

# Existence of Al Qaim عليه السلام

*Removing doubts about Imam Al Mahdi عليه السلام from the minds of the  
Shia*

*By Ibn Mukhtār*

# Introduction

One of the doubts faced by the [English speaking] Twelver Shi'i community online is the claim made by "charlatans" that there is no sahih hadith on the birth of the 12th Imam عليه السلام and therefore his existence cannot be proven. This is an illogical conclusion reached through false premises.. For the sake of argument I will accept this lie and still demonstrate that, even if this is true, it doesn't disprove the existence of the Imam عليه السلام at all thus showing that our belief in an Imam in Ghayba is built upon concrete.

The first question that needs to be answered is; Does not having an authentic hadith on the birth of the Imam عليه السلام disprove his existence. The answer is no. There are reports talking about people meeting him as a child before his father died<sup>1</sup> - That is enough to prove his existence. There are reports of his father confirming his existence<sup>2</sup> - That is enough to prove his existence. There are reports of people meeting him in the minor Ghayba<sup>3</sup> - That is enough to prove his existence. There are so many reasons why this argument falls. Hence not having sahih reports about the birth of the 12th Imam عليه السلام doesn't mean there's no proof for his existence, I will try my best to lay out my points in a clear and simple manner so even the least knowledgeable of the Shi'a of Amīr al-Mu'minīn Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام can understand. I would like to remind the reader again and state that this is written for the less educated Shia, and I know those who are more knowledgeable will feel as if the proofs I brought could be strengthened and elaborated upon but I cannot since I intend for this Doc to be short and precise. I am restricted in terms of the types of arguments I can make since the average Shi'i wouldn't have a clue what the Asl of Ibn Abi Umair رحمه الله عليه is for example so I am only going with simple arguments which don't need much elaboration.

On a side note, for Sahih hadiths on the birth of the Imam عليه السلام refer to the RevisitingTheSalaf article on the topic which can be found [here](#). The source for this doubt is very apparent. It comes from a 4 minute clip<sup>4</sup> of Kamal Al Haydari with english subtitles uploaded by the "Al Islaah" YouTube channel. He begins with why this must be discussed at a scholarly level. He says questioning such a belief is not controversial since scholars even question Allah's existence سبحانه وتعالى. He then puts forward his research on if the birth of the 12th Hujjah عليه السلام can be proven using the methodology of Sayed Al Khoei رحمه الله which he describes as "Manhaj Al Sanadi". He first reads out al-'Allāma al-Majlisī's رحمه الله عليه Mir'at al-'uqul and shows how only 8 out of 31 hadiths in the chapter<sup>5</sup> on the birth of the Imam عليه السلام are authentic. He then quotes Allama Behbudi who only included 2 narrations from that chapter in his Sahih Al-Kāfi. After that he explains how having one or two or five authentic hadiths on the subject do

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<sup>1</sup> The Return of Al-Mahdi

<sup>2</sup> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/1/4/76/2>

<sup>3</sup> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/1/4/77/1>

<sup>4</sup> Is it possible to prove the birth of the 12th Imam using chain-based methodology? | Sayyid Kamal Hayderi

<sup>5</sup> Can be found here: <https://thaqalayn.net/chapter/1/4/125>

not lead to certainty since this is a matter of Aqīdah. He goes on to quote Asif Muhsini, a student of Sayed Al Khoei رحمه الله, who says there are over 40 hadith on the subject but only 2 of them are reliable. Even then, for those two to be reliable, lenient standards must be applied. He reminds the viewer and the audience of scholars behind the camera that he is doing this for the strength of the Madhab and not for its weakness. He wants people to feel as if the scholars do not shy away from any matter and attack them head on in the Hawza. That is a brief summary of the video. I am not here to refute the Sayed neither am I here to say he's wrong. I will simply put forward my claim that, even if we are to accept what he is saying and accept that there are **zero** authentic reports on the matter, we can still achieve certainty in our belief in Ghayba. I will demonstrate this with simple arguments built upon mass transmitted hadiths from the Imams عليه السلام.

## Argument No 1 - There is always an Imam عليه السلام

One of the beliefs of the Imamiyyah is that there has always - since the creation of Adam عليه السلام - been an Imam/a hujjah/a divine authority/a representative of Allah سبحانه وتعالى present on Earth. This belief is based on reports which are “Mutawatir al Ma’nawī”<sup>6</sup> [Mass transmitted in meaning] from the Imams عليه السلام even in the Sunni Corpus. This belief was also held by the early Shia and there is even Quranic evidence for it.

