless to indulge in the argument that he is yet to be born.

6. A celebrated Sunni Scholar, Muhammad Yazeed Hafiz bin Maajah (who died in 273 A.H.) in his book, *Sunane Ibne Maajah* (at pages 518/519), states that there are many traditions from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) in respect of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), in which he had declared that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) would be from his Family and Progeny, and from the descendants of his daughter Fatimah (s.a.). He would be the authority from Allah, and his successor. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) further admonished all Muslims that if they chanced to come across Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), they should be obedient to him. Again he stated that Hamza, Ja'far, Ali, Hasan, Husayn and Mahdi will be the leaders in Paradise.
7. Imam Ahmed Ibne Hanbal (died 240 A.H.), an eminent Sunni author, states in the first part of his work, *Musnad*, at page 99, that it is reported that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Allah will bring out from concealment, Mahdi from my Family and Progeny, before the Day of Judgement, even if only one day were to remain in the life of the world, and he will spread on this earth justice and equity and eradicate tyranny and oppression."
8. The Sheikhu'l Islam of Istanbul, Sheikh Suleiman Nakshbandi,

Hanafi, in his book *Yanabi ul Mawaddah*, at page 494, reports from Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari that the Holy Prophet had stated: “After me there will be 12 Imams; the first of them will be Ali, then Hasan, then Husayn, then Ali ibne Husayn, then Muhammad bin Ali (Baqir). Oh Jabir! you will have the opportunity to meet Baqir (a.s.); please convey my salaams to him; after him will be Ja’far bin Muhammad, and then Musa bin Ja’far, then Ali bin Musa, then Muhammad bin Ali, then Ali bin Muhammad, then Hasan bin Ali and after them the Awaited One, Mahdi (a.s.). He will be the Twelfth and last successor. He will bear my name and also my title, Abul Qasim. He will be the son of Hasan bin Ali.”

9. Ahmed bin Hajar Makki, in his book *Sawaeke Muhrika*, at page 116; and Tirmizi, in his book, *Jame-a*, at page 33, write that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated: “After me, there will be my Twelve Successors who will be my heirs and all of them will be from the clan of Quraysh.”
10. Sheikh-e-Kamil, Abdul Wahab writes in his book *Al-Yawakit wa Jawahir*, “When the world will be filled with oppression and irreligiousness, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will reappear. He is the son of Hazrat Hasan Askari (a.s.). He was born on 15<sup>th</sup> Shabaan 255 A.H. and is still alive on this earth. When Jesus will descend from heaven, he will reappear and live with him; at the time of writing this book his age is already 1146 years.”
11. Abu Abdulla Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Yusuf Muhammad Kanji Shafi’i writes in his book *Kifayat al-Talib*, “It is undeniable that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) is alive till today; proof that he can remain alive for a long period can be derived from the fact that Jesus, Prophets Khizr and Elias have been alive on earth for thousands of years. They were apostles of Allah, but even His foes like the one-eyed Dajjal and the cursed Iblis are also alive till today, as established by the Holy Qur’an.”



## HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.) IS THE TWELFTH IMAM

There are numerous traditions in the Shia Ithna-asheri works to establish that Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is the Twelfth Imam. In this chapter, brief extracts are also reproduced from the Sunni and Aga Khani Ismaili books to establish this fact. All Muslims are unanimous on the authenticity of the traditions from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), that there would be twelve true successors after him.

1. The Sunni author Abdul Wahab in his book *Al-Yawakit wa Jawahir* states, "When tyranny and irreligiouness become rampant in the world, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will appear. He is the son of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), was born on the eve of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Shaban in 255 A.H., and he will remain alive until he meets Jesus."
2. Sheikhu'l Islam, the Sunni scholar Ahmed Jami, in his Persian book *Nafsatul Anas*, after narrating in poetic language at length, all the names of the Twelve Imams, writes that "Hazrat Imam Askari (a.s.) is the guiding light for the world and all men, and his son Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) has no parallel in the world."
3. Molvi Jallaludin Rumi, in his verses in the *Divan* stating the names of the Twelve Imams, clearly mentions the name of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) as the Twelfth Imam.
4. In *Tazkiratul Kiram* of Molvi Shah Muhammad Kabir, at page 270, it is reported from authentic sources that there are two types of succession - open and concealed; that upto the time of Imam Hasan (a.s.), the two types merged, but from then onwards followed the Twelve Imams of the Shias.
5. Shah Abdulaziz Dehlvi and Imam Ghazali in *Ahyaul Uloom*, Mulla Moin in *Dirastul Labib*, and Ibne Hajar Askalani in his work *Fathul Bari* - all eminent Sunni scholars - write unanimously that the

knowledge of the Twelve Imams is derived from Allah Himself. The Twelve Imams together with the Prophet (s.a.w.) and his daughter Fatimah (s.a.), constitute the fourteen *Ma'sumin* (the pure ones) and in respect of the Fourteen, there is unanimity among all Muslims that from their birth to death, they did not commit any sin or slip of any nature whatsoever. (*Tarikhe Islam*, volume I, page 29).

6. In the work of Aga Khan I, His Highness Hassanali Shah Saheb, entitled *Kanzul Masaib*, at page 9 and 10, and also at pages 22 and 23, the belief in Twelve Imams is mentioned. Further proof is contained in the judgement delivered by the learned Parsi Judge in the *Mahuwa Commission* in which it is reported at page 56:  
“*Kanzul Masaib* is a Farsi book in which, at page 208, is stated that it has been written on the order and with the aid of (among numerous epithets running into 6 to 7 lines) Khudavand Muhammad Hassan el Hussein. The author is one Ibrahim Isfahani and the book was published in 274 A.H. At pages 22 and 23 of this book, the names of the Twelve Shia Ithna-asheri Imams are clearly mentioned”.
7. *Ibratul Afza* is a Farsi autobiography of the First Aga Khan himself. The Farsi version was translated into Gujarati in 1865 A.D. by Bawa Karim Dadaji and printed by the Oriental Press in Bombay. At page 19 he states, “For a number of generations, my forefathers held ministerial positions in the Egyptian Government. They followed the code of the Ja'fary faith and the laws as enunciated by the Twelve Imams, etc.”
8. Aga Jahangir Shah, the son of Aga Khan the First, published his citation of religious rulings in Farsi. It was printed by Datprasad Printers in Bombay, in 1313 A.H. In it he states: “I also bear witness that Hazrat Ali Murtaza (a.s.) and each of his Eleven sons is a successor of the Prophet Muhammed (s.a.w.), and each one of them is a true Imam.” With regard to this citation the *Mahuwa Commission Report*, at page 57, states: “The present His Highness the Aga Khan

has accepted, in court, its contents and authenticity.” Moreover, there was also evidence in the case of His Highness the Aga Khan, that this mother Lady Alishah, and his wife also believed in the Twelve Imams.

9. Aga Khan the Second, His Highness Aga Alishah, issued his citation of the rules of Namaz and Fasting in Sindhi. On page 15, line 17, of the *Mahuwa Commission Report*, is set out the procedure for reciting salutation to the Twelfth Imam (a.s.). Likewise, on line 17 of page 34, there are instructions to recite salutation to Imam Husayn (a.s.). In the same manner, on line 6 of page 35, the procedure for reciting salutation to the Twelfth Imam (a.s.) is set out. On the same page, on line 10, is an order to pray in the names of “Muhammad, Ali, Fatimah, Hasan, Husayn - the pure five, and the Fourteen *Ma’sumin*.” What more proof does one need?
  
10. The Varas of Junaghat, Kassambhai Ismail, wrote a letter in the Hindu year 1956, to the Kamadia of Jamnagar, Kassambhai Devji, from which it is established that in those days Khojas believed in Twelve Imams and the Fourteen *Ma’sumin* and offered salutations to the Eighth and Twelfth Imams. The exact extract from the letter is as follows:-

“Jamnagar 927-55. May Shah Peer keep Kamadia Kassam Devji ever happy. From Varas Kassam Varas Islamil of Jamnager, and please accept his greetings. Secondly, the Khudavand, His Gracious Highness, has addressed a letter from Zanzibar on Shravan 19<sup>th</sup>, stating that the Khudavand will proceed from Zanzibar to Mombasa on 20<sup>th</sup> September, and will thereafter arrive in India, and has commanded that all jamaats and Kamadias, etc. be notified that:-

  - (a) The narration of the events of Kerbala should not be read all the time; they should only be recited during the ten days of Muharram and the salutation offered to Imam Husayn (a.s.) after such sermons be continued; but the other two salutations offered to Imam Raza (a.s.) and Muhammad Mahdi (a.s.) should be stopped;

- (b) After the majalis, only one salutation be offered facing westwards;
- (c) In the books and records maintained by the Jamaat, or the official records of accounts maintained by the Kamadia, or in the marriage records the names of the Twelve Imams and Fourteen *Ma'sumin* should no longer be used.

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> Bhadarva, 1956 - Kassam Ismail.”

11. In the Hindu year 1941, Alladin Gulamhusein, a staunch follower of the Aga Khan, published in his Gulamhussein Press - in the Sindhi language - a book, now withdrawn from circulation, in which he states: “There the Prophet, Amirul Momineen-Mola Murtaza Ali and the Twelve Imams and the Angels Jibreel and Israil will be present.” (pages 18-19)
12. In the same book, at page 43 is stated, “The light of Heaven will reach him who will repose faith in the Unity of Allah and the Prophethood of Muhammad, and will sincerely follow the Ahlul Bait, and will recognise the Twelve Imams; and the grade of such believers will be enhanced.” (Quoted from *Risala Imam Jaffer Sadiq*, Page 43)

The fact that despite the numerous adjectives used for His Highness, he is not described as the current Imam in the letter of Varas Kassam Ismail, proves that until then he was not regarded as an Imam but only as a *Peer* (Saint).

**REFERENCES TO HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.)  
IN THE *GINAN* OF PEERS:-  
(HYMNS OF AGA KHAN ISMAILI SAINTS)**

1. In the prayer book of Aga Khani Ismailis, *SO GINAN* part I, at page 79, in the prayer of Pir Shams is mentioned that the immaculate Mahdi will arrive on a horse called DULDUL.
2. In the same prayer book, in Part Two, page 3 in the prayer of Pir Ismail Shah, is the following:-  
“Anyone who does not recognise Mahdi Shah will be considered ignorant and will have lost his treasures of the world and the Hereafter, as well as his salvation. Mahdi will kill all the non-believers; he will teach the Qur’an and eradicate ignorance.”
3. In the same prayer book, Part VI is the prayer of Pir Hassan Kabirdin in which it is stated:-  
“The last Imam Mahdi (a.s.) will come. He is a great man and fortunate will be those who follow him. The first is Ali; the last is Mahdi and the latter is a great Imam. Whosoever will not accept and follow him, all his deeds will be rejected.”
4. Another prayer of Pir Hassan Kabirdin, in the same prayer book, is that “the brave man Mahdi will teach Arabic and his name will be Mahdi Shah. He will kill *Iblis* and *Dajjal* and will rule over all the continents of the world.”

**NOTE:** All the claimants who have hitherto professed to be the Mahdi have not been able to rule over even a little village, let alone the continents of the world. From all the four prayers cited above, the presence of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), and his reappearance, is established and so is the fact that he will rule over the world and spread peace and justice.

## THE BIRTH OF IMAME ZAMAN HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.)

Allah states in the Qur'an "They (the enemies) desire to put out the Light of Allah with their mouths, but Allah will perfect His light though the unbelievers may be averse." (9:32).

The enemies of Allah have left no stone unturned in their efforts to destroy the Prophet (s.a.w.) and his Holy Ahlul Bait (a.s.). They have poisoned or assassinated the descendants of the Prophet (s.a.w.), one after the other, but the Light has remained radiant and will so remain to the Day of Justice.

The Khalifa Mo'tamid of the Abbasid dynasty detained the Eleventh Imam, Hazrat Hasan Askari (a.s.), for years in his prison. He was well aware of the tradition of the Prophet (s.a.w.) that by the Eleventh Imam (a.s.), a son, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), would be born and that through him, the rule of the family of the Prophet (s.a.w.) would be established over the whole world, and he would destroy all the enemies of the Family of the Prophet (s.a.w.). So he imprisoned Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) for a long time to prevent him from begetting a child.

The Pharaoh had claimed to be God. Astrologers had advised him that from Bani Israel, a child would be born who would destroy his kingdom and would kill him and all his followers and companions. So he mounted a stringent watch on all the ladies of Bani Israel. Every child born was immediately killed with the sole purpose of preventing the birth of Nabi Musa. However, the will of Allah was such that He provided for the birth of Musa in the very house of the Pharaoh. Not only that, but even after his birth, he was brought up in the house of the Pharaoh. Similarly, the like of the Pharaoh, Mo'tamid desired that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) should not be born. However, none can hope to succeed in opposing the will of Allah.

Whilst Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) was in detention, there was a severe famine in Samarra. For a considerably long time there was not even a drop of rain. The Muslims offered special prayers for rain but in vain. Once, when all the Muslims had assembled outside the city to pray for rain, a Christian priest lifted his hands in prayers, and suddenly clouds gathered and it rained a little. On noticing this, the Muslims became worried. They began to suspect that perhaps Christianity was the true faith. The Khalifa immediately summoned his court and took the counsel of the scholars, Ministers and his officers. They were all confused. One courtier suggested that there was but one saviour who could save the situation, Hazrat Imam Askari (a.s.), and that he should be called from prison and consulted. The Khalifa was confident and certain of the knowledge, truthfulness and the Imamat of the Hazrat, and also of his rightful entitlement to the Caliphate. He called for the Imam from the prison to the Royal Court.

When Hazrat arrived in the court, the Khalifa himself stood up to welcome him, offered him a seat on the throne next to him, and recounted the whole event. Hazrat said, "Do not worry. It is not a big problem. Order all the Muslims to assemble outside the city tomorrow to pray for rain. At the same time, also order the Christian priest to be present." The following day, all the Muslims and the Christian gathered there. Hazrat Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) arrived with the Khalifa and asked the Muslims to pray for rain, but no cloud appeared. The Hazrat then asked the Christian priest to pray and when he raised his two hands in prayer, immediately clouds gathered. Hazrat asked the Khalifa to send someone to the priest and bring from him whatever the priest was holding in his hand. The Khalifa ordered a courtier to do so, and he took away a small bone between the fingers of the priest and handed it to the Khalifa, who handed it to the Imam. Hazrat immediately hid it in his handkerchief and put it in his pocket. Instantly, all the clouds dispersed. Hazrat then addressed the priest and asked him to pray. He raised his hands and prayed very hard but to no avail.

The Imam informed the Khalifa that it was the bone of a Prophet, and so if it was exposed under the sky, clouds immediately gathered. Then he advanced and led the Muslims in prayer for rain and raised his Holy hands. Instantly, heavy clouds gathered from all directions. Hazrat asked the people to go back to their homes and a torrential downpour followed. The Imam and the Khalifa returned to the court where this event became the only topic of discussion. The Khalifa was overjoyed that a threat over Islam had been averted. The Khalifa and the people became convinced of the efficacy of the Imam's prayers, his piety and truthfulness. After a while Hazrat arose. The Khalifa asked him where he was going and he replied that he was returning to the prison where the Khalifa had kept him. The Khalifa felt ashamed, and said, "O Son of the Apostle, please proceed home." So Hazrat returned to his house. In due course, the Twelfth Imam was conceived by Narjis. "Allah accomplishes his Light although the unbelievers may be averse." (61:8)

The popular name of the mother of Hazrat Mahdi was Bibi Narjis. Her other names were Malika, Susan, Rayhana. She was the grand-daughter of the Roman Emperor of the time. The interesting history of her arrival into Samarra is recounted here.

It is reported by Bashir bin Suleiman, "Once Imam Ali Naqi, (a.s.), the Tenth Imam, called for me and said, 'You being a descendant from our helpers, and amongst our friends, I wish to assign to you a responsibility as I place full confidence in you.' I asked him to issue his command as I was ready for any service. He said he desired to purchase a female slave. He asked me to proceed to Baghdad for this purpose and upon my arrival, to go to the river bank the next morning. There I would see a number of boats and a number of female captives for sale. I should approach one Omar bin Yazid who would have for sale, a female who would be dressed in two silk clothes. She would disapprove of any buyer and would be speaking in Roman language. He gave me 120 Dinars and said that the seller would accept only this price. He also gave me a letter in Roman language, to hand over to the female slave.



“I proceeded to Baghdad, and in accordance with the signs the Hazrat had given me, I identified the lady and handed the letter to her. Upon reading the letter, tears flowed from her eyes and she said to her master that she wanted to be sold only to me, and that she would not accept any other buyer.

“So I returned to my lodging with the lady, who placed the letter on her eyes and wept profusely. I asked her why she was kissing the letter and weeping when she was a visitor from Rome and did not know the author of the letter. She said, ‘Listen, I am the grand-daughter of Kaiser, the King of Rome, and my name is Malika. My father’s name is Prince Yashua, and the name of my mother is Shamunussafa. My grandfather had betrothed me to his nephew. One day, he called to the palace all the Christian priests, ministers, leaders and courtiers, seated his nephew on a throne studded with diamonds and asked the priest to perform my marriage with him. No sooner had the priest commenced the recitation from the book, then the idols on the walls collapsed, and the Prince fell off the throne which broke into pieces. The priest trembled, and implored my grandfather, the King, for forgiveness stating they could not comprehend the catastrophe.

‘The Emperor was deeply distressed. He considered postponement of the marriage an ill omen, and immediately ordered another throne studded with diamonds, and the fallen idols to be reinstated. He then asked another prince, his nephew’s brother to sit on the throne. The priests again commenced their recitations and in a moment, the same calamity befell them. All present were terrified, and without waiting any longer dispersed. My grandfather was deeply humiliated and for several days did not come out of the palace.

‘The same night Jesus appeared in my dreams. He was present with his companions at the same marriage ceremony. A high throne had been placed exactly where the prince’s throne had been, and on it was seated an elderly gentleman with a glowing countenance. Soon, an illumined

personage arrived and Jesus rose to welcome him and gave him a place next to him on the throne. I asked someone in my dream as to their identity. He informed me that they were the Prophet of Islam with his successors Hazrat Ali (a.s.), and the Eleven Imams from his progeny.

‘The Prophet of Islam asked Jesus for the hand of Malika, the daughter of Shamunussafa, for his son, pointing towards the illumined Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.). (This request was made to Jesus, as Malika was a descendant of Hazrat Shamoona, the successor of Jesus). Jesus invited the views of Hazrat Shamoona, who instantly consented as he regarded the request a great honour and so, my marriage was performed with Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.).

‘My eyes abruptly opened and I was full of joy on recalling the dream. However, overcome by fear, I did not narrate this to anyone. However, my health began to worsen, as I was pining for Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), and I became restless. Once, in a dream, I saw the daughter of the Prophet Janabe Fatimah (s.a.). I rose in reverence to her and complained about my condition and my separation from Hazrat. She told me to recite the *Kalimah* to testify to the Unity of Allah and the Prophethood of Muhammad (s.a.w.), and become a Muslim, and then only would she ask the Imam to visit me daily in my dream. I recited the testimony and became a Muslim, and since then every night Hazrat visited me in my dream and consoled me. Once, he said to me that my grandfather would send an army to attack a Muslim country, and that I should change my dress and join the army as one of the attendants. The Muslims would win, and I would be arrested with others and that I should join the other prisoners of war to this place.’

“I was overwhelmed with joy on hearing this narration and brought Bibi Narjis to Samarra, in the attendance of Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.). Hazrat welcomed her and handed her to the care of his sister Hakima.”

Later, the Hazrat married her to his son Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), and

commended her to his care and courtesy, and prophesied that by her he would have a son who would be the *Hujjat* of Allah on earth. When the earth will have been saturated with oppression, evil and dishonesty he would emerge to spread justice and piety.

Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) was born in Samarra, Iraq, at dawn on Friday the 15<sup>th</sup> of Shaban 255 A.H., in the house of his holy father. He was born pure and duly circumcised, and such brightness shone on his face, that it penetrated through the roof of the house towards the sky. Immediately upon birth, he first prostrated in *sajda* and, raising his right index finger towards the sky, testified as to the Unity of Allah, Muhammad (s.a.w.) being His Prophet, and Ali (a.s.) and his Ten successors being the true Imams. He then prayed to Allah that He may fulfil His promise.

Halima, the daughter of the Ninth Imam Hazrat Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) and the paternal aunt of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), lifted the newly born and presented him to Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), who received his beloved and blessed son into his lap. Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) at once greeted his father with salutations, to which his father replied and asked him to speak by the command of Allah. He again repeated the Holy testimony as to Unity of Allah, the Prophethood of Muhammad (s.a.w.), and the succession of the Eleven Imams, and then recited the verse of Qur'an: "We desired to bestow Our favour on those who were deemed weak on this earth, and to make them the Imams, and to make them the heirs." (28:5).

Thereafter, the Imam (a.s.) returned the child to Bibi Halima and she handed him over to his mother, Narjis. He immediately greeted her with salutations as well.

During the ceremony of shaving the head of the new-born, Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) instructed his attorney, Othman bin Said Umri, to distribute meat of 10,000 goats, and 10,000 loaves of bread to the poor.

There are many references in the Sunni authorities pertaining to the birth

of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). A few extracts and proofs are briefly reproduced here:-

1. A Sunni molvi Obeidullah Amratsari, in his book, *Sawanahe Umry Hazrat Ali (a.s.)*, at page 433, in reference to Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) states, “No child other than his son Abul Qasim Muhammad Al-Hujjat survived him.”
2. Zahaby, in his book *Tarikhul Islam*, mentions the birth of the Twelfth Imam in 256 AH.
3. The Sheikhul Islam of Istanbul, Sheikh Suleiman Balkhi Kanduzy, in his work *Yanabi ul Mawaddah*, has described the birth of the Twelfth Imam (a.s.), in much the same detail as given in the Ithna-asheri works. He cites the birth date as 250 AH., a slight difference in the year, accountable as a possible printing error.
4. In the leading Sunni book *Tarikhe Ibne Khaldun*, vol. 2, at page 24, it is stated, “the Awaited Mahdi (a.s.) was born on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> Shaban 255 A.H., and the name of his father was Hazrat Hasan Askari (a.s).”
5. Mulla Abdulrehman Jami in *Shawahidun Nubuwat*, at page 247, writes, “the son of Imam Raza was Muhammad, his son Ali, his son Hasan and his son Muhammad Mahdi. The last was born in Samarra in 255 AH.”

## IDD-E-BARAT

IDD-E-BARAT, which falls on 15<sup>th</sup> Shaban, and its eve are occasions of great blessing and joy for all Muslims. The night is highly recommended for prayers, especially the supplication of Kumail, and salutation of Imam Husayn (a.s.). Pilgrims in millions congregate in Kerbala for that eve.

All Muslims, the world over, celebrate this evening with bright illumination in their homes, thus adding grace to the remembrance of the birth of the Twelfth Imam (a.s.). Numerous traditions have been reported in both Shia and Sunni books on Idd-e-Barat, and it is relevant to quote a few of them:

1. To start with, *Barat*, an Arabic word, means “acquittal; discharge; immunity, or exemption.” Prayers during the night secure salvation from Allah.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated that during that night Allah destines sustenance, length of life and the names of those who would proceed for pilgrimage in that year.

2. The Prophet (s.a.w.) also stated that during this night, Allah forgives innumerable believers, exceeding in number even the number of hairs on the sheep belonging to the community of Kalb.
3. He added, “Allah, during this night accepts the prayers of, and forgives, all believers except the polytheists, those responsible for innovations in religious rules contrary to the commands of Allah, those who have disregarded their kith and kin, and the persistent and unrepentant sinners.”
4. The Prophet (s.a.w.) has enjoined his followers to spend the night of 15<sup>th</sup> Shabaan in worship and prayer, and to fast on the following day,

for Allah is anxious during the whole of this night to forgive any of His beings who remembers his sins and repents, and is anxious to increase the sustenance of anyone beseeching Him for it.

5. Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) has recommended the purification bath (*ghusl*) on that eve so that the burden of sins may be reduced, and also the offering of salutations to Imam Husein (a.s.), so that sins may be forgiven.
6. Imam Zainul Abidin (a.s.) has said that if anyone desires to greet 124,000 Prophets, then he should visit and offer salutations to Imam Husayn (a.s.) on the eve of the 15<sup>th</sup> Shabaan for, on that eve, all the Prophets and angels visit the grave of Imam Husayn (a.s.). Indeed, fortunate are those who are able to be in Kerbala on that eve to offer their salutations to Imam Husayn (a.s.).
7. Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) has said that, after the SHABE QADR of the Holy month of Ramadhan, the night of 15<sup>th</sup> Shabaan is the most blessed of all nights.

Allah has promised that He will accept the prayers of any believer during that night, and will not reject his prayers except if it is a wish for an act forbidden by Him. Indeed, during that night, if one recites a hundred times SUBHANALLAH; ALHAMDULILLAH; LA ILAAHA ILLALLAH; ALLAHU AKBAR, then his sins would be forgiven and prayers accepted.

8. The most recommended prayers for that night are:
  - (a) the Supplication of Kumail, (Dua-e-Kumail)
  - (b) four Rakat namaz (two namaz of 2 rakaats each, like morning prayers) in which in every rakat after SURA E HAMD, SURAE IKHLAS is recited 100 times.

There are various other prayers and supplications which are mentioned

in the relevant books of supplication.

Similarly, the day of 15<sup>th</sup> Shabaan is a blessed day, in which prayers and also supplications and salutations to Imam Husayn (a.s.) have been recommended.

## THE CHILDHOOD OF IMAM HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.)

At birth, Allah endowed Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) with knowledge and excellence. Like Prophets Isa and Yahya, in addition to knowledge, wisdom and Imamah, he has the power to perform miracles, and the ability to speak, and recite the Qur'an from the cradle. On the day just following his birth, an attendant in the home called Naseem, sneezed near his cradle. The Imam (a.s.), in the usual Arab tradition, responded with: "May Allah have mercy on you", and then added, "Whosoever sneezes, his life is assured for at least the next three days."

Another attendant, Nasr came near the cradle. Hazrat asked her to bring red sandal-wood. When she brought it, the Imam (a.s.) asked her, "Do you know me?" She replied, "Yes, you are my Lord and the son of my Master." He said, "I am not asking about that. I am the Twelfth Imam, the last of the Imams. Through me, Allah will bring success to the Progeny of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and my followers, and will eradicate trouble and calamity."

Forty days after his birth, when Bibi Halima visited Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), she was surprised to see Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) had grown to two years of age. Hazrat explained to her that children of an Imam grow faster than other children. Many miracles were performed by Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) during his childhood. One of them is narrated here:

Ahmed bin Is-hak bin Sa'dulashary reports that once he visited Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), intending to ask him who his successor would be. Before he could ask this question, the Hazrat said, "O Ahmed, Allah does not leave His World without His *Hujjat*, and there will remain one on earth to the Day of Judgement; through whose presence, mercy will be bestowed and calamities averted." He then put his question, and the Imam (a.s.) rose and brought from his house a three year old child with a luminous face and said "O Ahmed, as you are my true friend, I am disclosing my son to you; he is the *Hujjat* of Allah, the Imam after me,



and my successor. He will spread justice and equity in the world.” Whilst Ahmed was still bewildered, the child said “O Ahmed, I am the last successor of the pure Imams on earth. The earth continues to exist because of me. I will avenge the enemies of religion and punish them. When the world will be flooded with dishonesty, injustice, oppression and evil, I will emerge, on the command of Allah, and fill it with justice and equity.”

On the death of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), the entire city of Samarra was drowned in grief. Even Jews and Christians were full of sorrow. All the shops were closed. He died on 8<sup>th</sup> Rabiul Awwal 260 A.H., at the age of 28/29 years. His Deputy, Othman bin Said, arranged the funeral of the Imam (a.s.). When the coffin was ready, the Shias and other Muslims as well as the commanders of the army, all gathered, weeping and mourning at the residence of the Imam (a.s.). The brother of the Imam (a.s.), and uncle of the Twelfth Imam (a.s.), Ja‘far Tawwab appeared and wished to lead the funeral prayers. He stood by the coffin and all the people lined behind him for the prayers. As he was about to lead them, a small child, his face lurninous like the full moon, appeared and said to Ja‘far, “O uncle, please move aside. I am more entitled than you to lead the prayers on the coffin of my late father.” Ja‘far had never seen Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) before, and so he was stunned and retreated. Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) led the prayers and disappeared. None dared ask him anything, or even converse with him.

After leading the prayers, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) approached the servant of his father, by the name Adyan, and asked him for the letter he had. He handed over the letter. Prior to his death, Hazrat Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) had sent Adyan to Baghdad with a letter, and had told him that when he came back with the reply, Hazrat would have already died, but that he should hand the reply to the person who would lead prayers on his coffin and would demand the reply from him. He had told him that such person would be his successor and the Imam of the time.

Ja'far Tawab endeavoured very hard to obtain the property of his brother, and also his Imamat. He even approached the Khalifa of the time and sought his help, but the Khalifa replied that Imamat was not in his hands; only if the Shias of his brother would accept and recognise him for the holy office, would he be able to attain that position.

Numerous other events during the childhood of the Imam (a.s) have been reported but for the sake of brevity, they have been omitted from this book.

### IMAME ZAMAN (A.S.) IN THE COURT OF KHALIFA MO'TAMID ABBASI

One of the attendants of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), Ali bin Zamahyar, narrates that one of his duties was to bring Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) to the Imam (a.s.) from the basement where he was with his mother Bibi Narjis, and then return him there. During their meetings, the Imam (a.s.) would converse with the child. However, Ali was not able to understand their conversations.

On one occasion, messengers from the Khalifa Mo'tamid Abbasi came to the Imam (a.s.) with the message of the Khalifa that he had heard that Allah had blessed the Imam (a.s.) with the son, but that he had not notified the Khalifa of the newborn so that he could share the joy with the Imam (a.s.). He was, therefore, very anxious to see the child and requested that the child be sent to the palace. Thereupon, the Imam (a.s.) ordered Ali bin Zamahyar to bring the child and take him to the Khalifa. On hearing this order, he was terrified for he was certain that the Khalifa would kill the child. The Imam (a.s.), on noticing his apprehension, smiled and asked him not to fear taking the child to the Khalifa, as Allah would Himself protect His *Hujjat*.

Ali reports, "I proceeded to the basement and noticed such brightness radiating from the face of the child as I had never witnessed before.

The mole on his right cheek glittered like a star. I carried him on my shoulders, and when I came out of the house, I noticed that the brightness from his holy face had illumined the whole city of Samarra right to the sky. The townfolk left their work and stared at the child. Women and children from the houses came to the windows and terraces to view the luminous child. The bazaars soon became so overcrowded that it became difficult for me to pass through them to reach the palace. The messengers from the Khalifa had to make way for me all along.

“On entering the court, I noticed that the Khalifa, and all the courtiers and the guardsmen were dazzled by the brilliance shining from the face of the child. I proceeded straight to the throne of the Khalifa and stood right opposite him, carrying the child on my shoulder. After a while, the minister of the Khalifa standing next to him whispered to him. I was sure that they discussed assassination of the child and I began to tremble. The Khalifa immediately ordered his guardsmen to kill the child. They attempted to draw their swords from their sheaths, but in vain. The Khalifa said the swords had become stuck in the sheaths by the magic of the son of Hashim. So he ordered a sword to be brought from the treasury, boasting that no magic would work on that sword. The sword was duly brought from the treasury but despite all efforts, it could not be removed from its sheath. The Khalifa and all the courtiers were amazed. However, the Khalifa ordered that three ferocious lions be brought from the cage of wild animals. Instantly, three such lions were brought into the court.

“I was ordered by the Khalifa to place the child in front of the lions. I trembled at this cruel command. Suddenly, the child whispered to me in my ears, not to fear and to place him before those lions. So I did. I was astonished to notice that the three lions raised their paws and helped the child onto the ground. Then they stood to attention before the Imam (a.s.) with their heads bowed. The oldest of the lions suddenly became vocal, and in polished Arabic, testified as to the Unity of Allah, the Prophethood of Muhammad (s.a.w.), and then announced the names of

each of the Eleven Imams, saluted the child before him, and added, ‘You are the *Hujjat* of Allah on earth. I have a complaint to present before you. The other two lions, being younger, grab all the food that is brought to us. Thus, I am not able to obtain even my share of the food, and remain continuously hungry’. The child (Imam (a.s.)) pronounced that, in punishment, for this injustice they would both become aged and infirm, while the old lion would regain his youth and health. No sooner had the Imam (a.s.) said so, then both the young lions became aged and weak, and the old lion turned into a robust, young lion. On witnessing such a fantastic miracle, the Khalifa and all the courtiers became spell-bound and recited ‘*Allahu Akbar*’ in ecstasy and excitement. The Khalifa immediately ordered the child returned to his parents.

“I thanked Allah, and carried my Imam (a.s.) on my shoulder back to the house. On the way, the bazaar became even more congested with everyone staring in bewilderment at the shining Imam. Reaching home, I narrated the entire episode to Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) who, too, was delighted and thanked Allah.”

## **THE TRANSITIONAL CONCEALMENT (GHAIBAT-E-SUGHRA) AND THE DEPUTIES**

After the demise of his father, following his instructions, the Imam of our time, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) disappeared from public vision on 10<sup>th</sup> Shawwal 260 A.H. at the age of 5 years. This disappearance is known as the transitional concealment (*Ghaibat-e-Sughra*). However, he appointed some of his companions as his deputies, through whom he communicated with his followers, and answered their questions in writing. This period lasted about 70 years and thereafter, the long concealment followed, which continues to date. During the long concealment, no deputy has been appointed and communication by answers to question, or written messages has ceased. The Imam (a.s.) now awaits the command of Allah to reappear, and this subject will be discussed fully in a later chapter.

During the transitional period, many events occurred and many questions were answered, but for brevity, their accounts are omitted. Only a brief mention of the four deputies of the Imam (a.s.) is made here.

### **THE DEPUTIES DURING THE TRANSITIONAL CONCEALMENT OF THE IMAM (A.S.)**

1. The first Deputy was Othman bin Said, who was a companion and an attorney of the Tenth and Eleventh Imams (a.s.) as well. He was of advanced age, and a scholar of great learning. He remained a Deputy of the Twelfth Imam (a.s.) for only a brief period of one and half years. The Imam (a.s.) conveyed to him a written message that he would soon die and that in his place, he should appoint his son, Muhammad, as the Deputy of the Imam (a.s.), and make a public announcement of the appointment. He died in Baghdad, and was buried there. Many faithfuls constantly visit his grave to this day.
2. The second Deputy was Muhammad bin Othman. The Imam (a.s.)

wrote to him, “Oh, Muhammad bin Othman, your father was very fortunate to have been blessed with a virtuous son like you. Always pray to Allah to bestow His mercy upon him. May Allah help you.” Muhammad bin Othman was an exceedingly pious scholar. He was very obliging to the Shias, and conducted the affairs of Imam (a.s.) in accordance with his instructions. When his death approached, the Imam (a.s.) sent him a message to appoint Husayn bin Rauh, the Deputy to succeed him. He died in 305 A.H., after serving as Deputy of the Imam (a.s.) for 50 years. His grave in Baghdad is constantly visited by numerous believers.

3. The third Deputy was Sheikh Abul Qasim Husayn bin Rauh. This exalted scholar, besides being exceedingly pious, was of charming and humorous disposition, and was much liked and respected by many Sunnis also. He served the Imam (a.s.) and his Shias fully and faithfully. Numerous detailed accounts are available at length, of his achievements and qualities, and which again have been omitted from this book. He died in Shabaan 326 A.H. His grave is in Baghdad.
4. The fourth Deputy was Aly bin Muhammad Samury. He was the last of the Deputies and his office lasted 3 years. Just before his death, he received the following message from the Imam (a.s.): “In the name of Allah, Aly Samuri, May Allah grant patience and reward to your brothers in faith to bear your loss. Six days from today, you will depart this world. So complete all your assignment as, after you, there will be none to succeed you as my Deputy for I am now under the command of Allah to go into total concealment, which will last for a long time. During my long concealment, people will become hard-hearted, calamities and oppressions will abound and many imposters will appear. There will be two main precursory signs to my reappearance; Sufiani will rise from Syria, and a loud voice will be heard from the sky which people of all nations and tongues will be able to hear and understand.”

As foretold by the Imam (a.s.), Sheikh Aly died in Baghdad on 15<sup>th</sup> Shaban and, like his predecessors, his grave is popularly visited by many believers.

## **THE LONG CONCEALMENT (*GHAIBAT-E-KUBRA*): ITS MYSTERIES AND THE CRITICISMS AGAINST IT ANSWERED**

During the transitional concealment, the Imam (a.s.) used to directly answer the requests and questions of his Deputies and followers. Then, Allah ordered him into long concealment and, since then, our Imam (a.s.) has been concealed from us. In this period, there is no public appearance by him, no occasion for any one to claim to be his Deputy; nor is there any exchange of correspondence with him. However, in place of the specially appointed Deputy, pious scholars are accepted, and regarded as the representatives of the Imam (a.s.). To this end, the Imam (a.s.) has himself proclaimed: “Those learned in religion are its defenders; they restrain themselves against temptation and follow their Imam. It is obligatory upon the faithful to follow them. Such scholars are our representatives, just as we are apostles from Allah. Those who oppose them have opposed us, and those who oppose us, disobey Allah.”

Much criticism has been levelled against the transitional, and the long disappearance, of the Imam (a.s.). It is alleged that our Imam (a.s.) has hidden himself in a basement out of fear, and so no benefit can be derived from him, while the Imam of the critics is publicly available to them, and so on. In the first instance, it is essential to establish the truthfulness of the claim to an Imamate; else his being publicly available brings no benefit. In an earlier chapter on this subject, it has been established from the Qur'an and traditions, that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) is the true Twelfth and Current Imam. This chapter will discuss briefly the reasons for his concealment, its advantages, its purposes, and the fact that he has not been in concealment out of fear or any threat, but because it was regarded expedient by Allah.

Just as the earth benefits from the light and heat of the sun even when it is hidden behind the clouds, so does the creation of Allah benefit from the Imam even whilst he is in concealment.



The Prophet Musa was an apostle. Allah, the Omnipotent, was there to protect him. Yet, Hazrat Musa had to escape from the Pharaoh, as is stated in the Qur'an (28:21): "So he went therefrom, fearing awaiting." Allah, at that time, could have equipped Moses with the renowned miracle of the stick, and ordered him to face the Pharaoh, but He did not; and initially, Hazrat Musa had to escape from Egypt out of fear, and remain in concealment from the Israelites, for 10 to 15 years during which period, the Israelites suffered under the yoke of the Pharaoh. Was Allah powerless during all that period? It was only His will and expediency, by which He tested the Pharaoh and his polytheist and sinful followers, and the patience and faith of the Israelites. Allah does not make haste in imposing punishment.

From this, it is evident that the concealment of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) is a test for the people on this earth. Thus, he has remained in concealment by the Will of Allah, for the period determined by Him.

Immediately upon the death of the Eleventh Imam, Hazrat Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), Imam Mahdi (a.s.) could have commenced punishing the tyrants, infidels and the evil with the strength that Allah bestows upon His Imams, and the power an Imam possesses of commanding the obedience of any creation of Allah. However, in doing so, he would have had to kill countless Muslims, at a time when there were only a few faithfuls; The majority of the Muslims (the followers of the Omayyads and the Abassids), the greedy, and the infidels (and also non-believers and polytheists), would all have had to be killed and in no time, a vast population of the world would have perished. There would have been no opportunity for the creation of the abundance of men born since then, and to be born until the reappearance of the Imam (a.s.), to be tested for their firmness in faith. All such persons who have been born, and have lived in faith, have procured Paradise; as will many more yet to be born before the reappearance of the Imam (a.s.). Thus the disappearance and reappearance depend on the Will and expediency of Allah. Allah has no partner, adviser, nor assistant. Allah has created this world out of His

grace, and also to test mankind. In chapter 29 of the Qur'an, *Al-Ankabut*, (the Spider), in verse 2, He states: "Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, We believe, and not be tried?"

The followers of Prophet Nuh were tried severely, as is clear from the Qur'an, traditions, and history, and so were the followers of every Prophet.

For three years, the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) had to endure hunger and other afflictions in a cave, because of the threats from the Quraysh of Mecca. After that, when the polytheists had surrounded his house and were bent on killing him, he had to leave his home alone, in the darkness of the night, and emigrate from Mecca. By the Command of Allah, he appointed Hazrat Ali (a.s.) to sleep in his place on his bed. Had Allah not endowed His Prophet with sufficient strength to annihilate His enemies, and spread His religion? It was just that, the time destined by Allah for His Will to manifest victory had not yet come. So, in compliance with the Will of Allah, the Prophet (s.a.w.) had to migrate from Mecca. He had not yet been ordered to take up arms with the assistance of only his cousin Ali (a.s.) and a handful of companions.

Furthermore, on the exigencies of the occasions, Prophet Suleiman and Ibrahim, and various other Prophets were commanded by Allah to remain in concealment. These episodes are fully described in the Qur'an, traditions and history, and are omitted here, for the sake of brevity.

Despite the concealment of the Current Imam (a.s.), his existence on earth is a mercy and grace of Allah. Undoubtedly, if this light of Allah - His Vicegerent, and the successor of the Prophet (s.a.w.), had not been on earth, it would have been so flooded with sin and oppression, that it could not have been saved, even momentarily, from the wrath of Allah. It is established from the Qur'an and the traditions that the earth would have been deprived of any rain, and plants would not have grown to provide food. Those who repose no faith in Allah, His Prophet (s.a.w.),

and the Qur'an would find such belief unacceptable. However, their arrogant attitudes are of no concern to the faithful.

Moreover, the faith, and the faithfuls, derive guidance and assistance from the Current Imam of our age. A few examples only, are cited here to refresh the conviction of the faithful.

About a hundred miles from Najaf, is a centre of Shia learning called Hilla, where there lived a leading Shia jurist (Mujtahid), Sheikh Allama Hilli. Once, several people asked him for a ruling about a pregnant lady who had died, but with the child still alive in her womb. They asked whether she was to be buried with the child, or that the child be first removed from her womb. He advised that the lady be buried in the same condition with the child. After observance of all rites, as the people were carrying the coffin to the graveyard, a horseman stopped them on the way, stating that the Allama had ordered that the child be removed before the burial of the lady. So they carried the coffin to the graveyard, where the living child was safely removed, and the lady buried.

Two or three years later, the Allama was visited by a person with a small child. He asked the Allama, "Do you know this child? He is the one who was removed from the womb of his dead mother on your order. You had first advised that his dead mother be buried with the child inside her, but later on, sent a horseman to alter the instructions, and ordered the removal of the child from the womb of the mother." The Allama was astonished at these facts, and went pale, for he had not sent any horseman to change any instructions. He was convinced that Imam Mahdi (a.s.) had gone to his aid at that time; otherwise he would have been answerable for the burial of the living child. From that day he confined himself to his home, and refused to give any ruling on matters of religion to any person, lest he should err in the same way again. Shortly thereafter, he received a letter from the Imam (a.s.) stating that he should not be so concerned, and should continue to guide the people on the rules of religion as he understood them. If, per chance, he erred, the Imam (a.s.) would himself make a timely correction.

This narration clearly establishes that the Imam (a.s.) is conscious of everything that happens, and comes to the aid of his Shia followers. Thus, not only do the followers benefit from his guidance despite his invisibility, but also, his help reaches them in times of need.

It is reported in *Biharul Anwar*, that when the British colonised Bahrein, the entire community was Muslim, and a Sunni Muslim was appointed Governor. There were many Shias in Bahrein, but the Governor and his Minister harboured enmity against them. Once, the Minister presented to the Governor a pomegranate on which, he claimed, the names of the four Islamic Khalifas were naturally inscribed, so that the veracity of the Sunni sect, and of the Khalifas was proved. He then asked the Governor to call upon the scholars of the Shia faith to show the fruit to them, and urge them to abandon their faith and embrace the 'true' Sunni conviction. He urged that if they refused, they should no longer be regarded as Muslims and be killed, or be subjected to the taxes (*Jaziya*) levied on non-believers.

The Governor looked at the fruit and the inscription on it: "LA ILAHA ILLA ALLAH, MUHAMMADUN RASULULLAH- ABU BAKR, OMAR, OTHMAN, ALI KHULAFU RASULULLAH."

The Governor was deeply impressed and delighted, and acting upon the advice of the Minister, summoned the Shia scholars, showed them the fruit, and put to them the three alternatives as suggested to him by the Minister.

The Shia scholars were confounded. They sought three days time from the Governor, who willingly granted it, to provide him with their answer. Drowned in their anxiety, they eventually decided to seek succour from their Imam, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.).

Three eminent pious scholars were selected, and it was decided that each night, one of them would go out of the city into the forest and beseech the

assistance of the Imam (a.s.). For the first two nights, the two scholars spent the whole night in prayers and supplication seeking the aid of the Imam (a.s.), but to no avail. On the third and last night, the third scholar proceeded and again earnestly sought the help of the Imam (a.s.). At dawn, he saw an impressive personality approach him and tell him that he was his Imam. He asked him his problem. The scholar stated that if he was truly his Imam, then he would be aware of the affliction that had befallen him. The Imam (a.s.) said he was fully aware of their calamity and that they should not despair but simply follow his directions.

He then said, “Tomorrow morning, you and your colleagues proceed to the court of the Governor and tell him that you would provide him with the answer at the house of his Minister. The Minister will refuse to accept this answer, but you must insist on it, and ensure that the Minister does not reach his home before you. You must get to his house with him and the Governor, and ask the Minister to take you all to the top terrace of the house. The Minister will go pale, and will attempt to get to the terrace first, but you must stop him from getting there before you.

“On the terrace, you will find a bag in a niche in the wall. Open the bag and show the contents to the Governor. In it will be two moulds, on which are inscribed the letters of the wordings on the pomegranate. They were fitted onto the growing fruit by the Minister, so that when it grew bigger, the letters became embedded in it. The Governor will be convinced that the inscription was a forgery by the Minister.

“Then tell the Governor that there is another proof of the inscription being a forgery. Ask the Governor to order the Minister to break the pomegranate in his presence, and he would be convinced of the power of Allah and the fraud.”

The following morning, the Scholar (Muhammad bin Ali) went to the court with his colleagues. They requested they should all proceed

to the house of the Minister with him, as directed by the Imam (a.s.). Eventually, the Governor asked the Minister to break the fruit. When the Minister did so, black dust blew out from it and smeared the eyes and the beard of the Minister.

Everyone laughed aloud. The Governor was convinced of the fraud of the Minister, and ordered that he should be immediately executed. The Shia scholars left the Court with honour and respect.

This episode is well known. The grave of the scholar who met the Imam (a.s.) has been preserved, and is visited by many Muslims. These facts establish that the Imam (a.s.) is alive and with us, and when occasion demands, he comes to the succour of his afflicted Shias. More such illustrations of the Imam's help are cited elsewhere in the book.

The Imam, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), was born in SAMARRA, and went into concealment through the basement, which is adjacent to the Mausoleum of the Tenth and Eleventh Imams (a.s.). In Samarra, the population is predominantly (90 to 95%) Sunnis who all bear conviction of the existence of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), as miracles occur there so frequently. Furthermore, when the Imam (a.s.) visits the Mausoleum of his father and his grandfather (the Tenth and Eleventh Imams), the whole city becomes illuminated. The Arabs jubilate in excitement and the ladies climb to the terraces in rejoicing at the arrival of their Imam (a.s.).

Moreover, when the Imam (a.s.) visits the city, it becomes illuminated even on a dark night. If one raised ones finger, or produced a key, it would emit light like a candle. Despite many such miracles that occur in SAMARRA, the Arabs there do not desist from harrassing the Shia pilgrims.

Allah always accomplishes His proofs. Many miracles and signs appear establishing the veracity of the Imams (a.s.) and the existence of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), so that the conviction of believers is fortified, and proof is at

least presented to the obstinate. However, a few questions on this subject are still raised, and which will now be answered.

**QUESTION:** If Imam Mahdi (a.s.) reappeared now, then undoubtedly, evil and oppression and infidelity would vanish from the earth and sooner, peace, tranquility and obedience to Allah would prevail, and the believer would not remain in any doubt.

**ANSWER:** This world is for the trial of mankind. Allah has accomplished His proofs upon everyone. The emergence of the Imam (a.s.) is dependant on the Will of Allah. None has the right to hasten or criticise it. Moreover, even with the appearance of the Imam (a.s.), the misguided will still stray. Many have met our Prophet (s.a.w.) and our Imams (a.s.), witnessed their miracles and heard their words of guidance, and yet, blinded by worldly pleasures, remained without faith and even assisted the worldly tyrants (Omayyads and Abbasids), to create opposition and enmity against our Imams (a.s.), and eventually killed them. Thus, it is manifest that Allah acts according to His expediency.