Shaykh Muḥammad b. Ya’qūb b. Ishāq al-Kulaynī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, the author of Al-Kāfi has a few chapters dedicated specifically to this belief at the very beginning of Kitab Al Hujjah [The Book about people with Divine Authority] but reports about this are scattered all over the book. The chapters focused on this belief are the following:

- [1] The necessity of the presence of Divine Authority among the people
- [4] The issue that Allah’s holding people accountable remains unjustified without the Imam
- [5] The Issue that the Earth at no time is without a Person with Divine Authority
- [6] The Issue that even if only two people would remain on earth one of them would certainly be the Imam, the person with divine authority

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<sup>6</sup> Shahīd al-Thānī: [The *mutawātir* report] is that which has been narrated in such abundance that it generally becomes impossible for all the narrators to have conspired [to fabricate] a lie. And this [abundance of narration] continues in all the generations of narrators since it multiplies because people [continuously] narrate it from one another back until the first narrator, in such a way that the beginning of the chain is like its end and the middle of the chain is like the two ends.

### Types of Mutawātir Reports

*Mutawātir* reports are categorized into two types: *mutawātir lafẓī* and *mutawātir ma’nawī*.

*Mutawātir lafẓī* is a report that is transmitted in the same manner with the same wording by every narrator in every generation.

Examples include:

*I leave behind you two weighty things.*

أَتِي تَارَكَ فِيكُمْ الثَّقَلَيْنِ

مَنْ كُنْتَ مَوْلَاهُ فَهَذَا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ

*Whomsoever I am the master of, ‘Alī is the master of*

*Mutawātir ma’nawī* is a report whose transmitters do not agree on one wording but agree upon a single meaning. In such a report, all the transmitters and narrators in all generations transmit the same content with differing expressions but indicate the same single meaning with implicative indication (*dalāla iltizāmī*) or partial indication (*dalāla taḍammunī*). [*Iqra-Online*]

As I said before, these aren't the only reports [in Al-Kāfi] which talk about or imply this belief. Later on, I shall demonstrate how the Imams عليه السلام explanation of a verse proves this since there is an entire chapter on it. Below, is a sample of what the hadiths in these chapters say:

1- عَدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدَ بْنِ عِيسَى عَنْ مُحَمَّدَ بْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ عَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ أَبِي الْعَلَاءِ قَالَ قُلْتُ لَأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) تَكُونُ الْأَرْضُ لَيْسَ فِيهَا إِمَامٌ قَالَ لَا قُلْتُ يَكُونُ إِمَامَانِ قَالَ لَا إِلَّا وَاحِدَهُمَا صَامِتٌ.

1. A number of our people has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn 'Isa from Muhammad ibn abu 'Umayr from al-Husayn ibn abu al-'Ala' who has said the following. "I abu Abdillah عليه السلام, 'Can there be a time on earth without Imam?' The Imam said, "No, it can not be without Imam." I asked, "Can there be two Imams at a time?" He said, "No, unless one is quiet." (Al-Kāfi)<sup>7</sup>

2- عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ مُحَمَّدَ بْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ عَنْ مَنْصُورِ بْنِ يُونُسَ وَسَعْدَانَ بْنِ مُسْلِمٍ عَنْ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) قَالَ سَمِعْتَهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لَا تَخْلُو إِلَّا وَفِيهَا إِمَامٌ كَيْمَا إِنْ زَادَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ شَيْئًا رَدَّهُمْ وَإِنْ نَقَصُوا شَيْئًا أَتَمَّهُ لَهُمْ.

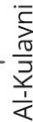
2. Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from Muhammad ibn abu 'Umayr from Mansur ibn Yunus and Su'dan ibn Muslim from Ishaq ibn 'Ammara from abu Abdallah عليه السلام who has said the following. "I heard the Imam عليه السلام saying, "The earth is never left without an Imam so that if the believers would add anything it would be brought back and if they would reduce anything it would be completed." (Al-Kāfi)<sup>8</sup>

The chapters I listed above have in total 27 narrations. On the next page is a chart to demonstrate the mass transmission of reports of this kind.

<sup>7</sup> Allamah Baqir al-Majlisi: حسن - Mir'at al 'Uqul Fi Sharh Akhbar Al al Rasul (2/294)

<sup>8</sup> Allamah Baqir al-Majlisi: حسن موقوف - Mir'at al 'Uqul Fi Sharh Akhbar Al al Rasul (295/2)

Imam Ali AS



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Even from among these chapters I have skipped a few chains since they were really bad and unreliable. Regardless, the reader must realize that this isn't ALL the chains in Al-Kāfi about this belief. There are more scattered here and there in the hadith, both clear and unclear. Below are some unclear reports which also imply the existence of a divine authority at all times.

2- عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ عَنْ ابْنِ أُذَيْنَةَ عَنْ بُرَيْدِ الْعَجَلِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) فِي قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) الْمُنْذِرُ وَلِكُلِّ زَمَانٍ مَنَا هَادٍ يَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى مَا جَاءَ بِهِ نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) ثُمَّ الْهَادَةُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ عَلِيٌّ ثُمَّ الْأَوْصِيَاءُ وَاحِدٌ بَعْدَ وَاحِدٍ.

2. Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from Muhammad ibn abu 'Umayr from ibn 'Udhayna from Buray al-'Ijli from Ima abu Ja'far عليه السلام who has said the following about the words of Allah سبحانه وتعالى.