**QUESTION:** Many Muslims are subjugated by the enemies; are humiliated and afflicted. They call for the aid of their Imam (a.s.), but their problems remain unsolved. Thus doubt or despondency is created in their minds, which is undesirable.

**ANSWER:** Once, a child of a lady became seriously sick, and there was no hope for survival. The lady said that if there was Allah, and He was Omnipotent and Merciful, He would surely save her child; else she would believe that faith in Allah is meaningless. The child died. Are the Omnipotence and the Mercy of Allah, therefore, disproved?

If the person seeking the aid of Imam (a.s.) is without faith; an oppressor, and does not say his prayers, then he is not entitled to any help. Whether he receives help or not, is of no consequence in determining the veracity of Imamatus. It is of no significance or

importance to the Imam (a.s.) whether one believes in his Imamate or not, for numerous signs, proofs, verses and traditions have established his Imamate. The acceptance of his Imamate is for the benefit of the believer himself, and his salvation. There is no compulsion in religion.

After the Prophet (s.a.w.), Allah sent Eleven vicegerents in succession, on earth, for guidance of mankind; all of them have been killed either by sword or poison, by Yazid, Omayyad, or Abbasid tyrants.

Moreover, they were visible, and publicly performed miracles. They guided the Muslims and yet, except for a few believers, the Muslims deserted them. Even if the Twelfth Imam (a.s.) were publicly visible, he would receive the same treatment. Thus Allah has concealed him for a definite period.



## THE LONG LIFE OF HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.)

Our Current Imam, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), was born in 255 A.H. and is alive. Doubts are expressed over a life of more than a thousand years. The argument is that when a person, only one hundred years old, becomes weak, disabled and deficient, how can a person over 1100 years in age remain alive and in good health? This question is answered by many verses in the Qur'an, by traditions and through logic.

Firstly, numerous people - both believers and infidels - are historically known to have lived for over a thousand years. Indeed, as will be demonstrated further in this chapter, some of them are still living.

The Holy Qur'an, in reference to the Prophet Yunus (Jonah), states: "but had it not been that he was one of those who glorify Us, he would certainly have tarried in its belly to the day when they are raised." (37:143-144)

The Prophet Yunus was a human being. If Allah, in His Omnipotence, is capable of sustaining a human being in the belly of a fish, without light, air, food or water, upto the Day of Judgement, why then cannot He keep healthy and alive, an apostle of His, for 1000 or 2000 years? None can doubt the infinite power of Allah.

The only plausible question is whether Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) is truly alive and, if so, why is he invisible? These questions are discussed in the various chapters of this book.

Even Sunni books have accepted and written about the long life of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), which has been mentioned elsewhere in this book.

The following are some instances of persons - Prophets, Saints, as well as polytheists and unbelieving monarchs, who have enjoyed very long lives:

## **PROPHETS AND BELIEVERS:**

Prophet Nuh,	2500 years
Hazrat Luqman,	3800 years
Prophet Suleiman,	700 years
Prophet Hood,	464 years
Prophet Adam,	who left a family of 40,000, lived for 930 years
Prophet Shish,	900 years
Bibi Hawwa,	930 years

Four Prophet are alive to this day for thousands of years:

### **IN THE HEAVENS:**

Prophet Idris proceeded to the heavens thousands of years ago, at a time when he was already 890 years of age.

The Prophet Jesus is in the heavens now for about 2000 years.

### **ON EARTH**

Prophet Khidhr has been alive for 4000 years and traverses all directions.

Prophet Elias has been alive for 4000-5000 years and traverses the earth.

## **INFIDELS AND POLYTHEISTS:**

Iblis	from time immemorial;
Anak,	daughter of Prophet Adam, 3000 years
Ouj bin Anak,	3600 years
King Jamshed,	1000 years
Zahaq Tazi,	nephew of Jamshed, 1200 years
Aad bin Our bin Irem bin Saam bin Noah,	1200 years
Shaddaad,	900 years
Cyrus, King of Iran,	1000 years
Dajjai,	1375 years.

Lastly one logical argument: If a person were to claim that he could walk on water, undoubtedly all people would assemble to watch him and when he does actually walk on water, everyone would look at him with amazement and regard him as a saint.

However if after a while another person made a similar claim, the astonishment of the people would be reduced considerably, and there would not be the same crowd to watch him as there was the first time. They would no longer regard it as a matter of amazement. If there was a third claimant, he might not even be much heeded, and excitement about him would virtually wane. Similarly, when so many men have already lived for thousands of years, and indeed Prophet Khizr and Elias have lived for four to five thousands years and are alive and healthy traversing the earth, then it cannot be surprising any longer that the Twelfth Imam (a.s.) should have been alive and healthy only for 1100-1200 years. It is even less surprising when it is accepted by even Christians, and all Muslims, that Iblis and Dajjal are still alive, and Agog-Magog have been alive for thousands of years since the time of Alexander the Great.

Indeed, the Prophets Khizr and Elias are alive, although the period of their Prophethood and guidance has long passed. This is now the age of the last Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w.), and the Islamic code and the Qur'an will endure to the Day of Judgement. However, the long duration of their lives is best illustrative of the long life granted by Allah to the Imam (a.s.) of this age.

A number of Sunni scholars have mentioned in their books about the birth of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) in 255 AH., and that he is still alive; and also report about a number of people having seen and met him. Yet the majority of them believe that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) has not been born; that he will be born in the final days, and will fill the earth with justice and equity. The main reason behind this belief is that if they accepted that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) is already born, they would be obliged to accept that he is in concealment and as a corollary they would have to abandon their

sequence of twelve Khalifas and accept the Ithna-asheri sequence which is the only one that ends with Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) as the Twelfth Imam.

It is a fallacy for the Sunnis to reject as pure imagination, the existence of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), his places of abode, his children and servants, and his meeting with people, merely on the ground that the places are not in the maps and are not easily accessible.

They themselves believe in concealed unseen men, whose names or places of abode cannot be established. For instance, in the book *Rehla e Ibne Battuta*, Ibne Battuta (died 779 A.H.), writes of his long journeys to Arabia, Iraq, Asia and China. In the second volume, at page 64, he writes, "During my journey, I reached China where I was told of a wonderful Sheikh about 200 years of age still living, but no one had ever seen him eat or drink, and he did not converse with any person. He was healthy but unmarried. He lived in a cave but always worshipped outside it. So I decided to visit him in his cave with my companions. When we reached there, he was standing outside the cave. I greeted him and he replied me. He then held my hand and after a long time he conveyed to me, through his interpreter, that I lived on the western side of the world, whilst he lived on the eastern side. He then told me that I must have seen wonderful things during my travels and might remember visiting an island where there was a temple in which I saw a person sitting near the idols and who had given me ten gold coins. I told him I remembered that very well. He said that the person was he, himself. I instantly kissed his hand. Then, again he remained silent for a long time. Suddenly, without saying anything, he entered the cave. We waited outside for a considerable period but as he did not emerge, we decided to enter the cave. We were told that we would not be able to see him again. An attendant had pieces of papers in his hand which he handed to me, stating that the Sheikh had left them for me as a gift to the guest, and that I should leave. When I insisted on waiting for him the attendant told me that even if I waited for ten years, I would not be able to see him for he never met anybody for the second time. I should not think that he was

not with me on the spot, but it was just that he was invisible. We were stunned and left the cave.”

The author proceeds to state, “I mentioned this episode to the Judge, the Sheikhu'l Islam and Awahdudin Bukhari and they all confirmed that whoever saw that person once, could not see him again, and the attendant who handed the pieces of papers was the person himself in an altered shape. One of his companions stated that he remained concealed for 50 years, and then suddenly appeared. There is nothing in his cave, and yet when a poor person asked for help, he gave him money. He narrates events of the past, and a number of traditions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). He claims that if he had lived in the time of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), he would certainly have assisted him. He curses Muawiya and Yazid vehemently.”

Moreover, in the same book of his travels, the author writes that Awahuddin Bukhari had told him that, once he had entered the cave, and the Sheikh held his hand. He noticed that he was in a huge palace, heavily embellished, and the Sheikh was seated on a throne with a crown on his head, and a number of beautiful women around him. He saw rivers of water flowing, and trees of sweet fruits, from which the fruits were falling. He picked one of the fruits with the intention of eating it, when he suddenly found himself standing alone outside the cave. The scenery had disappeared from his sight and he found himself alone. He left immediately.

Such astonishing experiences about the Sheikh have been narrated in Sunni books, from which it is clear that Muslims are prepared to believe in this Sheikh, his concealment and astonishing miracles, when even his name is not known. Yet they remain in doubt about Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) when the Holy Qur'an, traditions and history, and books by Muslims authors provide ample and abundant proofs about him, his concealment and miracles.

## CONCEALMENT OF PROPHETS

Sheikh Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali BAB-WAYH, reknown by the title of Sheikh Sadook, has reported that once Sheikh Najmuddin Abu Said Muhammad bin Hasan requested him to write a book on Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), and he replied that he would write one on his return to his home in Tehran.

However, when he was back in Tehran, he was not able to undertake the task as he became preoccupied with his family and other problems. Once, he dreamt that he was in Mecca, performing *tawaf* around the Ka'ba. When he had completed the seventh round and kissed *Hajar-e-Aswad* (the Black Stone), he saw a venerable person with a bright face near the door of the Ka'ba. It occurred to him that the personage was his Imam (a.s.) and he greeted him. He replied, and asked him why he had not written the book on concealment (*Ghaibat*). The Sheikh replied that he had written a great deal on it, but he said, "No. Now write a book on this subject, and also mention in it about the concealment of the earlier Prophets." The Sheikh awoke from his dream and wept. He remained in prayer for the rest of that night, and on the very following day, he commenced writing a book on the concealment of the Imam (a.s.).

In this chapter, it is proposed to give a brief account of the concealment of two Prophets.

### CONCEALMENT OF THE PROPHET MUSA (MOSES)

Sheikh Sadook reports from the Fourth Imam (a.s.), that just before his death, Prophet Yusuf assembled his family and followers and prophesied the events to come. He stated that they would have to undergo great calamities during the reign of the Pharaoh. He would enslave and kill their men, and would order the wombs of their women to be cut open to remove and kill their children. Then, Allah would order Hazrat Musa, the son of Lavi bin Yakub, to appear. He would be tall and of brownish complexion.

While for the 400 years of the oppressive reign of the Pharaoh, the Israelites suffered under their yoke, the Prophet remained in concealment. The Israelites patiently prayed for the appearance of Hazrat Musa.

After such a long period, they received the glad tidings of the birth of Prophet Musa, which enkindled hope in them. Amongst the Israelites was a pious scholar who always consoled them with the prophecy of Hazrat Musa's birth and success over the Pharaoh. Persistent persecution by the Pharaoh compelled this scholar to seek refuge in a cave in a forest. However, when the Israelites could no longer bear the oppression of the Pharaoh who made them lift heavy logs of wood and stone, they sent a message of their plight to this scholar. They told him that his statements about success were a source of solace to them, and urged him to return amongst them, and reassure them in their sufferings.

The scholar invited them to his cave in the forest. A few Israelites visited him. On one bright night, the scholar predicted that the time of the arrival of this saviour was close. Whilst they were engrossed in this conversation they found a youth, tall and bright, in front of them. The scholar, who was familiar with the description of Nabi Musa, immediately identified him and prostrated to Allah in thanksgiving; and so did all the remaining Israelites. They then kissed Prophet Musa's feet, and narrated all the cruelties they suffered from the Pharaoh. Hazrat Musa consoled them and assured them of success in the near future, and then disappeared from their sight. He went to Madayan to the house of Hazrat Shuaib, whose daughter married him on the condition that he should serve Hazrat Shuaib for ten years.

The first period of disappearance of Hazrat Musa was similar to the transitional concealment of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). The harassment on the Israelites was mounting and their patience, fast diminishing. So, after some ten years, they again visited the scholar who informed them that he had received an inspiration from God that their success would

come in forty years and they responded “*ALHAMDULILLAH*” (All Praise be to Allah). Due to this thanksgiving, Allah reduced their period of suffering by twenty years. This news was conveyed immediately by Allah to the scholar who, in turn, informed the Israelites of the rewards of their thanksgiving. They responded, “All Mercy and Grace is from Allah alone”. Hence, the scholar again received an inspiration that Allah had reduced their period of waiting and suffering by another ten years. They said that none but Allah could avert their hardship.

Instantly, they saw Hazrat Musa had reappeared. They all prostrated to Allah, and kissed the feet of Hazrat Musa, who delivered to them the good tidings that he had been commanded by Allah to appear and confront the Pharaoh, and ordered them to disperse.

Then Hazrat Musa proceeded to the court of the Pharaoh who ordered Magicians to attend. Hazrat Musa went out of Egypt with 600,000 Israelites, male and female, young and old and crossed the water, but the Pharaoh and his innumerable companions, on attempting to cross the waters, were drowned.

Thus is established the disappearance of Hazrat Musa, and the resultant test and trial of his people. Similarly, the followers of our Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) are tested and tried.

### **THE DISAPPEARANCE OF PROPHET SULEIMAN (SOLOMON)**

Prophet Dawood was succeeded by Prophet Suleiman as the King. Then, on the command of Allah, he disappeared from among his followers, and during this period of disappearance, obtained the royal signet; details of which are narrated below.

Prophet Dawood was commanded by Allah to appoint his youngest son, Suleiman, as his successor. Hazrat Dawood informed his children and followers of this command. The Israelites objected that the appointment was unjust as Suleiman was young, and his elder brothers were



experienced and able. Prophet Dawood informed them that none could object to the will of Allah. Yet, for their satisfaction, he asked them all to place twigs with their names inscribed, in a certain room. He would also ask his sons including Suleiman (Solomon), to place their twigs, with their names on them, in the room. The next day they should all attend to see which of the twigs had blossomed with leaves and fruits. The owner of such a twig would become his successor. They all accepted this suggestion and brought their twigs. The following day, when the room was opened only the twig of Hazrat Suleiman had sprouted leaves and bore fruits. So they all accepted the succession of Nabi Suleiman.

To establish the competence of Hazrat Suleiman even further, Prophet Dawood immediately tested his knowledge and understanding, in the presence of the Israelites. He asked him: “What provides maximum pleasure and peace of mind?” Hazrat Suleiman replied, “The forgiveness of Allah and forgiveness between men.” Hazrat Dawood then asked: “Which is the sweetest thing?” He replied, “Love and true friendship; for love and friendship is a gift and grace from Allah to His creatures.” (In this day and age this gift of Allah of love and friendship has disappeared, giving way to enmity, jealousy and injustice, which are a curse from Allah).

Prophet Dawood was pleased with the accurate and excellent answers from his son, and turned to the Israelites to ask if they were then satisfied that Suleiman was in every respect worthy of succeeding him.

After the death of Prophet Dawood, Nabi Suleiman disappeared, on the command of Allah. During this period of his disappearance, Allah tested his followers, who suffered agony and calamities.

Prophet Suleiman disappeared to a neighbouring country, where he married and lived with his in-laws. One day, his wife told him that she much appreciated his conduct, qualities, and generosity which were most admirable. However, she felt humiliated by his dependance upon her

father, and suggested that he should earn an independent income. Hazrat Suleiman replied that he was not skilled in any worldly trade, as he had not needed to work at any time to earn his income (he had always been a Prince). All the same, he promised to visit the market the next day to seek some means of livelihood. He set out to work, but in vain. His kindly wife consoled him, and inspired him to try again the following day. The next day, again Hazrat Suleiman returned empty handed.

Again his wife urged him not to be disheartened, and reassured him that he would eventually succeed, with the Mercy of Allah. The third day, Hazrat Suleiman went to the seashore. He saw a fisherman, and offered his help at any wage he considered fair. The fisherman accepted his offer and at the day's end, he gave Hazrat Suleiman two fish. He became pleased and thanked Allah. Nabi Suleiman cut open the fish and cleaned them. From the stomach of one fish, he found a ring. Being a Prophet, he identified this as the regal signet. He cleaned the ring, wrapped it in his handkerchief, and placed it in his pocket. He then went home with the two fish, which his wife was so very delighted to see.

She called her father, and showed him the two fish. Hazrat Suleiman asked his father-in-law: "Do you know who I am?" He replied that Hazrat Suleiman was a very kind person and that he (the father-in-law) considered him his son, but did not know who he was. Then Hazrat Suleiman revealed that he was the son of Prophet Dawood; the son of a King, and heir to the throne. He then produced the ring from his pocket, and placed it on his finger. Instantly, jinns and birds from all directions presented themselves before him.

Nabi Suleiman proceeded towards his capital with his wife and her parents. His followers were delighted to receive him and thanked Allah.

These are two illustrations of the disappearance of two Prophets. Followers of each Prophet have had this experience. Disappearance of Prophets Yunus (Jonah), Ibrahim, and Idris are well described in other books. For the sake of brevity, they are omitted here.

## HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.) AND NON-MUSLIMS

Allama Sayyid Gulamhussein Kanturi writes in his book *Intisarul Islam* (1917), that his close relative Hakim Sayyid Zafer Mahdi had returned to Lahore from his pilgrimage with him. A Hindu astrologer approached him and requested to be asked a question. The Sayyid offered him a present without asking him a question but he refused to accept anything without being asked a question. The Sayyid was annoyed as he himself was an astrologer. Yet he asked him whether he could tell him the events of the past or the future, or inform him what was on his mind. He preferred the more difficult choice of stating what was on the mind of the questioner.

The Sayyid asked him to tell him who the person, whom he had on his mind at that time, was. The astrologer made exhaustive calculations on his paper but could find no end to them. He managed, however, to obtain an insight into the person's appearance, thoughts and qualities, and became amazed. He said to the Sayyid that the person on his mind was indeed a great king of both the worlds. He found, from his knowledge, that if he researched all his life into the full quality of this person, he would still not complete his description. He found that this person was a king of the heavens and the earth, and the greatest king of all kings on earth.

On hearing this, the Sayyid was greatly excited and said he was thinking of our current Imam Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), whom the astrologer had so well identified. He then ordered his servants to bring his most expensive shawl and wrapped it round the shoulders of the astrologer. The astrologer declined to accept it and, with a stream of tears in his eyes, said: "No, no. I do not desire any present, or the shawl. I have today, through you, made a discovery more valuable than any kingdom in this world. I have been guided to the right path, and have discovered my true Lord. I have no desire for worldly matters any more." He wept profusely, and seeing him, the Sayyid and all his companions also wept.

The (late) author of this book was visited in his Mombasa office, in about the year 1930 A.D. by an astrologer from Bombay who was of advanced age and heavy-bearded, calling himself Huseini Brahamin. He requested the author to ask him a question, but as the author was then busy with his work he declined, hoping that the astrologer would leave if he was unattended. However, the astrologer stayed on and after a few moments, began to unfold to the author his past and future, his business, family, pleasures, hobbies, good and bad habits and illnesses. The author was astonished and began to listen to him attentively. Ninety-nine percent of the facts were correct. So the author said: "I have been concerned and anxious for a long time to know about a friend of mine. I wish to know where he is, in what state he is, whether he is alive or dead, happy or in distress and whether I would ever be able to meet him. If you give me a satisfactory answer, I promise you 25 Indian rupees."

On hearing this, the astrologer commenced his calculations on a piece of paper. Before then, he had revealed to the author a great deal about him without any workings. When the author queried, he said that he was able to read all about the author from the lines on his forehead, but now he needed the aid of his pen and paper on the question about his friend.

After many heavy markings on the paper, and counting on fingertips, and lifting his head frequently for about 15 minutes, he said: "Undoubtedly this friend of whom you are thinking is a great man. He rules over the earth and the heavens and he has neither anxiety nor unhappiness, except over the religion of his grandfather. He is definitely alive and happy in every way. Soon he will appear and will rule over India, Asia, and the whole world." He then proceeded to narrate numerous qualities of this personality which made the author very happy, and he immediately presented him with 25 Indian rupees. The author then asked the astrologer to tell him when this king would appear. He made fresh calculations and said that in near future in about 25 or 30 years he would appear and conquer the whole world. (Note: No-one can say with certainty when Allah will be pleased to command the reappearance of the Imam (a.s.).)

Thus, even calculations of astrology have established the presence in concealment of the Imam Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.).

Muhakkike Tusi, an eminent Shia Ithna-asheri scholar, was once deeply troubled on a question, on the Unity of Allah, put to him by a naturalist. He made astrological calculation to determine where Imam Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) would be at that time, and discovered that he was in the Masjid-e-Kufa. So he immediately proceeded there from Najaf. He met the Imam (a.s.) and obtained a satisfactory answer to his problem.

The Imam (a.s.) asked him how he came to know that he was there, and he replied that it was through his calculation. Hazrat admonished him not to repeat this exercise, and he apologetically explained that it was only because of his intense anxiety that he undertook the calculation and vowed never to repeat it.

An English priest has published a book, *Forty Future Wonders* from the book of the Prophet Daniel on the wars, droughts and other signs that will appear in the last days of the world. The book has been so popular that it has already run into fifty editions. In the 16<sup>th</sup> edition which was published in 1925 A.D. and which the (late) author had personally read, the priest writes “there will be a great war in the future, and only nine European countries will survive it. The tenth will be Syria whose king will probably be Muhammadan Mahdi. The Mahdi will be a strong opponent of Christianity. He will attack Europe and conquer it and eventually will conquer the whole world. However, he will reign for only seven years, and then Jesus will appear, and Christianity will spread throughout the world. Then, Jesus will rule the world for a thousand years.”

The (late) author has personally seen and read his extract in the 16<sup>th</sup> edition, but in the subsequent editions the name of Mahdi has been omitted altogether. The Christian priests must have been alerted that this name confirmed the truth of Islam and Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). However,

the deliberate omission of the Mahdi in itself implies their weakness. Whoever can still obtain a copy of the 16<sup>th</sup> edition will be able to ascertain for himself, the express mention in it of Imam Mahdi (a.s.).

That Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will rule the whole world is strong evidence of his reappearance. That his seven years reign will be followed by the spread of Christianity in the whole world by Jesus Christ — who would rule for a thousand years — is not a matter of any anxiety to the followers of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). It is our belief that Jesus will appear very soon after the appearance of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) and the only true religion, Islam, will spread throughout the world. Jesus never claimed to be the Son of God, nor taught the existence of more than one God or attribute any partnership to Him. Any one believing in one Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w.) is a Muslim. All believers of the Prophet Adam and the Prophets after him who adhered to their teachings and refrained from blasphemy and associating anyone with Allah in any manner were all Muslims. In the Holy Qur'an, in relation to the Prophet Ibrahim, Allah states, 'He has named you Muslims'. (22:78).

In *Zabur* (Psalms) revealed to Prophet Dawood (David) in the fourth verse of chapter 19, *Murmuuz*; is stated that in the last day of the world a personality would emerge who would have a continuous shade and shelter of a cloud over his head and who would spread equity and justice.

In the book of the Prophet Safyay in verse 9 in chapter 3, is stated, "Beware that in the last days of the world there will emerge a personality who will cause all men to worship God in a uniform way". (All will believe in Unity of Allah).

In the main Hindu book *Patankal* is stated, "Life on earth will be divided into four ages and in each age there will be four eras and in each era there will be four epochs of four thousand years each. The world will last for 256,000 years at the end of which a high personage will emerge. He will be the descendant of two great leaders; the last of the Prophets

(s.a.w.) and his successor whose name will be Bishan. The name of this personage will be 'the guide' (the Mahdi) and he will be an apostle of RAM (God). He will rule the earth like the previous Prophets and will manifest many miracles. Whoever will swear allegiance to him will gain salvation. His life will be very long and he will conquer the whole world. He will destroy the house of idols of *Somnath* and on his command the huge idol *Jagannath* will become vocal, and then collapse. Eventually on his command that idol will be destroyed and so will all other idols wherever they will be found."

In the Hindoo religious book called *Nasak* it is stated, "When the world will reach its last days there will be a kingdom in which justice and truthfulness will prevail. Treasures hidden beneath oceans, mountains or earth will surface, will become vocal and reveal the secrets of the earth and the heavens".

In the religious book of fire-worshippers, called *Zand Vapazand* which is regarded by them as a book revealed to the Prophet Zardosh there is a reference to Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). He is also mentioned in their other books *Kosab* and *Azawasn*.

Hakim Jamasap in his book referring to the last Prophet (s.a.w.) and his successors states, 'A Prophet will be born in the midst of Arabian mountains, will ride on a camel and will sit and eat with slaves (he will not be arrogant). He will wipe out all other religions, conquer Iran and invalidate the religion of fire-worshippers. The last successor of the Prophet (s.a.w.) who will be a descendant of the daughter of the Prophet (s.a.w.) will on command of Allah reign over the whole world. His kingdom will spread from Mecca and will last to the Day of Judgement. He will arrest and imprison the enemy of God, *Aharman* (Iblis). Angels from the heavens will attend upon him. He will revive the dead who were virtuous as well as the wicked. He will reward the virtuous and punish the wicked. He will revive the father of Hazrat Khizr, the father of Hazrat Elias, Mahras, Lafvas, the father of Ahasatalalis, Asaf bin

Barkhia, Sam, Hazrat Noah, Shamasun and Solan Shamueel. He will also revive Namrood, Firaun, Hamman and incinerate them etc.”

Much has been written about the king of the last days of the world in numerous books of the previous Prophets as well as in the Holy books of the Torat, Injeel and Zabur and also in the numerous religious books of Non-Muslims. Moreover Christians, Jews, fire worshipers and Hindus all await a guide; the Christians await Jesus and the Jews await Moses. Thus the whole world await a ‘Reformer’ who would eradicate from the face of the earth evil, dissension, wars, calamities and apostacy and spread justice and equity. This almost universal belief in the Awaited establishes that all those who have hitherto claimed to be the Mahdi were impostors. They have not been able to achieve what is expected of the true Mahdi to accomplish.

Bayasjee has written a book *Bothiran Sandhram* and Gosai TuIsidasji has translated it into a Hindi dialect. In chapter 12 of the translation at page 212 he states, “I shall not state anything of my own except what is truly stated in the *Ved* and *Purana*. In ten years, power will be over and none will ever attain that position again. In its place a star will shine on a very Holy spot on earth. Impossible miracles will be manifested and an accomplished vicegerent of God will be installed on earth. Whoever will desire to attain the pleasure of God will be obliged to follow Muhammad. Then an accomplished person will emerge and the world will call him Mahdi. After him all power will be his.” (Quoted from Sunni monthly *Molvi* - Dehli - Rasool, Safar-Rabiul Awwal, 1352 A.H.).



## TRADITIONS ON THE PERIOD OF WAITING AND ITS TRIALS

1. Hazrat Imam Raza (a.s.) has said that in the Qur'an Allah has stated about waiting: "Wait then; I too with you will be of those who wait." (7:71).
2. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has stated "Do await the emergence of the Imam for whoever will await our orders will be granted by Allah the status of a martyr rolling in his own blood."
3. Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) has stated, "An era will come when the Imam will be in concealment from his followers and they will have to endure sufferings from their enemies for which Allah will reward them infinitely. On the Day of Judgement they will be rewarded with the good tidings that because of their faith in their concealed Imam their sins will be forgiven and their virtues accepted. It is because of them that the world enjoyed rain and crops but for them, Allah would have meted instant punishment to the disobedient."
4. Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) has also stated that a believer who awaits his concealed Imam with full faith in his Imamatus will die with the reward of having lived with Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.).
5. It is reported by Abdulhamid Wasti that he complained to the Fifth Imam Hazrat Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) that the constant waiting, day and night, for the eventual saviour affected concentration on daily affairs. Hazrat replied, "Whoever reposes trust in Allah to grant deliverance through the saviour attains it from Him. May Allah bestow His mercy on the faithful who maintains patience in matters appertaining to us and spreads our traditions (religious guidance) to other believers."

Abdulhamid then asked what his fate would be if he died before the

emergence of the Imam (a.s.). Hazrat replied that whoever cherishes the desire that upon the emergence of the Imam (a.s.) he should assist him, including fighting Holy wars with him, will attain the reward of a person who actually lived with him and fought under his command.

6. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said to his companions, “During the last days of the world there will be believers, the virtues of a single of whom will exceed the virtues of 25 of you.” The companions protested that they were his companions and had fought in Holy wars with him but the Prophet (s.a.w.) replied, “In the last days of the world the believers will be surrounded by their enemies and beset with calamities imposed by their enemies, yet they will remain so true to their faith that even you would not be able to match them.”
7. The Fifth Imam, Hazrat Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) addressing the Shias and friends of the Progeny of the Prophet (s.a.w.) said, “Remember you will undoubtedly be tested in the steadfastness of your faith which may slip away without you being aware of it. Just as kohl when applied in the eyes makes its presence felt but fades away without one being conscious of it, similarly there will be some amongst you who in the morning will be faithful but by nightfall will have lost faith without even realising it.”
8. Hazrat Imam Ja‘far Sadiq (a.s.) stated, “When the wicked and the infidels will have made public their non-belief and the virtuous will have declared their faith and that there will be a clear difference between believers and non-believers and people will have lost hope and despaired then will the Imam (a.s.) reappear.”

The meaning of this tradition is that there will be a severe test. Those indifferent towards their religion and hence negligent in the performance of prayers or observing fast or other religious commands, engrossed in worldly pleasures, selfish and oppressive will be manifested as non-believers. On the other hand, the God-fearing adherents to prayers,

fasting and other religious commands, virtuous, repentant of their sins, kind, obliging and firm in their faith will succeed despite all the trials.

9. Moreover Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) said to Abu Basir that two-thirds of those professing to be followers of Hazrat Hujjat (a.s.) will turn away from the religion. (Because of their sins and carelessness they will despair and will begin to question that if the Imam is in concealment why does he not reappear? Thus they will lose faith in the Imam (a.s.)).
10. Hazrat Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) has urged that efforts must be enhanced to narrate to the faithful and those willing to hear the traditions on the signs of the last days of the world, the disappearance, concealment and reappearance of the Imam (a.s.) but that the non-believing be left alone.
11. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has stated, "You believers will be like bees. The worldly men will regard you weak, lowly and unworthy. But they will not realise your qualities. Remember your Imam will not re-emerge until you spit on each other and call each other liars as a result of the differences amongst you. In such days of trials and tribulations very few of you will remain firm in faith."

## THE SIGNS PORTENDING THE LAST DAYS OF THE WORLD

The present time, the last days of the world, is characterized by infidelity, injustice, evil and oppression. Man is engrossed in dissension, wars, violence and atheism. Yet it is known as the time of modern civilization, of education, research, inventions and enlightenment. Other communities appear to have progressed on this path of advancement and education and our leaders, in following their example, are urging us to emulate them. However, the progress and development in this era are lost in the dark midst of dissension, wars and oppression.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has stated that in the last days of the world man will lose his senses and will be perverted in his thought, every good thing will appear bad and evil, while innovation (in religion) (*bid'at*), immorality and immodesty will be admired.

There are many traditions narrating the signs of the last days of the world. Many have already appeared and others continue to appear. The more significant ones will appear just before the emergence of the Imam (a.s.). A few of these traditions are cited:-

1. The Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated, "An era will come when
  - a) men will value a scholar (*Aalim*) by his good dress (they will go by the external splendour of the scholar; the true scholars will be poor and remain unheeded);
  - b) men will be eager to listen to the Qur'an for its melodious recitation (Qur'an is heard on radio, tape recorders and cassettes in melodious tunes) ;
  - c) men will worship Allah only during the Holy month of Ramadhan (after that month Qur'an, fasting, supplication will all be forgotten)

When such time comes, man will suffer from the yoke of oppressive rulers."

2. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has stated, “In the last days of the world the King of Iran will be deposed. He will seek assistance from infidels. His calf will be thin (while his body obese). His name will be Ahmed.”  
(He was the last Iranian King of the Qajar dynasty. On being overthrown he took refuge in Paris and died there. Even his name was predicted over 1300 years ago by Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and this tradition was reported centuries ago.)
3. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has also stated that in the last day of the world Muslims would wear coloured cloths around their necks (neck-ties).
4. He also stated, “Tehran will be like a prison and a hell for the faithfuls while it will be a heaven for the non-believers. Not a trace of Islam will be left there. Men will assume feminine behaviour and women will discard veils. They will roam freely in bazaars over-crowding them.”
5. Students in colleges will be of two types:
  - a) those studying philosophy and
  - b) those studying languages of infidels (English, French. Russian)
6. Hazrat Imam Ja‘far Sadiq (a.s.) has stated. “When countries become engulfed in calamities, dissension, and evil, migrate to the Iranian city of Qum which will be saved from such calamities. The fountain of knowledge will shift from Najaf to Qum which will be the centre for religious learning. Close to the time of reappearance of the Imam (a.s.), Qum will be the centre of Islamic learning.”
7. The current trend of women moving around unabashed without veils and fully adorned is one of the main signs of the last days of the world. There are many traditions to this effect and a few of them are quoted:
  - a) Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has stated, “Women will become shameless. They will associate with men other than their husbands. Their hair

- styles will be such that they will resemble the projected hump of a camel. Such women will never enter Paradise.”
- (What was foretold by the Prophet (s.a.w.) and Imams (a.s.) 1300 years ago is so obvious today proving the truthfulness of the traditions and of Islam).
- b) He also stated “In the last day of the world women will strut in bazaars without veil and will exhibit to men other than their husbands, their adornments and beauty. Indeed such women are estranged from religion. They are evil, steeped in luxuries, regard prohibited acts as lawful and will forever dwell in Hell.”
  - c) He then asked the question, “Are you not ashamed? Have you lost your sense of modesty and indignation that you countenance your women in bazaars unveiled?”
  - d) Then the Hazrat advised his son Imam Hasan (a.s.), “O my son, do not seek advice from women, keep them in veil, do not permit them to go out, let no man other than the husband be familiar to them, and do not be submissive to them.”

In the light of the above traditions we need to examine the current trend of fashion and promiscuity and in particular the custom of introducing one’s wife to friends. As an Urdu poet states, “The beat from the band of the present time is introduce your wife to your friends.”

8. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated, “In the last days of the world people will remain human only in appearance, will be devilish at heart, blood-thirsty, murderous, drowned in evil and sins and will regard what is permitted in religion as forbidden and what is forbidden in religion as permissible. The faithful will be considered weak and dishonourable while the evil and irreligious will be considered kind. None will be able to enjoy others towards virtue. Those times will be afflicted with drought, calamities and tyrants.”
9. The Prophet (s.a.w.) added, “In the last day of the world wealth will be worshipped, (God will be remembered only in hunger and

trouble), men will idolize women, wealth will be the criterion for honour and respect and faith will remain but in name. Only lip service will be paid to Islam. Qur'an will only be recited on formal occasions and will not be practised. Mosques will be full of worshippers but their hearts will bear enmity and jealousy against one other. Most of the scholars (ulema) will be the worst of men and greedy of worldly possessions. In those times the world will be afflicted with drought, calamities and oppression.”

10. Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) revealed to his companions the following signs of the last days.
- a) The righteous and the truthful will die in great numbers while tyranny and oppression will prevail;
  - b) The Qur'an will be interpreted in accordance with one's own wishes;
  - c) Infidelity and falsehood will gain strength;
  - d) Evils and sins will be perpetrated in public yet there will be none to stop them (The faithful will be helpless);
  - e) Homosexuality and lesbianism will be common;
  - f) False praising will abound;
  - g) The youth will insult the elders;
  - h) People will spend their wealth for evil purposes and to gain popularity and yet there will be none to arrest these activities;
  - i) Worship of the faithful and their virtues will be scorned and themselves shunned;
  - j) Drinks will be consumed and sins committed in public and such evils will be admired;
  - k) It will not be possible to enjoin towards virtue or to extend kindness but all avenues will open for evils and sins;
  - l) Women will convene and hold meetings (i.e. committees' societies and clubs);
  - m) The wealthy, though irreligious, will be honoured more than the truly faithful;
  - n) Interest will be openly charged and fornication and sin applauded;

- o) Men will act according to their own thinking and contrary to the dictates of the Qur'an and traditions;
- p) Huge donations will be made only for popularity and for causes contrary to the commands of Allah but wealth will not be spent in fulfilment of His commands (needy kith or kin will not be assisted nor religious taxes paid);
- q) Women will dominate men;
- r) Listening to the Qur'an, traditions and religious discourse will be uninteresting but there will be eagerness for frivolous activities and discussion (like plays, cinemas, radio and speeches) ;
- s) Men will abound in affluence but will not make the payments ordered by Allah;
- t) Men, when informed of any command of Allah, will immediately say, "This is not logical to me";
- u) Disobedience to parents will be common; sons will defame their parents and make false allegations against them; they will eagerly await and rejoice the death of their parents;
- v) Men will regret the passing of a day in which no sin was committed and will regard it a day wasted;
- w) Alms and charity will be given only on recommendation of others (charity will not be made to the needy for pleasure of Allah);
- x) People will be inclined more towards the world, its grandeur, comfort and wealth and they will be abundantly wealthy.

When you notice all these signs seek refuge from Allah; beware of His punishment, sudden death and calamities”.

11. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated, “Very soon my followers will desire five things and forget five:
- a) They will desire worldly life and forget the hereafter;
  - b) They will desire wealth and forget the account they will have to render on the Day of Judgement;
  - c) They will desire women and forget the houris in Heaven;
  - d) They will desire skyscrapers and forget the grave;
  - e) They will become self-centred and forget Allah.”



12. Hazrat Muhammad Hanaffiya asked his father Hazrat Ali (a.s.) as to when Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) would reappear. He answered, "He will not reappear until the world will have been flooded with calamities; brothers will have oppressed each other; a ruler of Kazwin in Iran will have ordered women to remove veils and move about unveiled. (Anyone who will oppose him will be killed and whoever supports him will become an infidel)."
13. On one occasion Hazrat Ali (a.s.) in a sermon from the pulpit of the Kufa Mosque declared, "I am the father of the Mahdi." Malike Ashtar asked when the Mahdi (a.s.) would reappear and he replied, "He will not reappear until those destined to perish will have perished, truth revealed, man will have carried heavy burden of sins (committed openly), worldly affairs will have been disrupted (by mischief, dissension, wars and miseries), the laws of Allah will have been concealed (true roles of the religion will not be disclosed out of fear of the infidels and the wealthy) virtuous, kind, respectable women will have been harassed and oppressed, innovations made in religion (*bid'at*) (new styles, new customs will arise contrary to religious rules); Khurasan damaged, forts destroyed, buried treasures unearthed, Iraq conquered, terrible oppression will have prevailed and blood will have been shed. Only then expect reappearance of the Mahdi (a.s.)." Having said so that Hazrat heaved a deep sigh.

The Kharjiit leader, Syweid Bin Nawfil stood up and cynically asked him if he had witnessed all this to have talked as he did.

The Hazrat gave him a fierce look, thereupon he screamed aloud and collapsed to the ground in pieces. The congregation trembled in fear. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) then asked, "What am I to be treated in jest and ridiculed?" All those present fell to his feet and sought his forgiveness and entreated him to continue with his sermon. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) then proceeded to mention many more signs.

## QADIANI: THE SECT OF AHMADIAS

About 75 years ago in the town of Qadian in Punjab one Gulam Ahmad Qadiani professed to be a prophet and the Mahdi.

His followers still exist in India. After the death of Gulam Ahmad his followers were divided into two branches; the Kadianis and the Mirzais. Gulam Ahmad was one more claimant to Mahdihood. To refute his claims numerous books have been written by both Shia and Sunni scholars and discussions have ensued which have exposed his hollow and irreligious claims. The purpose of this book is not to write extensively about him but only to demonstrate the truthfulness of the Imamatus of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) and this subject is being touched upon in passing only to illustrate the emptiness of the Qadiani claims and the religious rulings on them.

Gulam Ahmad Gulam Murtaza Atta Muhammad died in Qadian in 1908 at the age of 73 years. He was a Mogul and came from Samarkand in Iran. He made numerous claims. He first posed as a reformer of religion, then as the Mahdi and eventually as a Prophet. By this claim to Prophethood he and his followers have apostated on Islam for all Muslims regard the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) as the final Prophet. In 1898 Mirza addressed certain questions to Sunni scholars and from the replies he obtained, the Imamatus, concealment and reappearance of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) are clearly established. Yet Mirza had the audacity to claim to be the Mahdi, Jesus, Krishna and a prophet.

Munshi Muhammad Abdulla in his book *Shahadate Qur'any* published the question of Mirza Gulam Ahmad Qadiani and the replies he received from the Sunni scholars:

**QUESTION:** "Relying on traditions, the Sunni sect bears firm conviction that in the last days of the world a Mahdi will appear, who will be a descendant of Fatimah (a.s.) the daughter of the Prophet (s.a.w.) and in

every way the true successor of the Prophet (s.a.w.). If a Sunni disclaimed such a conviction how is he to be treated? Will he remain a Sunni or is he to be regarded a liar, distant from religion and an infidel? This question must be answered by the leading scholars and jurists of the religion.

Dated 29<sup>th</sup> December, 1898, 15<sup>th</sup> Shabaan 1316 A.H. Mirza Gulam Ahmad".

**ANSWER:** "All Sunni are unanimous in their conviction that in the last days of the world a descendant of Fatimah (a.s.) the daughter of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) by the name of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will emerge. He will spread Islam on the entire surface of the earth and will rule over the whole world in spiritual and secular affairs. Any person who does not bear such conviction will suffer the punishment directed by the verse of the Holy Qur'an that, 'Those who oppose Allah and His Prophet will taste the fire'. He will have gone astray; indeed completely astray."

Signed by Abdul Haq Gazanwy (Sunni scholar) and after him 19 Sunni scholars sent their replies and some of whom have categorically stated that a person without such faith will end in Hell.

A Shia Mujtahid in Lahore Janab Molvi Sayyid Ali Hairy, has confirmed the correctness of the reply that a person without such a faith is an infidel.

Gulam Ahmad was himself a Sunni and accepted the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) as the final Prophet. As all Muslims do, he also believed and accepted that Jesus is alive in Heaven and has even stated so in his book *Barahin-e Ahamadiyya* after claiming Mahdihood. It is not intended to go into details of this topic except to mention the dishonourable language he has used for Islam, Qur'an, and Islamic beliefs and how the prophecies that he has made turned out to be totally false proving the mendacity of his claim to Mahdihood.

### THE BELIEFS OF MIRZA GULAM AHMAD

1. After his public claim to Mahdihood, Mirza published a book

*Barahin-e Ahamadiyya* in which in the footnote at page 498, he stated ‘This verse is for Jesus who will reappear in this world’.

Moreover, his son and successor Mirza Mahmood in the 27<sup>th</sup> June 1916 issue of the monthly Urdu publication *Afzal* wrote that, ‘in the past it has been the unanimous belief of all Muslims including eminent elders that Jesus is still alive. Even my father Mirza Gulam Ahmad held this conviction to the extent that for ten years after becoming the Mahdi he retained and reiterated the faith that Jesus is still alive and is in Heaven’.

For 1300 years all Muslims, indeed even the Prophet (s.a.w.) himself, all the Imams and scholars, have accepted that Jesus is alive. However, 10 years after Mirza became the self proclaimed Mahdi he received a revelation that Jesus had died and that he himself was Jesus (by incarnation!?) Allah is said to have revealed to him, “the previous Jesus has died and is not to return and you are the Jesus, the son of Mary, who has reappeared.”

Mirza himself was a scholar and well versed in the traditions. Despite his knowledge he discarded a conviction firmly held by all the Muslim for 1300 years and by himself for a number of years and declared himself Jesus contrary to the verses of the Holy Qur’an and the traditions without any scintilla of evidence or proof to support him. It was patently against reason to denounce as an infidel anyone holding faith in the living Jesus. It show only how irrational he had become.

2. Mirza stated in the newspaper *Badar*, in the issue of 5<sup>th</sup> March 1908, “It is our claim that we are the Rasool or the Prophet. Whoever is thus addressed by Allah must be superior to others by the tribe to which he belongs and in his qualities and must also be a person of numerous prophecies and such qualifications are found in us.”
3. In *Shahadate Qur’any Ala Kizbe Krishna Qadiayani* published in Lahore by the Islamiyya Steam Press the following strange and

fanciful views of Mirza are printed:-

- i) Mirza writes in *Izala-e Awham* at Page 689, “Some of the revelations proclaimed by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) also proved false.”
- ii) In *Barahin-e Ahamadiyya* at page 556 he writes “Allah has kept Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w.) under my control and makes revelation to me through him.”
- (iii) In a book called *Izala* at page 25 he writes, “Allah has revealed the Qur’an but a number of verses in it contain matters contrary to etiquette and any listener can understand that such expressions are bad. Allah has cursed infidels in such verses. Uncalled for and filthy expression have been used for Walid bin Mugheira.”
- (iv) In *Anjame Atham*, at page 51, he writes “Mary and his son Jesus cannot surpass Kaushalya (the mother of the king Ramchandra).”
- (v) In the same book, at page 80, he states, “The Muslims believe that Jesus will return but Allah has revealed to me that he is dead and that I myself am the Jesus.”
- (vi) At page 691, in *Izala-e Awham* he writes, “I am the Jesus, son of Mary. The Christians are the Dajjal and the railway is the donkey of Dajjal.”
- (vii) In the monthly magazine *Alhakam*, Vol. IV, in the issue of 17<sup>th</sup> June 1900, he claims, “Amongst you, I am the living Ali and yet you believe in the Ali who is dead.” (God Forbid)
- (viii) He writes in *Aeene Kamalate Islam*, at pages 564 - 65, “I have observed in a divine inspiration to me that I am God Himself. The spirit of Allah embraced me and then it contained me. As the spirit of God has entered into me, I have created the earth and the heavens”.

(ix) With regard to Imam Husayn (a.s.) he states “I have a thousand of such Husayns in my pocket.”

### THE PROPHECIES OF MIRZA QADIANI PROVEN FALSE

Mirza has published numerous prophecies in his book *Ilhamae Mirza* and most of them have proved false. A few of them are briefly illustrated here:

1. “I make a prophecy to vouch for my truthfulness that Allah has revealed to me that I will marry the elder daughter of Mirza Ahmad Beg. When this prophecy comes true a number of infidels will embrace Islam and many of those who have gone astray will come to the right path.” (Ahmad Beg was the maternal cousin of Mirza).

He asked for the hand of Beg’s daughter in marriage and threatened that if it was refused the consequences for the girl would be bad and if she would be married to someone else, her husband would die within two and a half years and within 3 years the father of the boy would also die. Moreover a great calamity would befall his house etc. Yet Ahmad Beg disregarded all such threats and married his daughter to another person.

When Mirza noticed that his prophecy had proved false he declared another one: “Allah has revealed to me ‘eventually you will marry that girl and that as none can avert what is destined by Allah your enemies who ridicule you will be humiliated’”

Signed by the humble Gulam Ahmad, Gordaspur, dated 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1888 A.D.

He continued to issue many prophecies in this regard and eventually in his book *Shahadatul Qur’an* at page 4, he predicted that Ahmad Beg and his son-in-law would not survive after 21<sup>st</sup> August 1894. Mirza continued to issue threats in respect of this girl for 20 years on the strength of the revelations to him. At last in 1908 A.D. Mirza himself died. Not only did

he never manage to marry the girl, but at the time of his death the girl, her father and her husband all were alive, happy and healthy.

2. In another prophecy in *Jange Mukaddas* he writes, “If Athham Shakhs does not die and go to Hell in 15 months I am prepared to bear any punishment; degrade me, despise me, tie a rope around my neck, blacken my face and curse me worse than the devils.” However, the period passed and Athham did not die.
3. In his book called *Dafeul Bala* Mirza states that Qadian cannot be affected by a plague as a prophet of God resides there. However in a short time a severe plague seized the city resulting in the death of thousands of people including numerous followers of Mirza himself.
4. On 15<sup>th</sup> April, 1907 Mirza issued a pamphlet in which he announced that if his claim was true, one Mirza Sonullah (of Amritsar) would suffer a curse from God and would die during the lifetime of Mirza through plague or another calamity. He proclaimed that God would thus establish his truthfulness. However, Mirza himself died within a year on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1908 while Molvi Sonullah was alive and not only healthy but had not been ill at all.

A number of prophecies made by Mirza have thus proved mere bluffs but cannot all be dwelt upon at length in this book.

### **Mirza Qadiani as God, Wife of God and Son of God (May God Forbid)**

1. “God wishes to see your menstruation or some such other defiled or licentious matters. However Allah will reveal to you His own signs which will be continuously conveyed to you. You do not have a menstruation but you have borne a child who will have the status of the child of Allah.” (*Hakikatul Wahyi*, page 143, and *Arbaeen*, page 12).

2. One of his devout followers, Kazi Yar Muhammad, B.O.L., Pleader, states in his publication, *Islami Kubrani* tract No.24 (Riaz Hind Press Amritsar), "On one occasion the Awaited Masih (i.e. Mirza) disclosed that at the times of revelation his condition becomes like that of woman with Allah employing manly power over him." (it is obvious how a man exercises such manly power over a woman).
3. "His spirit was blown into me as was done to Mary and metaphorically I became pregnant. After a period, not exceeding ten months, I was converted, through revelation, from Mary to Jesus." (*Kishtie Nooh*, page 47).
4. "O Mirza, you are from our water (sperm) and others are of dry matter." (*Arbaeen*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, page 39).
5. "Then labour pain dragged Mary i.e. myself to a date palm." (*Kishtie Nooh*, page 47).
6. "At the time of revelations the Creator addressed me thus: Listen my son" (*Hakikatul Wahyi*, page 79, and *Arbaeen*, page 22)
7. "I dreamt that I am Allah and I am convinced that i really am Allah" (*Kamalate Islam*, page 64)
8. "God has said to me 'You are from me and I from you'." (*Hakikatul Wahyi*, page 74).

Thus Mirza became a woman - Mary - then pregnant - then God's son - God's father and eventually God himself. He is too bewildering to comprehend!



## **BABI, AZALI, BAHAI**

Just as in Punjab the Qadiani Mirza claimed Prophethood and Mahdi-hood, likewise in Iran, about 100 years ago, there sprung the new sects of Babi Azali and Bahai. The followers of these sects are still found in Iran and India today.

In this brief work it is not possible to set out the biographies of Babi Azali and Bahai and the refutations of their claims. However, their brief history and imposture will be touched upon.

The founder of Babism was Mirza Ali Muhammad Mirza Raza Shirazi. The off-shoot of this Babi sect were the Azali and Bahai sects. Mirza Yahya Subhe Azal and his brother Mirza Husayn Ali Bahai called Baab a prophet and a herald of good tidings as he had foretold about the two brothers.

Among Bahais, Baab is known as the survivor from the Prophet's family and Mirza Husayn Ali as the awaited Second Jesus.

After the death of Mirza Muhammad Baab his followers did not recognise or accept Mirza Yahya Subhe Azal or Mirza Husayn Ali Bahai. Mirza Yahya claimed that Baab had announced his appearance. Mirza Husayn Ali Bahai at first had owed allegiance to his brother Yahya and propagated his faith on his behalf but later turned away from him, proclaimed him a fake, denounced his claim as false and began to preach his own Bahai faith.

As a result of the friction between these two brothers much blood was shed. The followers of Mirza Yahya became known as Azali and the followers of Mirza Husayn Ali as Bahais.

At present, missionaries of Bahatism have spread all over Asia, Europe and Africa. How could the founder Mirza Husayn Ali claim himself a

recipient of revelations when he had himself changed his religion three times!!! At first he was a Shia Ithna-asheri, then he joined the Babi faith and then he became a missionary of the sect of his brother Mirza Yaha Azali. Finally he became the founder of his own faith and declared himself the awaited Mahdi. His sect could only be termed a branch of the Babi Sect.

*Al-Bayan* is said to be the book revealed to the founder of the Babi faith and its principles stated below have been extracted from it. It will be noticed that they are contrary to Islamic principles, the Qur'an and the traditions:

1. Congregational prayers are forbidden;
2. In the place of daily 17 rakaats of prayers there are only 9 with various changes in the prayers;
3. Fasting in the Holy month of Ramadan is forbidden and in its place fasts have been ordered for 19 days from the beginning of March (*Asrarul Akaeed*, page 83)
4. Ablution bath after (seminal or menstrual) discharge is not necessary;
5. Any woman other than one's real mother is not within prohibited degree of marriage.

Originally the founder of the Babi faith, Mirza Ali Muhammad Baab, was a Shia Ithna-asheri. He was a student of theology in Najaf, Iraq. He then went to Iran where he began to practise meditation. He used to stand bare-headed in the sun for hours. Consequently his brain dried out, he lost his mind and started making all sorts of false claims.

In 1844 A.D. Mirza Ali Muhammad initiated public propagation of his sect. He declared himself the Gate of Allah, the Tree of Toore, the Awaited Mahdi and eventually a prophet.

In an open debate with a Shia Scholar of Shiraz he publicly said "My utterances are more eloquent and superior than your Qur'an. My faith renders Islam invalid. Beware of your lives. I will shed the blood of all my opponents."

He ordered his disciples to add in the call for prayers, "I bear witness that Ali Muhammad is the remainder of God and I bear witness that Ali Muhammad is the gate of Allah."

Of the main supporters and propagators of the Babi faith was a woman Kurratal Ayn, a daughter of a religious scholar and married to a scholar. She was a shrewd lady, learned and eloquent. Her original name was Zarrin Taj. She was also very beautiful. As a result of matrimonial frictions with her husband she joined the Babi faith only to take revenge against her husband. She never missed an opportunity to exhibit her beauty to the followers of the Babi Faith by disturbing her veil. Once she climbed onto a pulpit before a huge audience, removed her veil from her face and roared: "Friends and foes! By the emergence of the Babi faith, Islam has been invalidated. All the injunctions on prayers, fasting, alms etc. are worthless. Beware! Hazrat Baab will soon conquer the whole world, there will be no other faith in the world except Babism and it is our duty to augment our numbers manifold.

"Remove and throw away the veil which separates you from your women. Remember that a woman is a fragrant flower of this worldly garden, so pick the flower, and derive delight from it. A flower is offered as a gift to friends. Avarice is the root of all evil. Do not hesitate to offer your wives to your friends for all such prohibitions have been removed in the Babi faith. Enjoy all the pleasures of this world for there is nothing after death."

From the above summary it will be clear how inane and irreligious the Babi faith is.

## BAHAISM

Bahaism was established in 1853 AD. by its founder Husayn Ali, known as Bahauallah, in Mazinderan, Iran after he broke away from the Babi faith. Terrible bloodshed followed. Eventually on the order of the Shah

of Nasiruddin, he was imprisoned and in 1868 he died in prison. He was succeeded by his son Abbas Efendi who established himself in the city of Aqqa in Palestine.

Professor Brown writes that Bahatism is a new face of Babism. Just as the Babis regard Ali Muhammad (Baab) as a high personality so the Bahais regard Mirza Husayn Ali Bahauddin as the greatest of men.

The Bahai believe that Ali Muhammad Baab merely heralded the tiding of the perfect emergence by Allah and this was accomplished by the birth of Bahauddin for Mirza Husayn Ali was god incarnate. Even Bahauddin himself so declared in prison when he said, "There is no god except I, the imprisoned and oppressed." What does one make of a god who gets imprisoned and oppressed? How can such a faith ever be associated with Islam in any way?

The first book of Bahai was *Aykaan* and after declaring himself god he published a second book *Aqdas* which is claimed to supersede all other scriptures. In *Aqdas* is stated, "Only your mothers are prohibited to you and decency alone forbids stating the rule on handsome boys." The meaning must be that association with all women except mothers is permitted and so is homosexuality.

As a result of the mischief of Babi-Bahai there was terrible bloodshed in Iran. Scholars, Ministers and eventually, the Shah of Iran, Nasiruddin Shah, were murdered. A considerable number of the Babis and Bahais present in Iran are mostly Jews of Hamadan, Kashan and Yazd who embraced the faith and also Parsees of Iran and India. A very few Muslims may have accepted the faith.

The main missionary of the Bahai faith, Mirza Hassan Niku, was the representative of Abbas Efendi, the son of Bahauddin. Awoli, who was given the high title of "Jibreel" by the Bahais and whose original Muslim name was Abdulhussein Ayni was also a main supporter of the faith.

Both of them as well as many leading missionaries of the faith, however, recanted and wrote books against the Bahai faith exposing its fallacies.

Avarah in *Kashful Hiyal* openly published photographs to show the emptiness of this faith and the political manoeuvres behind its propagation. It was only to strengthen opposition to Islam and Iran, that the Jews and Parsees supported the faith.

The claimant to Mahdihood in 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, Mirza Qadiani, was originally a Sunni scholar and preacher. Gradually he claimed Mahdihood, Prophethood and eventually Godship. Similarly Mirza Ali Muhammad Baab of Babism and Husayn Ali Bahauallah of Bahatism were originally Shias; each of them also founded a new sect and claimed to be the representatives of Baab, the Mahdi, Prophet and eventually God.

The forefathers of His Highness the Aga Khan came to India from Iran as Shia Ithna-asheries believing in the Twelve Imams, Fourteen *Ma'sumins* and observing prayers and fast and all the Shia rules. In the early days, the Aga Khans were known as *Peers*. In Jamatkhanas prayers and fasting were observed, Qur'an read and faith in Twelve Imams accepted. Gradually only in this century claims to Imamate, Mahdihood and incarnation began to be made. At first the Aga Khanis were known as the *Bhagat* while Shia Ithna-asheries as *Subhanyas*. Then the *Bhagats* turned themselves into Ismailis and for a few years now have been calling themselves Shia Imami Ismailias.

On the other hand, according to Shia Ithna-asheries, from the very inception of Islam, faith in the Qur'an, the Twelfth Imam, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.), his birth and disappearance, concealment and reappearance have been established through the Qur'an, traditions and history. Incontrovertible proofs for this statement and its elaboration are fully contained in this book.

Claimants to Mahdihood have appeared one after the other, presenting

before the world concepts contrary to and in opposition of the principal precepts of Islam as enunciated in the Qur'an and the traditions. Surely all these claimants cannot be true for the prophecy is for only one Mahdi!

The famous tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) that there will be Twelve Imams after him and the last will be Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) is cited in numerous Sunni authorities including:

1. *Kanzul Amal*, 6<sup>th</sup> Vol., page 198,
2. *Sunane Abi Dawood*, page 588;
3. *Jama-e Tirmizi*, page 269;
4. *Sahih Muslim*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vol, page 119;
5. *Sahih Bukhari*: Kitabul Fitan, Babul Istikhlaf, part 29, page 629.

Indubitably the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) must have proclaimed the tradition of the Twelfth Imam on the command of Allah Himself. So there must be only 12 successors to the Prophet (s.a.w.). Thus the belief of all those accepting more than twelve successors to the Prophet (s.a.w.) cannot be in accordance with the wishes of Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w.).

The following is a list of various claims to the succession of the Prophet (s.a.w.):-

1. The first line was of the *Khulafa-e-Rashidin* who were four in number and not twelve.
2. The second chain of claims to succession was of the Omayyads, who were fourteen.
3. The third series was of the Abbassides who were thirty seven.
4. The fourth lineage of Khalifas was of the Egyptian and Abbassids who were eighteen in all. Halaku Khan brought an end to the Abbasside caliphate in Baghdad and the King of Egypt proclaimed a prince from the Abbasside family as a Khalifa bringing the figure to eighteen.
5. The fifth series is of the Turkish Khalifas. The first Turkish Khalifa Sultan Salim conquered Egypt, terminated the Egyptian caliphate and commenced the Turkish chain. They were thirty in all when Mustafa

Kamal Pasha terminated this Caliphate and the Sunni Caliphate came to an end. Now there is no Sunni Khalifa on earth.

The claims of the other sects are: -

1. The Babi, Azali and Bahai sects who, however, have dissociated themselves from the Islamic doctrines and cannot be regarded under the fold of Islam any more.
2. Similarly, the Qadiani sect contradicts the fundamental Islamic belief and cannot be regarded as an Islamic sect.
3. However, the Bohra Ismaili community are Muslims. They believe in twenty one Imams to date and claim that their last Imam Tayyab, is in concealment. Thus their claim also exceeds twelve Imams.
4. Aga Khani Ismailies regard their present Imam as the 49<sup>th</sup> exceeding the number twelve by more than four times.
5. The Shia Ithna-asheries believe in exactly Twelve Imams (a.s.), precisely in accordance with the tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). The first of the Imams was Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and the Twelfth is Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) as has been reported in the five leading Sunni books mentioned above as well as in numerous other Sunni books. The name of each the Twelve Imams was specifically mentioned by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) himself. This fact is also authenticated in a number of famous Sunni books, for example,
  - i) Allama Sayyid Ali Hamdani in *Mawaddatul Qurba*, Bombay, Press page 34;
  - (2) *Arjahul Matalib*, Lahore Press, page 402;
  - (3) Allama Sheikh Suleman Kanduzi, the Islamic Sheikh of Istanbul, in his book *Yanabi ul Mawaddah*, Istanbul Turkish Press, page 445;
  - (4) Allama Muhaddis Jamaluddin in *Tarikhe Rawzatul Ahabab*, Vol. 3, page 27.

Apart from these, numerous other books have mentioned the exact names of the Twelve Imams (a.s.).

- (5) The forefathers of His Highness the Aga Khan, also believed in Twelve Imams as disclosed in their books of which mention has already been made in an earlier chapter.

## THE PLACES OF ABODE OF HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.) JAZIRATUL KHADHRA, ETC.

Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) is alive on this earth and grants succour when sought by his followers as has been elucidated elsewhere in this book. Many locations have been cited as his abode including Rabwa in Yemen, Zituwa etc as indicated In various supplications.

Besides, the *Jaziratul Khadhraa* (The Green Island) is a vast land in the Kingdom of the Imam (a.s.) and includes many large cities with a great population of Shias. It is governed by the sons of the Imam (a.s.). It consists of a group of islands so called and situated in the middle of the White Sea to the west of England. By the command of Allah a number of people have visited these islands. However, according to history books the precarious whirlpools surrounding the islands have rendered it hazardous for vessels or boats to reach them.

It is argued that if the islands are truly so big, then with the existing facilities of aeroplanes, steamers etc for mapping, the fact that they are not included in the Atlas of the world makes it difficult for one to accept their existence. Therefore, before going into the description of the places, it is proposed to answer this argument:-

1. America which is such a vast continent, the size of almost half the world, was only discovered in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Can it, therefore, be argued that it did not exist before the 18<sup>th</sup> century?
2. Discovery of countries covered with snow in the North Pole is continuing till today.
3. There are numerous islands in the oceans and yet only some of them are known to us.
4. There are a number of places historically proved to be in existence and yet their exact locations are not known and have not been mapped. For example, in North Africa there is an area occupied by the Agog-Magog known as *Sadde Sikandari*. The Prophet Suleiman built a huge fortress in North Africa and has hidden in it unfathomable treasure.



Then there is the abode of the Companions of the Cave (*Ashabe Kahaf*); the Garden of Eden and the paradise of Shaddad. Existence of all these places has been established by historical evidence, yet they are not accessible (except to a few people who have been able to visit them) nor have the aeroplanes of the civilized world been able to reach them.

5. Only a few years ago when the war was raging in Korea the following news was communicated by Reuters:-

“SOUTH POLE VENTURE AFTER KOREAN WAR”

“Rear Admiral Byrd who is 64 announced yesterday that he will lead another expedition to the South Pole as soon as the Korean war is over, He said:- ‘There is a land area in the Antarctic, as large as the United States, which so far as is known has never been seen by the human eye. It was imperative that this reservoir of natural resources did not fall into the hands of a potential enemy;’ he spoke of the possibility of using a hydrogen bomb or other nuclear devices to melt great areas of ice and snow so as to tap deposits”. (Reuters).

Thus it is evident that a number of places are yet to be discovered and so may be the *Jaziratul Khadhraa*, particularly when history has made mention of them centuries ago, and there is also evidence of those who have visited them including their names and the dates of their visits.

**PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT:** The great Shia Scholar Allama Majlisi (a.r.) and many other scholars have reported that Abul-Hasan Hammad bin Ahmad bin Tawlun came across such a vast treasure trove as none had acquired before. His greed, therefore, increased and he ordered that the Pyramids of Egypt be demolished and the treasure in them removed. His advisers attempted to dissuade him and cautioned him that whosoever would demolish the Pyramids, his life would be curtailed. However, he did not heed them and employed a thousand persons for the job. For one whole year the digging continued but nothing was found. So he ordered that the project be abandoned. On the last day of the project they saw a tunnel and decided to enter it. Before reaching the end of it, they found

a huge slab of marble on the ground. They dug it out. On it was an inscription in Greek which no Egyptian scholar could decipher. Finally Abi Abdulla Madini said he knew an old man in Ethiopia who was 360 years of age who would be able to decode this inscription. So a message was addressed to the King of Ethiopia requesting him to send the man over to Egypt but he replied that he was unable to ask a person of that age to undertake a journey which might result in his death. He suggested that whatever question was to be put to the old man be sent in writing. The marble slab was accordingly despatched to Ethiopia. The old man translated the writing into Ethiopian from which it was rendered into Arabic. It read that the marble was from:-

“Rayyan bin Doneta, the King of Egypt in whose time Nabi Yusuf (Joseph) was the prophet in Egypt. Aziz lived full 700 years and his father Rayyan for 1700 years and his grand-father Domag for 3000 years. It read: ‘I decided to see the source of the River Nile. I travelled with my companions for eighty years. Eventually I reached a place which was in total darkness. During the journey all my companions except 4000 men were killed and so I decided to return to Egypt and build two Pyramids in which I have buried my treasure, precious stones etc and have so stored them that for years the treasures and the books of learning will not be spoiled’.

Then followed a few verses whose translation is:

“My knowledge has given me insight into a few mysteries. However Allah knows best about hidden matters. I travelled for eighty years on a long journey till I reached darkness. Finally I was convinced that I would not be able to get any further and indeed, none would dare even reach that far again. So I retreated to my home in Egypt and built two Pyramids there leaving behind examples of my physical and mental strength and courage. They will never age or be spoiled. None will be able to open and reach the amazing deposits and treasures that I have placed in them and fortified them except that in the last day of the world an apostle of Allah will open my treasures and unearth my astonishing belongings. He will exhibit them in the Kaaba. Undoubtedly every act of his will be perfect

and he will enjoy dominance over every person. Through him the name of Allah will prevail over the whole world. When he will emerge 313 men will bear allegiance to him and whoever will oppose him will be killed. Then 99 men of Taif who will have died will be revived and will dig out my treasures which will be used in Holy wars. Thus I have hinted on this, marble. Undoubtedly all will perish and so will I.”

Having read this, the King Abul-Hassan Hammad was convinced that none would be able to dig out the treasure except Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). So he returned the slab in its original place.

Within a short period of twelve months Hammad was killed while in his inebriated sleep, by one of his slaves, Taher.

**THE TREASURE STORED BY NABI SULELMAN  
IN THE LEAD FORTRESS BUILT BY HIM  
(MADINATUNNAHAS)**

*Madinatunnahas* is one of the greatest wonders of the world. It was built by the Prophet Suleiman in East Africa in Andolusia with the help of Jinn by melting lead. It is twelve square miles in area and the walls are seventy five feet high. He stored fabulously valuable treasures in it. There is a hint about it in the Holy Qur’an, “and WE made a fountain of molten lead to flow out for him; and of the jinn there were those who worked under him by the command of his Lord.” (34:12)

On the command of Allah a stream of lead began to flow in that area and the jinn used the lead to build the fortress. During the reign of the Omayyad Khalifa, Abdul Malik bin Marwan, a person managed to reach this fort. (It was the will of Allah that he should reveal upon the Omayyads and the Muslims of that age and those yet to be born His signs and the status of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.)). This person narrated about it to the Khalifa who instantly ordered his governor in Andolusia to undertake a search for this fort and report to him about it.

The Governor set out on this expedition. He reached the fort but could not enter it. Peculiar sounds were emanating from inside the fort. Near it was a lake with a constant high tide and its water bubbling like boiling water. The Governor ordered divers into it who brought out round vessels of tin and lead. On them was a seal. The Governor ordered the vessels to be broken and from them emerged images on horseback and on foot screaming "O Prophet of Allah! we seek your refuge." The governor was convinced that they were disobedient jinns who had been imprisoned by the Prophet Suleiman.

The Governor gave a detailed report to the Khalifa. He also added that he had complied with his orders to proceed to the fort despite advice from the learned men against such a course as none had managed to get to the fort. Alexander the Great attempted to reach the fort and sent his men in search of it, but after a long period they returned unsuccessful. So Alexander decided to give up. Yet the Governor had set out fully equipped. He had to undergo great difficulties and even the supply of food they carried was exhausted. Yet he reached the fortress but failed to enter it. The wall of the fortress was seventy five feet high made of lead and on it was a writing in Arabic which he ordered his men to take down and sent a copy to the Khalifa. They were Arabic verses in eloquent grandeur, the essence of which is:

"No human being can live forever. If any powerful and honourable person could have survived eternity then undoubtedly the Prophet Suleiman would have attained a very long life. Allah made a stream of lead to flow for me and I ordered a community of the Jinn to construct for me out of it a fortress that would stand to the Day of Judgement and would not be ravaged by age or time. I ordered the walls to be built high, fortified with molten lead and to store in it my vast treasure so that despite passage of time not even a particle of the treasure be spoiled. Surely the pomp of no King lasts forever.

"The end of every King is to lie solitary under the ground. The same will be my end. So let men beware that the eternal kingdom is only of Allah.

Now after my death there will come a time when from the family of Adnan and Hashim the best of men will be born. Allah will endow him with miracles, His signs and Prophethood and he will be the guide of all the creation on earth. He will have the keys to all the treasures of the entire world and his successors will also have such control over the world. They will be Twelve, all of whom will be vicegerents of Allah on earth. The last of them will appear by the command of Allah. His name will be proclaimed aloud in the heaven and this high personage will open my this fort and its treasures.”

When Abdul Malik bin Marwan had read the letter, the messenger who had brought the letter, Talib Bin Mudrik, added that he had personally visited the fort with the Governor and had personally read the inscription on the wall of the fort. Hearing this the Khalifa asked Muhammad bin Shahab Zohri who was present in the court and was one of the companions of the Fourth Imam (a.s.) and a friend of the family of the Prophet (s.a.w.) what he had to say. He answered that the fort was under the control of the jinns who prevented any entry into it. The Khalifa then asked him who the Mahdi (a.s.) mentioned in the verses would be but Zohri requested the Khalifa not to pose that question to him. However the Khalifa insisted on an answer stating to him this was a very important matter and that Zohri should fearlessly disclose what he knew regardless of whether it would displease the Khalifa for he was keen to know the answer.

Then Zohari narrated that Hazrat Ali bin Husayn (the Fourth Imam (a.s.)) had informed him that the Mahdi would be the descendant of Fatimah (s.a.) the daughter of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). The Khalifa Abdul Malik interrupted him, and stammeringly said “You are both liars. The Mahdi will be a descendant of Omayya.” Zohri asked him to obtain confirmation of what he had stated from Hazrat Ali bin Husayn himself but the Khalifa declined saying it was not necessary. He then whispered to Zohri, “Beware, none should come to know the facts about the fortress and the writings on it.” Zohri promised that he would not repeat the facts to anybody.

Andolusia is on the map of Africa. The English have been to that country but have not succeeded in reaching the fortress. If they had found it they would have left no stone unturned to acquire the treasures. So it is no wonder that the *Jaziratul Khadhraa* and numerous other places have remained concealed from human reach. Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.s.) has many abodes; yet they are beyond the perception of the ordinary man except the members of his household and very close attendants. Even when he comes to the aid of people he is not recognisable. After he has rendered help and has disappeared from sight the circumstances and the miraculous rendering reveal that the help was from the Imam (a.s.) and cause grief that one was not able to identify him. In the Holy month of Ramadhan he sometimes attends the mosque at Kufa, sometimes in Najaf and sometimes in Kerbala.

On the occasion of every Hajj he performs it in Mecca. However some of his places of residence have been mentioned in various books; for example, there are large cities under his rule in the group of islands known as *Jaziratul Khadhraa* in the White Sea and which can be reached after a voyage by a sailing ship of fifteen to twenty days from the north-west coast of Africa. The names of these cities are given as:

1. Mubaraka whose governor is Hazrat Tahir, a son of the Imam (a.s.) and the capital of this Island is a city called Zahera;
2. Raequa where the governor is the Second son of the Imam (a.s.) called Hazrat Qasim;
3. Safiya under the governorship of the son of the Imam (a.s.) called Hazrat Ibrahim;
4. Zaloom where the governor is Hazrat Abdul Rehman, also a son of the Imam (a.s.);
5. Panatis whose governor is the son of the Imam (a.s.), Hazrat Hashim.

Apart from these five Islands the Hazrat also has abodes in various solitary places in Yemen and Iraq where also a few believers have reached him and their accounts are given elsewhere in this book.

## NARRATIONS ABOUT THE ISLANDS

Sayyid Muhammad Shafti Rishti has recommended that during the concealment of the Imam (a.s.) believers should endeavour constantly to remember him as he is more loving and caring to them than their most affectionate parent. Persistent efforts must be made to do what would please him. He writes that he constantly beseeched him to show him the *Jaziratul Khadhraa*, the White Sea and his other kingdoms where he and his other sons rule. He narrates;

“Once on the eve of Ghadir, which fell on Friday eve (Thursday night) I was strolling after my midnight prayers in the garden of my house in the Bedabab bazaar in Isfahan. Suddenly I encountered an impressive Sayyid dressed in the usual attire of a Muslim scholar. After greeting me he asked, ‘You wish to see the *Jaziratul Khadhraa* to strengthen your own conviction and the faith of others’. I humbly replied ‘My Lord, I am very anxious to see them’.

“He asked me to hold his hand, close both my eyes and recite blessings on the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and his Progeny (*Salawat*) 7 times. I did so. I could feel the gust of high winds as I was flying towards the sky. In a while, he asked me to open my eyes and admire Allah’s power of creation. When I opened my eyes I found myself in a beautiful city with wide roads and buildings close to each other. Streams of water were flowing all around and there were beautiful gardens full of varieties of trees heavily laden with fruits. It appeared a replica of Paradise. He then directed me to a mosque in the opposite garden and informed me that people had already congregated there for dawn prayers which would be led by Abdul Rehman, a seventh generation descendant of the Imam (a.s.). He asked me to say my prayers behind him and that he would meet me after prayers. I proceeded to the mosque. What a wondrous mosque it was! As I entered, I found that people had already lined up for prayers that were to be led by a luminous personality already in the *mihrab*. Wading through the full congregation, I approached him, offered my respects and kissed his hands. He welcomed me warmly and said that

Allah had blessed me to get me to that mosque. I asked him a few complicated questions that had troubled me for long and he instantly provided me with most satisfactory answers. Soon it was time for prayers and I too lined up.

After the prayers it dawned on me that I led prayers in an Isfahan mosque and people there would be waiting for me and would be disappointed. No sooner had these words been uttered by me, the Sayyid who had brought me from Isfahan was next to me, asked me to hold his hand and close my eyes. In a moment I found myself in the mosque in Isfahan. The people there had already lined up waiting for me. I proceeded to lead the prayers. I never saw that Sayyid again.”



## TRADITIONS ON THE REAPPEARANCE OF THE IMAM HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.) AND SIGNS HERALDING IT

All Sunni books mention traditions on the reappearance of the Imam (a.s.). This is proof that the current Imam (a.s.) is alive because it is only a person who is alive but concealed who can reappear and not one yet to be born.

1. It is stated in the second volume of *Tarikhe Khamis*, “when the Mahdi, Muhammad bin Hasan Askari will reappear, the angel will proclaim his reappearance. He is the Khalifa appointed by Allah and in his age goats will graze fearlessly alongside wolves and children of men will hold snakes and scorpions and play with them.”
2. In *As’afurraghabin* at page 140, Sheikh Muhyyuddin quoting from the Arabic book *Futuhat* writes, “There is no doubt that Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.s.) will reappear but at a time when the world will have been filled with tyranny, oppression, injustice and sins and eradicating them all he will replace them with justice and equity.

He will be a descendant of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) by his daughter Fatimah (a.s.) in the order that her son Imam Husayn will have a son Ali (a.s.) who will have a son Muhamad Baqir (a.s.) who will have a son Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) who will have a son Musa (a.s.) who will have a son Ali Raza (a.s.) who will have a son Muhammad Taki (a.s.) who will have a son Ali Naqi (a.s.) who will have a son Hasan Askari (a.s.) whose son will be the Muhammad Mahdi (a.s.) and who will receive allegiance in the Holy Ka’ba.”

3. Ibne Abbas reports in *Faraid us-Simtayn* from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), “There are 12 *Hujjats* of Allah, first of whom is Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and the last of whom is my son Mahdi (a.s.). The Prophet Jesus will descend from the heavens and will say his prayers behind Mahdi

(a.s.). The whole world will be lit up with the Light of Allah and the rule of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will spread from the East to the West of the world.

(The above mentioned three traditions are all cited in Sunni books) .

These Sunni books also prove that when Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will reappear he will establish Islam as the sole religion in the world and spread justice and that he will be the son of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.). All those who hitherto have claimed to have been the Mahdi (Mirza Qadiani and others) and those who claim to be the current Imam and the Mahdi have not been able to arrest the tide of injustice and oppression in this world in any way at all.

### **THE SIGNS HERALDING THE REAPPEARANCE OF IMAM MAHDI (A.S.)**

The signs that will herald the reappearance of Imam Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) and the situation that will prevail in the last days of the world have already been discussed. Now we examine the definite signs that will appear just before his re-emergence.

1. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has stated that just before the emergence of the Imam Mahdi (a.s.), nine definite signs will appear:
  - (i) Dajjal will emerge;
  - (ii) A loud voice will be heard from the sky;
  - (iii) Sufiani will appear and wage a fierce war;
  - (iv) The army of Sufiani will be swallowed by a sudden opening of the land between Mecca and Medina;
  - (v) A revered pious Sayyid will be murdered in Mecca;
  - (vi) A Sayyid descendant of Imam Hasan (a.s.) will emerge with his army;
  - (vii) An image of a man will appear in the sky opposite the sun;
  - (viii) There will be two eclipses in the Holy month of Ramadhan contrary to the normal order and calculation; there will be an eclipse of the sun on the 15<sup>th</sup> day and an eclipse of the moon on the last eve;

(ix) on three occasions a loud voice from the sky will be heard in the Holy month of Ramadhan.

These signs have been discussed in greater detail elsewhere-

2. Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) has stated that there will be eclipses of the sun and moon contrary to the usual order and prior to this happening two thirds of the Muslims will have become infidels.
3. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has stated that before the emergence of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) there will be wide-spread bloodshed and death by plague and twice ants will appear.

## THE ONE-EYED INFIDEL DAJJAL

Once Hazrat Ali (a.s.) at the conclusion of his sermon in the Mosque of Kufa asked the people to put any questions to him before he disappeared from amongst them.

Sa;sa bin Sawhan stood up and asked “O Commander of the faithfuls, when will Hazrat Hujjat reappear?” Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied, “Firstly there are many signs presaging his emergence and those signs will appear one after the other. Listen carefully to me relating those signs and remember them: People will destroy the concept of prayer, will misappropriate deposits made with them, will regard lying as lawful, will take interest, will be corrupt, will yield to sensual desires, will abandon consideration for their relatives, will take pride in oppression, will decorate the Holy Qur’an, will decorate mosques, will erect tall minarets, will honour the evil and unjust, will fill the mosques for prayers but they will lack unity, will introduce their wives as partners in their businesses out of worldly greed for wealth, will accept the word of the sinful and obey them; wicked and ignoble men will become communal leaders; people will keep in their homes instruments of entertainment (piano, guitar etc); women will ride horses (bicycle) and imitate men (will wear masculine dresses); people will undertake and complete worldly pursuits first before offering their prayers, will appear outwardly noble but their hearts will be wicked.”

At that stage Asbag bin Nabata asked who the Dajjal was. He replied “The name of Dajjal will be Sayad bin Sed. Only the wicked will follow him and the noble will belie him. He will emerge from the Yahudiyya town of Isfahan in Iran. He will have only one eye which will be on his forehead and it will be very bright. His eyeballs will be red and near his eye will be inscribed in clear letters the word ‘Infidel’ for all to read. In front of him there will appear a hill of smoke and behind him there will appear a white hill. He will emerge at a time of terrible drought. People will assume that the two hills are of food and will rush towards him.

He will ride on a grey donkey whose one stride will cover the distance equivalent to about one mile.

“Water in any river he will pass by will dry. In a voice loud enough to be heard by all men and jinn he will proclaim, ‘O my friends, come to me immediately. I am the creator of all the beings of the universe. I have made them of different shape and have provided for their sustenance. I call you towards my providence for I am God and possess power over all things’.”

Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) proceeded to caution that the enemy of Allah is a liar for he himself will be eating and drinking. “Moreover your God is not one-eyed, neither does He eat nor drink, does not have a body and does not move from one place to another. Beware! The followers of that wicked person will be the illegitimately born persons and Jews. Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will kill Dajjal in Syria on a high hill called TALLU AFIK on a Friday morning three hours after sunrise.

“After that a great sign will appear.” He then quoted the verse of the Holy Qur’an: “and we have revealed to them a person mobile on earth and communicating with them.” (27:82) “He will emerge from a Hill in Mecca called SAFFA. He will have with him the ring of the Prophet Suleiman and the stick of the Prophet Musa. He will place the ring on the forehead of the believers and the words “*Haza mu’min*” (this is a believer) will be immediately inscribed. He will place the stick on the forehead of the nonbelievers and the words “*Haza Kafir*” (this is an infidel) will be inscribed. Then when the sun will rise from the west, he will raise his head in front of the sun and every person in the entire world will be able to see him. At that stage penitence will no longer be accepted nor will any deeds, except of those who will have become believers and will have done good deeds before the emergence of the signs for faith without good deeds is incomplete.”

In a Sunni book called *Kamaluddin* Abdulla bin Omar reports that one

day after morning prayers, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) accompanied by his companions proceeded to a bazaar, stopped at a house and knocked on the door. A lady from the house recognised him and asked if she could be of any service to him. The Prophet (s.a.w.) said he wanted to meet her son Abdulla. She said he had become mentally disturbed, often soiled his clothes and talked of lofty matters. The Prophet (s.a.w.) sought leave to enter the house and meet him. The lady, of course, granted leave but sought to be excused if in this disturbed mental condition, her son ill-behaved before the Prophet (s.a.w.).

The Prophet (s.a.w.) entered the house with his companions. The accursed Abdulla lay clad in a thick cloth and was murmuring to himself. His mother asked him to keep quiet as the Prophet (s.a.w.) had come to see him. Hearing this he sat up. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "Had the lady not asked him to keep quiet, you would have heard what he was saying and you would have known of the condition which I have described to you." Then the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked him what he was observing. He said "I observe both truth and falsehood and notice Empyrean (Arsh) on the surface of water." The Prophet (s.a.w.) asked him to declare faith in Allah and in his Prophethood but he replied, "I believe in the unity of Allah and I am myself the Prophet of God for you are not more competent than I am for Prophethood." The Prophet (s.a.w.) left the house.

The next day the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) visited him again with the companions. With the permission of the lady he entered the house and saw the son perched on a date palm raving aloud. Again his mother scolded him to keep quiet and come down from the tree as the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) had visited him. He quietened and came down. Again the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was disappointed and said, "Had the mother not asked him to keep quiet, you would have been convinced that he is the wicked Dajjal of whom I have already pre-warned you." The Prophet (s.a.w.) then left the house.

Again the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) visited him the third day with his companions and on entering the house noticed that Abdulla was playing with goats around him.

The Prophet (s.a.w.) asked him to accept the Unity of Allah and his Prophethood and asked him to say what the Prophet (s.a.w.) had in mind. He uttered the word “*Addukh Addukh*” (*Dukh* means smoke and that very morning the chapter *Dukhan* had been revealed to the Prophet (s.a.w.) and he had recited it during morning prayers). The Prophet (s.a.w.) then declared, “What Allah wishes will be and you will not attain your desire.”

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) then explained to his companions that Abdulla was the wicked Dajjal whom he had already mentioned to them. He would emerge in the last days of the world and until then Allah would imprison him on an island. He will cause a delicate test for people in the last days. All the Prophets before him had cautioned their followers about Dajjal and our Prophet (s.a.w.) striking a note of warning for his followers, added, “Do not be carried away by him. Your Allah is not one-eyed, nor does He have a body and this wicked man will emerge in the last days of the world astride a donkey.”

Dajjal will emerge in the last days of the world and will remain alive for 40 days traversing every corner of the world on his donkey. Eventually he will be killed in Syria by Imam Mahdi (a.s.).

## **THE FACTS ABOUT REAPPEARANCE OF THE CURRENT IMAM HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.)**

When the appointed time for the reappearance of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) comes his sword will come out of its sheath and address him, “O Hujjat of Allah the moment for your reappearance has come. Please present yourself to the world.”

Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) has stated, “On his reappearance, Imam Mahdi (a.s.) will first enter the city of Mecca. He will be attired in the clothes of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) wearing his yellow turban carrying his stick and wearing his sandals. A few weak goats will be in front of him. None will be able to recognise him in the city of Mecca. Thus he will enter the Kaaba appearing in the prime of youth. He will enter the Holy Kaaba at night. After midnight Jibreel, Mikaeel (Michael) and other Angels in large groups will descend from the heavens into the Holy Kaaba, present themselves before the Imam (a.s.) and offer their salutations. Jibreel will then reveal to him the command of Allah that whatever the Imam (a.s.) will wish and order will be. The Imam (a.s.) will then spread his right hand over his face and say: ‘All praise is due to Allah, who has accomplished His promise to us and has made us inherit the land, we may abide in the garden where we please, so goodly is the reward of the workers.’” (39:74)

Then Hazrat Hujjat (a.s.) will stand at one of the corner of the Holy Kaaba and announce “O those especially selected by Allah for my assistance, present yourselves to me.” This voice will be heard in every country of the world and the specially selected 313 believers from Asia, Africa and China etc will hear this voice. Some of them will be on their prayer-mats, others asleep but all will immediately proceed towards Mecca and in a moment will find themselves in the presence of the Imam (a.s.).

At that moment Jibreel will kiss the Holy hand of the Imam (a.s.) and



swear allegiance to him followed by the other angels. Then the leaders of jinn and the special 313 will swear allegiance to him.

The people of Mecca beholding all this will be stunned and ask who these people are and where they come from and why the particular night is so much bright and there are so many miracles. A number of them will reply that they do not know any of the men except four who will be from Medina and who will inform them that the leader of their group with the luminous countenance is the Imam (a.s.).

Soon after sunrise a voice will be heard in pure Arabic and loud enough to be heard in every corner of the world stating, "O the created beings in the heavens and on earth, the high personage who has emerged is the Mahdi from the family of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)" Then the voice will announce the full names of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) upto Imam Husayn (a.s.) and will invite all people to swear allegiance to him and warn them against disobeying him and becoming infidels. The angels, jinns, the 313 and other faithfuls will declare their faith and obedience to the Imam (a.s.).

That voice will be heard very clearly in all the countries, forests and mountains and all men, women children will be astonished to hear it. At the time of sunset another voice will be heard declaring, "O people, listen! Your god has emerged in the forests of Yabis (in Palestine) and his name is Othman bin Ambasah of the Omayyad family and is a descendant of Yazid bin Muawiyah. Proceed to him and swear allegiance to him so that you are guided to the right path."

The angels, jinns, and the believers will call this announcement a lie and utter falsehood. The infidels, hypocrites and irreligious will become confused and will go astray.

Then Imam Mahdi (a.s.) touching the holy Kaaba will proclaim "O entire creation of Allah, listen to me! I am endowed with all the virtues,

signs, knowledge and miracles of all the prophets, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) himself and all the Imams (a.s.) and the knowledge of all the scriptures.” All believers will accept this proclamation. Then a person known as *Dabbatul Ardh* will emerge between *Rukn* and *Makan* holding a ring and a stick. He will place the ring on the foreheads of the believers and instantly there will appear inscribed on their foreheads, “This is a believer.” He will place the stick on the foreheads of non-believers and instantly there will appear inscribed on their foreheads, “This is an infidel.”

Then a person whose face will have been turned towards his back will present himself before the Imam (a.s.) and say, “O My Lord, I have brought good tidings for you. I have been brought here by an angel who has turned my face towards my back and has ordered me into your presence.” Hazrat will then ask him to narrate his story. He will state, “O My Lord, my brother and I were both in the army of Sufyani and we attacked the entire land between Damascus and Baghdad causing destruction and damage. We then proceeded towards Medina and Mecca with an army of 300,000 persons intending to enter Mecca, destroy the Holy Kaaba and kill off the population of the city.

“We reached the desert of Bayadana situated between Medina and Mecca during the night. After midnight we heard a voice ‘O Bayadana, destroy these oppressive infidels.’ Suddenly, by Allah! the earth opened up and 300,000 soldiers together with all our animals and belongings were sunk into the ground. There was not a trace of them only my brother and I escaped. One angel appeared and slapped both of us so hard that our faces turned right behind towards our backs. Then addressing me first, he told me, ‘O Bashir proceed to Mecca and present to the Imam Mahdi (a.s.) the good tidings of the destruction of the army of Sufiani.’ He then turned to my brother and said, ‘O Nazir, proceed to Damascus and inform Sufiani of the destruction of his army and also inform him that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) has already emerged in Mecca.’ Ask him to present himself to the Imam (a.s.) to offer his penitence and that if he does so

his repentance will be accepted. (However that wicked person will not repent and will proceed to Hell).”

On hearing all this the Imam (a.s.) with his holy hands will restore his face to its proper position.

Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will then proceed from Mecca to Kufa with a large army of angels and jinns. He will make the Mosque at Kufa his court and his residence will be in the Mosque of Sahlah.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will achieve success in his task in one night. This tradition is incontrovertible proof of the falsehood of all those who have claimed to be the Mahdi so far and of the impostors yet to come.

The capital of the kingdom of the Imam (a.s.) will be Kufa, which by then will have so expanded as to have absorbed the city of Najaf. Every inch of land in that area will carry a very high value and believers from all corners of the world will assemble there. The city of Kufa will be about 54 miles long and will merge with the town of Kerbala. In that era Allah will fulfil all the wishes of the believers.

The Imam (a.s.) will send to Damascus a huge army which will defeat the army of Sufiani and kill him. Simultaneously Imam Husayn (a.s.) will return to the world together with his 72 companions who were killed with him in Kerbala as well as 10,000 true believers. They will appear before Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). So will Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and the other Imams (a.s.) return. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) will also return with all his companions and all those who were killed fighting with him in the Holy wars.

Those who had belied the Prophet (s.a.w.), oppressed him and accused him of witchcraft and such other charges will also be restored to life and will be duly punished for their injustice and oppression. There will also

follow the return of Nabi Isa and other Prophets and believers. There will be but one religion in the world, Islam, with peace, piety, justice and equity pervading the whole world. The earth will be replete with the blessings of Allah. An account of life in that period fully described in other books is omitted here.

## THE RETURN (*RAJ'AAT*)

*Raj'aat* means the return of the dead into the world. It is necessary to believe that after the reappearance of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) upon the command of Allah, the Prophets, their companions, a number of virtuous believers as well as oppressors, the enemies of the family of the Prophet (s.a.w.) etc., will be revived. There are a number of verses in the Holy Qur'an as well as a number of traditions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) reported in a number of Sunni books to establish this fact. Not only so but also Christians, Jews, Fire-worshippers and Hindus have references to this concept in their books. In this chapter, this doctrine is briefly mentioned in the light of the verses of the Holy Qur'an and the traditions:

1. "And on that day when we will gather from every nation a party from among those who rejected our communications, there they shall be formed into groups." (27:83). On the other hand, for the Day of Judgement the Holy Qur'an states: "and We will gather them and leave not anyone of them behind." (18:47).

This verse proves that on the Day of Judgement all the creation will be resurrected so that the reference in the preceding verse quoted above to only a group of followers of each Prophet being revived must point to the return in this world of a few people only.

2. "And it is binding on a town which we destroy that they shall not return." (21:95) This verse clearly establishes the return into this world because on the Day of Judgement all the creation of Allah will be revived.
3. "They (two infidels) shall say: Our Lord, twice did You subject us to death, and twice have You given us life." (40:11)

This verse mentions of death twice and revival twice; the first revival, therefore, must be at the time of the return in this world.

4. "So when the promise for the first of the two came, We sent over you

Our servants, of mighty prowess, so they went to and from among houses, and it was a promise to be accomplished.” (17:5)

5. “Most surely we helped our apostles, and those who believe, in this world’s life.” (40:51).

There are numerous similar verses in the Holy Qur’an regarding the dead being brought back into this world.

Moreover there was a return even amongst the followers of previous Prophets and the dead amongst them were revived, so the contention that the dead cannot be revived until the Day of Judgement is untenable.

1. Nabi Musa took with him a selected 70 to accompany him to make supplication to and hear the commandments of God. They demanded to see God with their naked eyes. So they were struck to death. By the prayers of Prophet Musa Allah revived them. This is narrated in the Holy Qur’an.

2. In the Holy Qur’an in chapter two, *Al-Baqarah* (The Cow), verse 243 states “Have you not considered those who went forth from their homes, for fear of death, and they were thousands, then Allah said to them, Die; again He gave them life”;

This verse is revealed with regard to the followers of the Prophet Hizkil consisting of 70,000 families. When a plague infested their city they all left it. Before they could resettle there was a command of Allah that they should all die and instantly they all died and their bodies became so decomposed that only bones were visible. Once an Israelite Prophet passed from there (either the Prophet Armyia or Prophet Hizkil) and prayed to Allah to revive them out of His infinite power so that the city could be re-livened and they could worship Him. Allah commanded the Prophet to sprinkle water on their bones. So the Prophet did and they all became alive, re-entered their city, became followers of the Prophet and obedient worshippers of Allah.

During *Raj’aat* (the Return) only the staunch believers and the worst of

the infidels will be revived. Similarly only some of the Prophets, our Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), the Eleven Imams (a.s.) with some of their companions and all the martyrs of Kerbala will return. There are many traditions pertaining to this, but suffice it here to mention few of them:

1. Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) has stated that during the period of the Return, after the reappearance of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) firstly Imam Husayn (a.s.) will be revived together with all his companions who were martyred at Kerbala. With Imam Husayn (a.s.) will be 70 Prophets. When the life of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) reaches its end, he will hand over his ring to Imam Husayn (a.s.) who will bury Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.).
2. Moreover, the Sixth Imam (a.s.) has stated, "After the return of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) he will enter Kufa and from the grave yard in Najaf called *Wadi-us-Salaam*, Allah will revive 70,000 true believers who will assist Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.).
3. Furthermore, the same Imam (a.s.) has said that when Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will reappear an angel will approach the grave of every believer, inform him of the reappearance of the Imam (a.s.) and will ask him to rise if he wished to present himself to him. At that time any believer desirous of doing so will rise from his grave.
4. He also stated that a believer who daily for 40 days after morning prayers recites *Dua-e-Ahad* will be amongst the companions of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) and should he have predeceased the reappearance, will be revived and emerge from his grave.
5. Besides these traditions, the same Imam (a.s.) has also said that just before the reappearance, in the month of Jamadi-ul-Akhar and the ten days of the month of Rajab totalling 40 days there will be torrential rain never witnessed before by which Allah will reunite the bones with flesh in the bodies of the dead believers. The believers will emerge from the grave clearing the earth from their heads. There are

numerous such traditions described in other books but are omitted here.

6. Haras bin Abdullah Rabai has reported that once he sat upon a bridge in Baghdad with the Khalifa Mansur. Next to him was his Prime Minister Sawaar. There was also the poet Sayyid Hamyari who was reciting the poem he had composed in the praise of the Khalifa who was deeply delighted to hear it. The Prime Minister noticed that the Khalifa was very pleased with the Sayyid. So out of jealousy he said, "O leader of the faithful! this Sayyid has no inward love and respect for you. He cherishes love and affection for his leaders, the family of the Prophet (s.a.w.) . Not only so but he defames the Khalifas and the companions of the Prophets (s.a.w.) and he also harbours enmity against you."

The Sayyid pleaded, "Your Minister complains against me out of jealousy. His entire family since before their conversion into Islam and thereafter, have had enmity against your family. Even Allah has mentioned about them to the Prophet (s.a.w.) in the Holy Qur'an: '(As for) those who call to you from behind the private chambers, surely most of them do not understand.' (49:4) This Minister is also one of them."

The Khalifa smiled and said, "That is true." The Minister was therefore even more annoyed and said "This Sayyid believes in *Raj'aat*."

The Sayyid retorted, "Naturally I believe in *Raj'aat* for Allah has stated in many places in the Holy Qur'an about the Return (and he recited 3 of the verses mentioned above) and also there are many traditions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) on this subject. Verily, there are traditions from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) that on the Day of Judgement the arrogant will appear in the shape of ants. Moreover he has added that in the last days of the world a number of my followers will be sucked into the earth and a number of them will appear in the shape of monkeys, pigs etc. My faith in the Return is true and in accordance with the Holy Qur'an and the



traditions and I am convinced that during the Return this Minister will be revived in the shape of a dog, a pig, or a monkey. By Allah, this Minister is a tyrant, arrogant and an infidel.”

Hearing this caustic criticism the Khalifa smiled and said, “What you say is true.”

During *Raj'aat* Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will take full revenge against the assassins of Imam Husayn (a.s.), and of the other Imams (a.s.) and of the faithfuls. Those murdered in the world innocently will be revived to complete their span of life. They will receive their recompense from their assassins who will also be killed.

In those days Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) will administer justice according to his personal knowledge. He will need no witnesses.

That period will be known as the *Qiyamat-e-Sugra* (*Lesser Doomsday*).

7. Hazrat Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) has stated that on the day of Ashura, Imam Husayn (a.s.) informed his companions before the battle that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) had informed him that after his death, his enemies would invite Imam Husayn (a.s.) to Iraq and there kill him and his companions. Imam Husayn (a.s.) then added, “I can see these infidels killing us all. Verily after our deaths we shall meet the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and remain with him for a while. Then during the period of the return, I will be the first to emerge from my grave. We will fight the enemies of Allah and the angels who had never before descended to earth will come down to assist us, including Jibreel, Mikaeel and Israfeel. At that time the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and my brother Hasan (a.s.) and all the Imams from my progeny will be with us. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) will unfurl his flag and hand it together with his sword to Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). All of you my companions, will remain with me and we will stay in the world for as long a period as Allah wills.

“Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) will hand to me the sword of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and he will send with me an army to the east of the World (Asia). There I will fight the irreligious enemies of Allah and kill them; I will reach India and conquer the subcontinent and will clean the place of polytheists and infidels. I will destroy all the animals on earth whose meat is forbidden, I will guide the Christians, the Jews and all polytheists. Those who will remain without faith, I will kill them. In that era Allah will spare the believers of all calamities and sicknesses and bestow on them blessings and mercy. Branches of trees will be heavily laden with fruits. Those generally only available in summer will be available in winter and the ones usually growing in winter will also be found in summer.”

Then Imam Husayn (a.s.) said to his companions that Allah states in the Holy Qur’an “And if the people of the towns had believed and guarded against evil We would certainly have opened up for them blessings from the heaven and the earth, but they rejected, so We overtook them for what they had earned.” (7:96)

8. The Prophet Idris was concealed for 20 years. When he returned he performed the miracle of reviving a dead son. His mother informed her community and all of them approached the Prophet, sought forgiveness and entreated him to pray that the drought which had afflicted them be averted. The Prophet prayed for them and they were saved.

Thus there are a number of examples of the dead having been revived, some of whom lived thereafter for a long period, married and had children. The size of this book does not permit an extensive narration of those examples, but it must now at least be clear that a number of dead have been revived by the command of Allah, which process is known as the Return. There is then no wonder that in a similar way at the time of the reappearance of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) there should be a Return of the Prophets, the Imams (a.s.) the sincere believers as well as the cruel oppressors.

## THE DUTIES AND SUPPLICATIONS OF THE BELIEVERS DURING THE CONCEALMENT

Although our current Imam (a.s.) is concealed from us, yet he is fully aware of our prayers, deeds, activities, misfortunes and calamities. Any believer, who, at the time of need sincerely seeks his help, receives assistance from him. There are certain obligations on the believers during this period, the performance of which is the true sign of their belief:-

1. It is the duty of every believer sincerely and affectionately to remember his Imam who is his true leader in this world and the hereafter and to recite various supplications; for example, the *Dua-e-Ahad* after every morning prayers, the *Dua-e-Nudba* on Fridays and also *Ziyarat* (salutations).
2. It is an obligation of a believer to keep reminding himself that temporal rulers have deprived the Imam (a.s.) of his true place in the world, changes and innovations have been made in the rules of religion and that the friends and followers of the family of the Prophet (s.a.w.) are few and despised. He must keep continuously praying for these amictions to be averted and for final salvation.
3. Every believer must regard it his obligation to ensure that the true religion survives, the believers remain in faith and make all possible endeavours for the propagation of the faith including opening and running of religious schools and publication of religious books.
4. As one gives charity for the protection of one's parents and members of his family, likewise one must give such charity for the protection of Imam (a.s.) who is the spiritual father. This is a true indication of affection. Just as it is ordained to send *Salawat* on the Prophet (s.a.w.) and his Progeny, although they are not in any need of them, purely as a sign of affection and for reaping the high rewards, likewise it is a symbol of veneration for the Imam (a.s.) to give charity in his name.

5. It is necessary for the believer to keep the Imam (a.s.) constantly happy by reciting the Qur'an for him, visiting the shrine at Kerbala on his behalf, performing Hajj on his behalf etc. The Imam (a.s.) in turn prays to Allah for our protection and forgiveness for he is aware of all our deeds.

Once Abu Muhammad Adaji sent a believer to perform Hajj on behalf of the present Imam (a.s.). He had two sons; one a believer and the other a nonbelieving infidel. From the money he received to perform the Hajj he gave some amount to his non-believing son. When he reached Arafat in Mecca, he met a personage with a bright face who told him "O Sheikh, are you not ashamed?" He asked, "Why?" The personage replied, "Do you know that the person on whose behalf you have come to perform the Hajj is your Imam and therefore aware of all matter. Yet out of the money granted to you to perform such a Hajj you gave a portion to your vicious son? Very soon you will go blind." Having said so he disappeared. Within a few days of his return to his country, he had pain in his eyes and eventually became totally blind.

6. In the times of affliction and need the Imam (a.s.) surely comes to our aid. The only condition is that the person seeking help must be saying his prayers regularly, observing fast, making all endeavours to refrain from sins, repenting sins already committed, retaining love and affection for his Imam (a.s.), remembering his Imam (a.s.) in his supplications, recitations and salutations.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has stated "when the knife is on your neck and if you will call the Imam of your time he will certainly come to your help." There are many incidents when such help has been rendered and they will be discussed in the relevant chapter .

7. It is the duty of every believer that whenever he mentions the name of the Imam (a.s.) in any supplication, salutation or conversation he should stand up and put his right hand on his head. This is a sign of his love, respect and reverence for his Imam (a.s.).

8. There are many traditions about how to seek his help in times of affliction and need. One such tradition is as follows:

During the reign of Shah Fatehali in Iran there was a difference of opinion in respect of a *waqf* between two great scholars, Agha Haji Muhammad Ebrahim and Agha Mirza Muhammad Mahdi. So the Shah of Iran sent his renowned scholar Mulla Kassam to Isfahan to resolve this difference. He did so and made peace between them. Once during the trip Mulla Kassam went to a graveyard in Isfahan with his assistant. As it was not a Thursday there were not many people about nor were there the usual Thursday coffee and *hukah* stalls.

Having recited *Fateha* in the graveyard, he said to his assistant, "There is no coffee-shop here. I feel like smoking a *hukah*." The assistant told him that if he had mentioned this early while they were in town he would have brought the *hukah* with him. So Mulla Kassam proceeded to the grave of an eminent scholar, the late Mirza Muhammad Baqir Damad. The grave was well built and on entering the building to reach the grave he found an elderly person on a prayer-mat in a corner. Mulla Kassam walked towards the grave and started reciting *Fateha*. The personage asked, "Mulla Kassam, you mullas do not seem to have good manners. Why did you not offer *salam* when you entered?" Mulla Kassam became stunned with the personality of this gentleman, lowered his head and said humbly, "Having recited *Fateha* I would have presented myself to you to offer my salutation." Having said so he saluted the gentleman who replied and said, "Please be seated. Your late father was a virtuous person. He had beseeched Allah to grant him a virtuous son who would be a scholar. His prayer has been answered and he has a virtuous, scholarly son like you."

He then asked if Mulla Kassam wished to smoke a *hukah*. Mulla Kassam responded that he thought there would be shops in the graveyard so he had not brought his *hukah*. The gentleman said "Please get the *hukah* from this basket." Mulla Kassam looked into it and saw a *hukah*, tobacco enough for one consumption, coal, matchbox etc. He decided to call his

assistant but the gentleman stopped him and asked Mulla Kassim to prepare the *hukah* himself. So Mulla Kassim went out, made the *hukah* and inhaled it. On completion, he cleaned the *hukah*, returned to the gentleman and replaced the basket. The personage then asked Mulla Kassim to state any other wish he had. Mulla Kassim asked for some food but the gentleman said, “Do not ask for wordly thing.” Mulla Kassim then said that he would gratefully accept anything that he was given. So he said, “I give you two *duas* which you may recite when you have a wish or when you need my help in any affliction and I will immediately come to your assistance. However one of the supplications is meant only for you, while the other is for every believer.”

Mulla Kassim apologised that he did not have paper or pen. The gentleman asked him to get them from his basket. When Mulla Kassim looked into the basket he did not find the *hukah* which he himself had put there only a short while before. He only saw an ink pot, a pen and a piece of paper. He took them and started writing.

Firstly, the personage dictated to him the supplication that was meant only for him. Then he dictated to him the second supplication stating any believer with a wish or in affliction should recite 70 times “*Ya Allah, Ya Muhammad, Ya Ali, Ya Fatimah, Ya Sahibuzzaman adrikny wala tuhlikny.*”

Mulla Kassim pondered over the last portion which, according to what he had read in the books, should have been *Adrikuny* in plural (you all come to my help). The personage said “Why don’t you write! *Adrikny* in singular is correct for I alone am caned for help as I am the *Hujjat* of Allah in this era and I have every power. So my help is being sought. The names of Allah, the Prophet (s.a.w.), Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and Fatimah (s.a.) are included as interceders. The seeker of help is beseeching my help in their names.” So Mulla Kassim took down the supplication and returned the pen and ink into the basket. He then started to reread and check his writing. As he lifted his head there was neither the personage, the prayer

mat nor the basket. He immediately ran to the door and looked in all directions but saw nobody. He asked his assistant if he saw anyone leave through the door but the assistant said he had seen no one. Mulla Kassim was convinced that the gentleman was his Imam (a.s.), and that he had experienced a miracle from him.

Firstly the Imam (a.s.) knew of his inner desire for *hukah*, then in the very basket in which there was nothing but the *hukah*, he subsequently found writing material only and the *hukah* had disappeared. He thanked Allah for this experience and deeply regretted missing the chance of asking the Imam (a.s.) other questions.

9. The exalted scholar Sayyid Ibne Tawoos directed and recommended to his eldest son in his will as follows:-

“I hereby inform you, your brothers and whosoever may become aware of this will that Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w.) have sent us the tidings of our Lord the Imam of our time, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) and have also revealed his status, dignity and glory and the benefits and support that are derived by his followers from him. We should not be unmindful of him or of our love for him even for a moment. If a person becomes engrossed only in worldly affairs, wealth, children, buildings and business, he will be preferring lowly worldly things over his Imam.

“Moreover if a person devotes himself to worldly kings, governors and leaders and is keen to please them, mixes with and respects them with the hope of gaining benefit from them, then he will always be anxious that their rule and wealth is sustained. Thus he will not wish for the reappearance and the rule of his Imam, which will be distasteful to him.

“The true belief is that our current Imam (a.s.) is the rightful king and all the kingdoms, wealth, treasures in this world belong to him. All the kings, leaders and rulers abuse the positions contrary to the wish of Allah and His Prophets. If despite such belief a faithful is not displeased with the worldly situation and does not seek its destruction then he is not true to his faith in his Imam.”

The above quotation is an extract from the will. Indeed, if a person has faith and belief in his Imam (a.s.), he would always remember him. Whenever the faithfuls gather, their first topic of discussion should be their separation from the Imam (a.s.), the opposition against the religion of Allah and the plight of the believers. Such ought to be the true approach to religion and faith. However in the present time of civilization, despite their faith, the faithful only remember their Imam once in a year on the 15<sup>th</sup> Shaaban or during the *Dua-e-Iftitah*, *Lailatul Qadr* or in the salutations to him after prayers. It is sad that besides these occasions, there is no discussion about him nor do we remember him. In our meetings we pass resolutions of loyalties and good wishes to temporal rulers but do not offer them to the King of the World and the Hereafter, our spiritual father, and do not seek his assistance for the success of our meetings or for his kind benefaction upon us.

Thus it is the duty of leaders of our community, mullas, molvis and alims that they constantly preach about and talk about our current Imam (a.s.), his concealment and the signs that will be apparent in the last days of this world. Thus they will enkindle and enhance the faith of the believers and deter the community from sins, seeking false pleasures and entertainment indulged by other communities under the guise of civilization.

It must always be remembered that the concealment of the Imam (a.s.) is a delicate test for the faithfuls. Allah has tested followers of the previous Prophets in this way as is clearly stated in the Holy Book and the traditions already mentioned in this book.

Alas, even in the times of our need and affliction we do not remember our protector and Imam (a.s.) to seek his help. We are convinced that Allah does not accept our good deeds and supplication without *wasta* (intercession) of our Imam (a.s.) yet we are increasingly becoming oblivious of him.



10. During the time of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) one of his companions Ramila reported: "Once I had high fever. After a few days I felt better. It was a Friday so I decided to make ablution (*Ghusal*) and proceed to the mosque to say my prayers behind my *mawla* and visit him also. I had my bath, changed my clothes and proceeded to the mosque. During the sermon, I felt very cold and was shivering. Yet I stayed on. After prayers Hazrat went home and I followed him there to visit him. He welcomed me and told me that I had been trembling during the sermon. I disclosed my condition to him and he said 'O Ramila, whenever a misfortune befalls any of our friends or he becomes sick we feel its effect; we also become afflicted or sick with him.' I asked him, 'O My Lord, is this result confined to the affliction on the residents of Kufa only?' The Hazrat replied, 'If any of our friends, a faithful, suffers a misfortune or becomes sick in any part of the world, we become immediately aware of it and we feel its effect too'."

11. If there is fear of any harm from an enemy, help must be sought from the current Imam (a.s.) by daily reciting two rakaat namaz, a brief ziyarat to the Imam (a.s.) and 70 times as follows:

*Ya mawlay, Ya Sahibazzaman; ana Mustageethun bika, Ya mawlay, Ikfini sharra many'uddhini.*

12. One other method of approaching and seeking the help of our current Imam Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) reported in various books is by writing a petition (*arizah*) to him and depositing in into the sea, lake, well or river. This procedure is generally followed on the 15<sup>th</sup> Shabaan after morning prayers before sunrise. The petitions are encased in pure clean, perfumed earth and reverentially deposited into the sea.

For brevity the detailed procedure and the supplication to be recited at the time of depositing the *ariza* are not set out here but any faithful desiring to use this procedure can obtain petitions and the supplication.

Undoubtedly, these petitions reach the Imam (a.s.). Any believer with firm conviction in the Imam (a.s.), a practising faithful; saying his prayers, observing fast and restraining himself from sin can use this procedure any day (not necessarily the 15<sup>th</sup> Shabaan). This method provides an eminent opportunity to express one's affection and faith in the Imam (a.s.) and of the honour of presenting salutations and writing to him. With regard to these petitions two cases are reported here of how they reach the Imam (a.s.) and how he deals with them:-

1. Aqa Mirza Ibrahim Shirazi reports: "When I was in Shiraz I had a few wishes which particularly worried me. Foremost amongst them was my keen desire to proceed to Kerbala to visit Imam Husayn (a.s.). So to seek the assistance of the current Imam (a.s.), I presented a petition to him of my wishes. One evening unobserved by any person I deposited it into a well which was full of water. Except for Allah none knew of this.

The next day I proceeded as usual to my teacher for my lessons. There were many other students present. My teacher, mentioning my name informed me that my petition had reached the Imam (a.s.). I was deeply delighted. Yet I asked my teacher how he came to know of it and he narrated, 'Last night I saw Hazrat Salman Farsi in my dream. There were many people with him and he had a pile of papers before him which he was examining. He turned to me and citing your name and names of a few other persons asked me to inform them that their petitions had already reached the Imam (a.s.). Then I saw that the papers in the hands of Hazrat Salman bore the seal of the Imam (a.s.). I thus understood that those whose petitions were accepted received the seal of the Imam (a.s.) and those that were not accepted were not so sealed.'

The remaining students then asked me about this petition and the dream of their teacher. I revealed to them about my petition which convinced them of the dream of the teacher. In a short while all my wishes were fulfilled and I also had an opportunity to go to Kerbala."

2. Sayyid Muhammad Sayyid Abbas, a resident of Jabale Amil reports, “I was living in Najaf in one of the rooms in the courtyard of the mausoleum of Hazrat Ali (a.s.). I was financially strained. Very often I lived only on a handful of dates and water. I prayed to Allah constantly for the improvement of my pecuniary condition but I did not reveal my condition to any person. Eventually I decided to present a petition (*Ariza*) to our current Imam (a.s.). Every morning when the gate of Najaf was opened I went out and deposited a petition in a river. 39 days had passed. On that day as I was returning after depositing my petition I felt that someone was following me. I turned to look at him and saw a typical Arab resident of Jabale Amil. He greeted me and started walking with me. I replied and continued walking quietly. He asked “Sayyid Muhammad, for the past 39 days every morning when the gate opens you have been coming out and depositing a petition in the river. What is your wish? Do you think your Imam is not aware of your wish?” I was confounded as to how this person came to know of my activity though I had mentioned it to no one. Immediately it occurred to me that he may be my Imam (a.s.). I had read in the books that the blessed palm of the Imam (a.s.) is very soft; so to satisfy myself, I extended my hand to shake hands with him. He responded and I found his palm extremely soft. I became convinced that he was my Imam (a.s.) and immediately bowed to kiss the hand but he had disappeared. I was suddenly alone, extremely excited that my petition had reached my Imam (a.s.) that I had the good fortune of meeting him. Shortly after that my condition improved.”

## IS IT IMPOSSIBLE TO MEET HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.) DURING THE LONG CONCEALMENT?

Our opponents criticise our belief that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) has been living in concealment for eleven centuries. For example, Munshi Khadim Hussein writes in the Qadiani Urdu monthly *Tashheez ul Azhan* in an article cited *Tahkike Akheruzzaman* that he finds it very strange that although Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) has been living for over 1100 years no one can claim to have met him. This stand is as fallacious as it is fanciful in view of the fact that numerous persons have reported meeting Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) and accounts of such meetings have been given in Shia Ithna-asheri books. In the last chapter of this book a few instances of such meetings have been cited. However even leading authoritative Sunni books have narrated accounts of Muslims who have met Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.).

The eminent Sunni scholar Allama Sha'arani writes in his book *Lawakihul Anwar* that Sheikh Hasan Iraqi reports, "One day I entered the Omayyad Jamie Mosque, and noticed a number of people seated around a person who was on a chair delivering a sermon on Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). I was so deeply impressed with that sermon that I developed a deep yearning to meet Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) and since then continuously beseeched Allah to provide me such an opportunity. Twelve months passed. Then I once went to the same mosque for evening prayers and immediately after my prayers I saw a person adorned in an Irani turban approach me. He touched my shoulder and asked my why I was supplicating so hard to Allah to meet him. I asked him who he was and he said he was Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). I immediately kissed his hand and begged him to come to my home. He agreed and remained my guest for seven days. During all this period he enlightened me on religious matters and advised me to fast on every alternate day and recite 500 rakaat of prayers every day. At the time of his departure on the seventh day he advised me not to meet anybody but remain constantly in the worship of Allah and that I should not worry about my livelihood as it would be

supplied. I saw him to the door and he asked me to return inside my house. I have since stayed in my house peacefully.” The author asked his age and he revealed it as 620 years at that time. The same author has repeated this episode at page 288 in his another book *Yawakit Wal Jawahir* printed in Egypt.

Moreover such cases of meetings with Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) by persons whose names have been cited are to be found in many Sunni books, e.g. *Kifayat al-Talib*, *Matalib ul usul* and *Yanabi ul Mawaddah*, etc. In the last named book written by Sheikhul Islam of Istanbul Sheikh Suleiman Kanduzi chapter 83 has been exclusively devoted to accounts of persons who have met Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). It is very briefly summarised here:

1. Ali Abdulla bin Saleh states “When I saw Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) in Mecca near the Black Stone (*Hajar-e-Aswad*) people were pushing each other to move forward. He said that such conduct was contrary to the Command of Allah.”
2. Muhammad bin Shazan Kabuli reports that when Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) met him, he called him by his original name only known to the near members of the family and obtained satisfactory answers to all the questions he had asked the Imam (a.s.).
3. Muhammad bin Othman Omari saw Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) in the Kaaba with his hands lifted in the supplication, “O Allah fulfil the promise that you have made for me.”
4. Zarif Abunusr narrates that when he was once fortunate to meet Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) he said, “I am the last successor of the last Prophet (s.a.w.) and due to me calamities will avert from mankind on this earth.”
5. Muhammad bin Abdulla Kufi has reported names of 12 persons who were civil servants and another 53 persons who have all met Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.).

6. Hasan Ibne Wajna Nasibi states, "I have performed the Hajj 53 times and every time I supplicated in the Kaaba to meet the current Imam (a.s.). During my 54<sup>th</sup> trip I was once sitting in Mecca when a lady came to me, called me by my name Hasan and asked me to accompany her. We reached the house of Bibi Khadija and I stopped there. Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) himself came to the door. I greeted him and he replied, 'Hasan, I have been with you in each of the Hajj that you performed. Now you go and reside in the house of Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) and do not worry about your livelihood. You will receive all the food and clothing that you will need.' He also taught me a supplication. I remained in that house for along time and received all my necessities as occasions demanded."
7. Ali bin Ahmed Kufi reports that once he was performing tawaf of the Kaaba. He was suddenly stunned to notice a youthful person with a bright face. In his bewilderment he asked him who he was and he replied, "I am the Imam of this age and the Mahdi who will fill the earth with justice and equity. Undoubtedly there is a Hujjat of Allah all the time on earth."

He then dropped the stick he was holding in his hand. I picked it up and noticed that it had turned golden. I handed it back to him.

8. Rashid Hamdani says, "Once on our way back from the Hajj we lost our way. I found myself alone in a forest. I walked a little and came to a green lawn where the ground had a striking fragrance. Suddenly I saw a beautiful tent and outside it were two attendants. On noticing me one of them entered the tent and after a short while came out and asked me to enter the tent. Inside the tent I found an impressive person with a shining face seated. Above his head was a long sword hanging in the air unsupported. I greeted him, he replied and added, 'I am the Qaim who will emerge in the last days with this sword and fill the earth with justice and equity.' I knelt on the ground and he said, 'There is no prostration except for Allah; lift your head. Your

name is Rashid and you are a resident of Hamdan. What do you desire? Do you wish to reach your home?’ I replied ‘Yes, my lord I am very anxious to reach home.’ He presented a basket to me and ordered one of the attendants to take me to my home. We both left and when we had walked a little distance, the attendant said to me, ‘Look, here is your town; proceed to it.’ As I turned to look at him he had disappeared. I reached home and found that in the basket the Hazrat had presented to me were fifty gold coins, the possession of which kept us ever happy.”

All the above instances have been reported in just one book *Yanabi ul Mawaddah*. Apart from these, there are many other reported cases in numerous Sunni books detailing even the names, of the persons who have visited the Imam (a.s.) and the circumstances of their visits. Of course, in the Shia books innumerable such cases have been reported. The size of this book does not permit setting them all out.

## SIX REPORTED CASES OF MEETINGS WITH THE IMAM MAHDI (A.S.)

### THE FIRST EVENT:

#### THE PLACING OF THE BLACK STONE (*HAJAR-E-ASWAD*) IN ITS PLACE BY OUR CURRENT IMAM HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.)

A Shia scholar Abil Qasim Ja'far Ibne Muhammad Kavliyah reports in book: "In 307 A.H. the army of Karamata attacked the Holy Kaaba and removed the Black Stone (*Hajar-e-Aswad*), They later decided to return it and at that time I set out for pilgrimage and reached Baghdad. I knew that the only person who could restore the Black Stone to its place was the Imam of the current time and it was with the intention of meeting him that I decided to perform the Hajj in that year. However in Baghdad I became very ill. So I asked Ibne Hashim to perform the Hajj and handed him the expenses for the trip and a letter. I impressed upon him that at all costs he must meet the person who would replace the Black Stone and present my letter to him.

Ibne Hashim narrates, "I proceeded to Mecca and paid a good sum of money to the attendants so that they provide me a good vantage point near the Black Stone. There was a huge congregation in the mosque. I noticed that many great men, scholars etc. arrived and attempted to restore the Black Stone into its position but did not succeed; the stone kept shaking. Suddenly a youth of impressive personality and bright face came through the crowd and with his blessed hands fixed the Stone into its proper place. The Stone became firmly fixed. The congregation, excited and jubilant, proclaimed 'ALLAHU AKBAR.' Having replaced the Stone the youth again left through the crowds. I followed him like a mad person pushing other people. The youth was walking steadily but I could not reach him although I was running behind him. Eventually we came to a forest outside the city. It was quiet and lonely. The youth stopped, turned to me and asked me to hand him the letter. Without reading the letter he said 'tell the author of this letter that he will recover from his malady and will live for another 30 years.'



Hearing this I wept out of excitement. In the meantime that high personage had disappeared from my sight.”

Ibne Hashim returned to Ibne Kavliyah, narrated to him the reply from the Imam (a.s.) and just as he had predicted, the scholar lived for another 30 years.

### **THE SECOND EVENT:**

#### **THE APPEARANCE OF HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.) IN KANDHAR IN AFGHANISTAN**

In an answer to another scholar, Mulla Abul Qasim Kandhari has written, “In 1266 A.H. I was in Kandhar Afghanistan taking instructions in astronomy and philosophy from the son of Mulla Abdulrahim Mulla Habibulla. One Friday evening I visited him at his house. He was sitting in the courtyard with many scholars, judges and leaders of the city sitting around him resting against the four walls. Amongst them were Mulla Gulam Muhammad, the Chief Qadhi, Sardar Muhammad Ali Khan and a scholar from Egypt, all of the Sunni sect. A Shia businessman, the children of the host, a son of the Qadhi and myself were facing towards the Qibla. Intellectual and religious discourse started. The Chief Qadhi spoke at length against the Shia sect alleging how ignorant and naive they were to believe that Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) was already born of Hazrat Askari (a.s.) in 255 A.H, went into concealment in 260 A.H. and is since alive to this day. All present concurred with this criticism except for the scholar from Egypt, who, also of the Sunni sect and had earlier participated in criticising the Shia faith, abstained from discussion on this point. When the Qadhi had finished, the Egyptian scholar said, “Now listen to me carefully.”

“I was obtaining instructions in traditions from a jurist in a school in Tawloon. He spoke of the complexion, height and handsomeness of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). There was considerable discussion on this subject. Suddenly all were quiet for a youth of the same complexion and height

was seen inexplicably seated amongst us. Everybody lowered their heads in silence. None dared lift an eye or utter a word.”

The moment the Egyptian scholar had said this much all present lowered their heads and remained in complete silence. Soon all were wet with perspiration. Only once did I lift my eyes to see my Imam (a.s.). He was seated right in the middle of us all quietly looking around at everybody. I was infinitely excited. Yet I did not dare lift my eyes again. For about 15 minutes we all set in that condition, stunned. Then he went away. Yet all present remained unsettled. None dared speak. One after the other everybody rose and left without bidding farewell. The whole of that night I could not sleep and remained in the same ecstatic mood for I had the opportunity to meet my Imam (a.s.). Moreover the opponents received a timely answer to their criticism. The existence of the Imam (a.s.), his concealment and his total control over the entire world was proved beyond doubt.

All the same I was also in deep grief that I managed to look at my Imam (a.s.) but once although the truth of the matter was that I dared not lift my head the second time.”

Mulla Abul Qasim further reports, “the next day I attended the class of Mulla Abdulrahim where the Imam (a.s.) had visited us. My teacher called me secretly into his library and said, ‘Did you see what happened last night? Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) himself visited us and we all became wet with perspiration. We became dumb-founded, so much so that we dispersed without even bidding farewell to each other.’ Out of caution I said I had seen nothing. He then said, ‘It is an open matter, why are you denying it? A good number of those present have written to me last night and this morning expressing surprise about the episode they had witnessed’.”

The next day I met the businessman in the street. He said, “Allah has guided us by providing us the chance to meet His Hujjat. Moreover the sardar, Alikhan also became convinced and has become a Shia.”

After a few days I met the son of the Chief Qadhi who told me his father wanted me to visit him. I declined and vigorously resisted him but in the end he prevailed over me to follow him. I appeared before the Qadhi and offered my salutation. He replied and offered me a seat. At that time the Egyptian scholar and many other scholars were also seated there. The Qadhi asked me about the meeting and the events of that night. I said that I had only witnessed that people suddenly became and remained quiet and left without bidding each other farewell. At that time those present called me a liar. They said they had all witnessed that high personage sitting amongst them with his knees bent. The Qadhi said, "This man is a student of jurisprudence. He will not lie. It is possible that those who were in doubt witnessed him and this man being a Shia himself with firm conviction towards his Imam (a.s.) did not witness him." All present accepted the explanation of the Qadhi.

### **THE THIRD EVENT:**

#### **THE VISIT OF HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.) IN THE HOUSE OF THE MOST LEARNED AGHA SAYYID MAHDI IN HILLA**

In Hilla there was a businessman called Sheikh Ali who was one of the faithfuls. He reports, "One morning I set out to the house of the Mujtahid Agha Sayyid Mahdi *Bahrul Ulum* to visit him. On the way I passed by the grave of Sayyid Muhammad Zidmeah and noticed a very impressive personality standing near the grave reciting *Fateha*. He was an Arab with a bright face. On noticing him, I too stopped to recite *Fateha*.

Then I saluted him. He replied to me and said, 'O Ali, you are proceeding to visit Sayyid Muhammad.' I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Let us go. I am also going to visit him.' On the way he said, 'O Ali do not be disappointed. You have suffered great losses in business. Such is the way of wealth, it does not always remain with one. Allah will help you. Although Hajj was obligatory on you, yet you did not perform it. However do not worry, you will be rich again.' I wondered how the news of my loss had spread so wide that a person unknown to me had become aware of it. However, I responded, 'All praise is to Allah and only what He wishes happens.'

By then we had reached the house of the Mujtahid. I paused and invited him to lead the way. He replied, '*Ana Sahibuddar*' meaning, I am the owner of the house. (One of the titles of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is *Sahibuddar*). Then he held my hand and made me enter the house first and he followed.

In that house was a wide room in which the Mujtahid conducted his classes. His students were already waiting for him.

There was one vacant place of the Mujtahid which the personage who had accompanied me occupied. I sat in a corner of the room near the place of the Mujtahid. The personage picked a book written by the Mujtahid Himself and started reading it and then addressed the students, 'What a useful book this is! It contains excellent proofs on the rules of religion.'

The Mujtahid in the meantime emerged from his room and noticed the impressive personality in his place. On noticing the Mujtahid, the personage rose to offer him his place but the Mujtahid insisted that he should remain where he was and the Mujtahid respectfully sat opposite him.

He was very much tempted to ask him who he was and where he had come from but he dared not to do so. He commenced his class as usual and whilst he was explaining an issue, that personality expressed his views. Never before had I heard such exemplary proof presented so melodiously and lucidly. An impudent, ignorant student interrupted him to ask him what he would understand on that issue, yet that personality just smiled and kept quiet.

Then he asked for water and an assistant began to fill a tumbler from a big container. That personality said that the water in that container was impure as there was a dead lizard in it and so he asked for water from another container. It was brought and he drank. The Mujtahid then asked

where he was coming from and he replied that he had arrived from the town of Suleimaniyya.

The Mujtahid asked him when he had started from there and he replied, 'I left there yesterday. Najib Pasha has entered the town with government forces and has conquered it. He has imprisoned the rebel governor Ahmed and in his place has appointed Abdulla Pasha as the Governor.' The distance from Suleimaniyya to Hilla took ten days to cover and I wondered how he had traversed it in a shorter time and yet neither the Governor of Hilla nor anyone else was aware of his visit. However, I remained quiet.

That high impressive personality then rose to leave. The Mujtahid escorted him to the door. On returning inside the Mujtahid asked the students why they did not ask him how he could cover the distance from Suleimaniyya to Hilla overnight when it would ordinarily take ten days to cover? The students asked the Mujtahid why he did not pose the question himself; he revealed that at that time he was out of his senses. He then asked us to go and look for him, although he said he was sure that we would not see him again for he was then certain that the person was the current Imam Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) himself. The container of water was not in sight and yet he knew there was a dead lizard in it, which fact was verified by the servant. Again on the religious issue he was so erudite and so clear. At that stage I narrated how I had met him on the way, how he mentioned about my business loss and not having performed Hajj. All were convinced that he was none but Hazrat Hujjat (a.s.) himself. Ten days later the Governor of Hilla received the news of the conquest of Suleimaniyya which further fortified the conviction of all present that they were fortunate to have met the Imam (a.s.) and thanked Allah.

## **THE FOURTH EVENT:**

### **THE STUDENT OF NAJAF MEET HAZRAT MAHDI (A.S.) IN THE MOSQUE AT KUFA**

The scholar of Najaf Sheikh Abdul Hadi reports, "A believer in Najaf, Haji Ali always visited the mosque of Sahlah every Wednesday eve. Once I asked him if he had ever had the good fortune of meeting the Imam Mahdi (a.s.). He said that a number of years ago when he was a young student he visited the mosque every Wednesday eve with other students and believers and thereafter spent the remainder of the night in the mosque at Kufa.

They were eleven in number and every week one of them had the duty of preparing and bringing food, tea and tobacco. Once it was the turn of a shopkeeper. He arranged all the items and kept them ready in his shop. However, when he set out for the mosque he forgot to carry them. We visited the mosque at Sahlah and after evening prayers proceeded to the mosque at Kufa and after our salutation and prayers assembled as usual in a room there to eat. All were silent. The shopkeeper whose turn it was to bring the food also remained quiet with his head lowered in shame. He admitted that though he had prepared the food he forgot to bring it along. He promised that the next morning when he opened the shop he would show us the food. We braced ourselves to spend the cold night in hunger. Suddenly we heard a knock at our door and one of us who was the most hungry in the cold of that night went to open the door asking who it was knocking the door at midnight.

He encountered a personality luminous and awe-inspiring and immediately greeted him. He received a reply in a voice that gladdened him. He then inquired what he could do for him and the personage asked, do you wish to have a guest for this evening? He said, you are most welcome. The personage entered and sat amongst us. We experienced an inner feeling of pleasure and happiness as a result of his presence amongst us. He commenced conversing with us in a sweet and soft tone.

He narrated traditions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) referring to him as ‘our grandfather’.

After a short while he said, you have not had your tea and so I have brought with me in my basket all the necessary ingredients for tea. Please help yourself. We were all so delighted that in that cold night, if we could not have had any food, a cup of tea was so welcome. One of us picked from the basket tea, sugar and all the utensils requisite for making tea including even coal. While one of us was busy preparing tea this personage continued to refresh us with choicest traditions. After tea, he replaced his utensils into his basket and continued conversing with us. After a little while again he said, ‘You must all be hungry for tonight you have not yet had anything to eat. Please get some food out of my basket and help yourselves.’ We became infinitely pleased at this offer and thanked Allah. One of us removed from the basket a covered utensil full of food. When we uncovered it, we found deliciously prepared rice with meat on top. It was still so hot that it appeared to have been just cooked. We all helped ourselves to our contentment. On noticing that there was still some food left over he asked us to send it to the attendant of the mosque.

As it was then late hours of the night he asked us to sleep and so we all fell asleep. At dawn we woke up for morning prayers and as we were preparing to return to Najaf we recalled our guest. We began looking for him in every corner of the mosque but failed to trace him. We asked the attendant of the mosque but he said he had seen none enter the mosque the previous night and that the door had remained continuously closed so that no one could have gone out either.

We all were utterly amazed. It then dawned on us as to how in a little basket we should have found all the utensils for making tea with no food inside it and yet after a short while we should have got out of it a utensil full of food but no sign of any item for preparing tea. Moreover hours had passed on that cold night since he had arrived and yet when the food

was served it was so hot and fresh and of such quantity that all eleven of us could eat to our contentment. We were convinced that inexplicable as all this was, it must have been a miracle. It also then occurred to us that the personage in narrating traditions repeatedly referred to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) as his grandfather and eventually disappeared from our sight. We became sure that the guest we had the previous night was none other than our Imam Hazrat Hujjat (a.s.). We pitied ourselves that we had failed to identify him during the night.

### **THE FIFTH EVENT:**

#### **THE PLACE OF ABODE OF THE CURRENT IMAM (A.S.) IN HILLA**

Aqa Hujjatul Islam Sayyid Ali Akber Khui, a leading scholar in Mashad states, "When I went to Iraq to visit the Mausoleums of our Imams (a.s.). I proceeded to Hilla where I saw a building with a dome. On its main door was written *Makame Sahebuz-Zaman* and a number of people were visiting the place. I inquired from the people about the building and was informed that it belonged to a scholar Aqa Sheikh Ali Hallawi who was extremely pious and always remembered the current Imam (a.s.). He used to ask why the Imam did not reappear when the traditions mention only 313 companions of the Imam (a.s.) and there were so many faithfuls in the world with Hilla alone having over a thousand pious scholars. Such was his constant query. Once alone he was taking a stroll in a garden outside the city. Again he was lost in the same thoughts when he suddenly noticed an Arab approaching him and after salutation asked him what he was saying to himself in anger. He replied that he was confused that sin and injustice had become so common in the world and yet the Imam (a.s.) did not reappear. He needed only 313 sincere companions while Hilla alone could offer more than a thousand pious scholars. He was replied, 'O Sheikh I am your Imam. It is not as you think. In the entire Hilla only you and a butcher in the city are worthy of being my true companions. I will prove this to you. You pick 40 out of the most pious scholars in Hilla and tell them that on Thursday night the Imam (a.s.) will visit your house. Invite them there after Isha prayers.



You should also get two goats and tie them on the upper terrace of your house and ask the butcher to bring along with him his knife. Arrange for the guests to be seated in the courtyard of your house and I will arrive there myself.' Sheikh Ali was highly excited on hearing all this but suddenly found no one before him.

He immediately contacted the butcher and narrated to him the entire episode. Then as directed, he invited forty virtuous and pious scholars who were all exceedingly delighted to hear of the promised appearance of the Imam (a.s.). He also purchased two goats for the occasion. On Thursday evening all the invitees duly assembled and occupied themselves in remembrance of Allah asking Him to send His Mercy on the Prophet (s.a.w.) and his Progeny (*Salawat*). In a short while an unknown fragrance filled the place and a bright light entered the house. Steadily it passed through those present in the courtyard and proceeded up the steps leading to the terrace. All acclaimed in ecstasy the presence of the Imam (a.s.) by reciting *Takbir* and *Salawat*. Yet they had only seen the light. They had not noticed the shape of any person. After a short while they heard a voice from the terrace asking Sheikh Ali, to send the butcher to the terrace. The butcher went up. The Imam (a.s.) ordered him to slaughter one goat. By a miracle of the Imam (a.s.) the goat did not emit any sound at all. The blood of the slaughtered goat flowed through the eaves of the roof down into the courtyard. When the guests saw the blood they were terrified. They all became convinced that the Imam (a.s.) had killed the butcher. Then they heard a voice asking Sheikh Ali to go to the terrace. When he had reached the terrace, the Imam (a.s.) ordered the butcher to slaughter the second goat. The blood of the second goat streamed down the eaves of the roof into the courtyard. All the guests trembled in their conviction that even Sheikh Ali had been killed. They feared that theirs would be the next turn and all would be killed. To save their lives they all escaped; not one remained behind. Then the Imam (a.s.) asked Sheikh Ali to go down and bring the guests to him to the terrace informing him, however, that he would find none below. When Sheikh Ali came down he found the courtyard empty.

He returned to the terrace stunned. The Imam (a.s.) asked him, ‘Are you now convinced how much faith these people have in their Imam? To save their lives they have all run away; they would not even wait to obtain an audience with me. Henceforth stop querying about my reappearance. Of the forty pious persons you picked in Hilla, except for the two of you all have run away. Such is also the position in other countries.’ Having said so the Imam (a.s.) disappeared from sight.”

In honour of the visit of the Imam (a.s.) to his house Sheikh Ali renovated the house and dedicated it as a *waqf* and named it, *Makame Sahebuz-Zaman*. To this day, the building stands in Hilla and is visited by many pilgrims. Many have asked for their wishes there and have been granted.

Apart from Hilla there are many other places attributed to the Imam (a.s.):

1. In the *Wadi-us-Salaam* graveyard in Najaf is a place renowned as *Makame Sahebuz-Zaman* and is constantly visited by pilgrims who have had their wishes granted at that place.
2. Between Najaf and Kufa is a mosque known as SAHLAH where there is a place named after the Imam (a.s.).
3. In the town of Na’maniyyah, situated between Baghdad and Wasta, also is a place named after the Imam (a.s.) and is visited by many pilgrims.

There are other places too which have been visited by the Imam (a.s.). In the memory of his visit pilgrims visit the places to offer their salutations to him and ask for their wishes.

In the above-mentioned place in Na’maniyyah a scholar called Sheikh Ibne Abil Jawad had the good fortune of meeting the Imam (a.s.). He reports, “I was blessed to meet the Imam (a.s.) and said to him that two

holy places had been named after him, one in Na'maniyyah and the other in Hilla. He replied 'On the eve of and on the day of Tuesday I come to Na'maniyyah. On the eve of Friday and on the day of Friday I come to Hilla. But the people in Hilla are ill-mannered. They do not accord respect to me or my place. They do not salute me as they enter the building and do not recite *Salawat* twelve times upon my ancestors. If a faithful visits my place in Hilla, offers salutation to me, recites *Salawat* twelve times, recites two rakaats of namaz, supplicates to Allah and then asks Allah for his wishes, they will certainly be granted.'

I asked him "O my lord, please teach me the supplication to be recited at Hilla."

The Imam (a.s.) repeated the supplication three times so that I could remember it. It is as follows:

ALLAHUMMA KAD AKHZATTAADIBU MINNI HATTA MASSANNIYAZZAR  
WAANTA ARHAMURRAHIMIN, WAIN KAN MAKTARAFTU MINAZZUNUB  
ASTAHIKKU BIHI AZAF AZAF MA'ADDABTINI BIHI WANTA HALIMUN ZU  
AN-NATIN TA'FU AN KASIR HATTA YASBIKU AFWAKA AZABAK.

This supplication should be recited three times followed by *Salawat*.

#### **THE SIXTH EVENT:**

#### **THE MIRACLE OF THE CURING OF THE WOUND ON THE THIGH OF ISMAIL HARKALI**

The Shia Scholar Ali Ibne Isa Arbali has set out in his book, *Kashful Gumma*, the case of Ismail bin Hasan Harkali which occurred during the reign of the Abbasid Khalifa, Mustansir. He reports that Ismail bin Hasan Harkali had died during his time but he had never met him. However he learnt from his son Shamshudin that his father Ismail had narrated to him the following:

"When I was young I had a wound in my right thigh. It deepened and during winter it would open up and blood and puss would ooze from it.

I proceeded from my town Harkal to Hilla to consult the eminent Shia Mujtahid Agha Raziyyudin Ali Ibne Tawoos. He showed my wound to the doctors in Hilla but they were of the unanimous opinion that the wound had deepened right to a vein so that an operation on the wound carried the risk of cutting the vein which could result in instant death. The Mujtahid therefore advised me that as he was going to Baghdad I should accompany him so that we could consult some Christian doctors there. On examining my wound they too advised that they had no treatment for it. In those circumstances, I suggested that before I returned home I should visit the shrines at Samarra. The Mujtahid approved of my plan and even made financial and other arrangements for my trip.

On reaching Samarra I visited the shrines and proceeded to the basement. I recited the salutation there, supplicated and wept profusely seeking the assistance of my Imam (a.s.). On Thursday morning I went out of the city to the river, performed an ablutionary bath (*Ghusal*), washed my clothes and turned back to the city. Approaching the wall of the city I saw four horsemen, two of whom were young and one elderly and between them was a personage impressive and shining with a sword hanging on his side. I assumed they were shepherds. On seeing me they stopped and greeted me and I responded. The impressive personage who was in the middle said, 'Ismail, you wish to return to your home tomorrow?' I replied, 'Yes I am very keen to get back home.' He then asked me to go close to him and I went up to his horse. He placed his one hand on my shoulder and bending down he pressed hard on the wound on my thigh with his other hand. It caused me much pain. He then reverted to his erect position on the horse. The elderly gentleman to his right said to me, 'O Ismail, you have secured your salvation.' I replied, 'By the grace of Allah we shall all secure salvation.' I was amazed that my name was thus being mentioned all the time when I did not know them at all and was a total stranger in that city. Then the elderly gentleman revealed to me that the personage in the centre was the current Imam Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) himself.

I instantly kissed his feet. He advanced and I followed behind him. Then the Hazrat asked me to go back to the city but I said that having met him I would never part from him. However the Imam (a.s.) again ordered me to go, adding that course was better for me. Nevertheless I continued to walk behind him when the elderly gentleman said, ‘O Ismail, are you not ashamed that your Imam has twice asked you to go away and yet you stay on in disobedience to him?’ I became deeply despondent and stood dumb-founded. The Imam (a.s.) turned back to me and said, ‘When you reach Baghdad the Khalifa Abu Ja‘far Mustansir will send for you and hearing that you have become cured will present you with a thousand ashrafi. Do not accept them. Ask my son Sayyid Ibne Tawoos to write in my name to the merchant Ali Ibne Awz to give to you as much money as you need and I will also recommend to him to make payment to you.’

Suddenly all the four horsemen had disappeared from my sight. I remained standing in deep sorrow that I had missed them and then sat down and wept profusely. Eventually I returned to Samarra, pale and sad. The attendants in the shrine were surprised to see my condition and inquired after my health. I asked them who the four horsemen who had just come out of the city were. They thought they would be the shepherds around the city. I explained to them that one of the four was Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) himself. They were astonished and wondered why I did not ask him to cure me. I narrated the entire episode to them and then removed the garment from the wound. (Before then in the sorrow that had overcome me on my separation from the Imam (a.s.) I had not even thought of looking at the wound). They also exclaimed that there was not even a trace of the wound. I began to doubt if the wound was not on the other thigh but there was no trace of it on the other thigh either. I was immediately surrounded by all the people there who began to recite blessings on the Prophet (s.a.w.) out of excitement. They tore my garment to get pieces of it as sacred cloth. I feared that they would trample me to death. The attendants also became apprehensive and whisked me away to an inner portion of a private room for my protection. After a short while a magistrate of the city came to me and

asked me when I had left Baghdad and I replied to him that I had set out from there a week ago. The next day I left Sammarra for Baghdad. I spent the night on the way in a settlement and entered Baghdad early the following morning. News had already reached Baghdad of my experience and a huge crowd had gathered on the Baghdad bridge to receive me. When I reached the bridge they asked me my name. On hearing it they surrounded me and considering my garments sacred, they started tearing pieces from it. The police intervened and rescued me from them. They took me to the city where again I was surrounded by people. The Mujtahid, Sayyid Ali Ibne Tawoos, visited me and I narrated the entire incident to him.

He had seen the deep wound on my thigh and so lifted my garments to look for the wound himself. When he did not even notice a trace of it he became unconscious. When he regained conscious he wept profusely and took me to the house of the Minister of the Khalifa Mustansir. The Minister was a resident of Qum and Shia in faith. He examined my both thighs and when he noticed that there was not even a mark of the wound he called the Christian surgeons whom I had consulted so that they could satisfy themselves. They confirmed that they had examined my wound and had advised that the only available treatment was to cut the wound open which entailed a danger to my life. The Minister then asked them how long it would have taken for the wound to heal if it had been cut open and they said it would have taken at least two months to heal but a white scar and a hole would have been left in its place. The Minister then asked them how long ago they had seen the wound and they said only ten days had elapsed. The Minister then removed the garment from my thigh and they were astounded to notice that there was no scar in the place of the wound but only clear skin. One of the Christian doctors immediately exclaimed that it was the work of Jesus. The Minister retorted that they had failed to treat the wound which was now cured beyond recognition and the Minister knew very well whose miracle that was.

The Minister informed the Khalifa Mustansir who called for me, examined my thigh and satisfied himself that it was the miracle of Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). He offered me one thousand gold coins but I declined to accept. He asked me why I was refusing the offer as if I was afraid of somebody. I replied him that the Imam (a.s.) who has cured me forbade me to accept the offer. On hearing this, the Khalifa became so sad that he wept. I left his place. In accordance with the directions of the Imam (a.s.) the Mujtahid addressed a letter to Ali Ibne Awz who gave me the amount I needed.”



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