“(Muhammad), you are only a Warner. **For every nation there is a guide.** (13:7)” **The Imam (a.s.) said that at all times there is a guide from us** who guides people to the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Of the guides who possess Divine authority after the holy Prophet ﷺ is Amir al-Mu'minin عليه السلام and his successors one after the other.” (Al-Kāfi)<sup>9</sup>

This report is in the chapter called “The Imams عليه السلام are the only true guides”. It includes four reports on the interpretation of the ayah 13:7.

*And those who disbelieved say, "Why has a sign not been sent down to him from his Lord?" You are only a warner, and for every people is a guide.*

#### *The Holy Quran 13:7*

From the apparent reading of the verse, we realize that **every nation/people** has a guide for themselves. The verse is vague and open for interpretation but the Shi'a of Ali ibn Abi Talib عليه السلام are blessed with Imams عليه السلام who inherited the knowledge of RasulAllah ﷺ, the man who was incharge of explaining the revelation to the people.

[We sent them] with clear proofs and written ordinances. And We revealed to you the message [i.e., the Qur'an] that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them and that they might give thought.

#### *The Holy Quran 16:44*

They have explained to us that this verse is talking about the Imams عليه السلام that existed from the creation of Adam عليه السلام till our time, this very second. This is a subtle proof for the same belief in another chapter of Al-Kāfi.

<sup>9</sup> Allamah Baqir al-Majlisi: حسن - Mir'at al 'Uqul Fi Sharh Akhbar Al al Rasul (2/344)

1- عَدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ عَنِ النَّضْرِ بْنِ سُوَيْدٍ عَنِ يَحْيَى الْحَلِيِّ عَنْ بُرَيْدِ بْنِ مُعَاوِيَةَ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ مُسْلِمٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) قَالَ إِنْ عَلِيَ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) كَانَ عَالِمًا وَالْعِلْمُ يَتَوَارَثُ وَلَنْ يَهْلِكَ عَالِمٌ إِلَّا بَقِيَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ مَنْ يَعْلَمُ عَلَيْهِ أَوْ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ.

1. A number of our people has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad from al-Husayn ibn Sa'id from al-Nadr ibn Suwayd from Yahya al-Halabi from Burayd ibn Mu'awiya from Muhammad ibn Muslim from abu 'Abdallah عليه السلام who has said the following. "Ali عليه السلام was a man of knowledge and knowledge is inherited. Whenever a man of knowledge<sup>10</sup> dies, **he leaves another man of knowledge behind** who possesses his knowledge or whatever Allah سبحانه وتعالى wants." (Al-Kāfi)<sup>11</sup>

The following hadith implies that every "man of knowledge" عليه السلام leaves behind another man of knowledge since knowledge is inherited.

- عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ حَمَّادِ بْنِ عَيْسَى عَنْ حَرِيزٍ عَنْ زُرَّارَةَ وَالْفَضِيلِ عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) قَالَ إِنْ الْعِلْمُ الَّذِي نَزَلَ مَعَ آدَمَ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) لَمْ يَرْفَعْ وَالْعِلْمُ يَتَوَارَثُ وَكَانَ عَلِيٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) عَالِمَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ وَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَهْلِكَ مِنْهُ عَالِمٌ قَطُّ إِلَّا خَلَفَهُ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ مَنْ يَعْلَمُ مِثْلَ عَلَيْهِ أَوْ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ.

2. Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from Hammad ibn Isa from Hariz from Zurarah and al-Fudayl from Abu Ja'far عليه السلام who has said the following. "The knowledge that came with Adam عليه السلام was not taken away. Knowledge is inherited. Ali عليه السلام was the knowledgeable person of this nation (Muslims). **No one from us has ever left this world without leaving behind one like him** in knowledge or what Allah سبحانه وتعالى wanted." (Al-Kāfi)<sup>12</sup>

3- مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنِ الْبَرْقِيِّ عَنِ النَّضْرِ بْنِ سُوَيْدٍ عَنِ يَحْيَى الْحَلِيِّ عَنْ عَبْدِ الْحَمِيدِ الطَّائِيِّ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ مُسْلِمٍ قَالَ قَالَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) إِنْ الْعِلْمُ يَتَوَارَثُ وَلَا يَمُوتُ عَالِمٌ إِلَّا وَتَرَكَ مِنْ يَعْلَمُ مِثْلَ عَلَيْهِ أَوْ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ.

3. Muhammad ibn Yahya has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad from al-Barqi from al-Nadr ibn Suwayd from Yahya al-Halabi from 'Abd al-Hamid al-Ta'i from Muhammad ibn Muslim from abu Ja'far عليه السلام who has said the following. "Knowledge is inherited. **No man of knowledge dies without leaving behind one who is as knowledgeable as his predecessor or what Allah wants.** (Al-Kāfi)<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The type of Alim being talked about here is one given knowledge by Allah سبحانه وتعالى. In another report in Al-Kāfi, the Imam عليه السلام describes Khidr and Dhul Qarnayn who were 2 non-Prophets as Alims.

عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ عَنِ ابْنِ أُذَيْنَةَ عَنْ بُرَيْدِ بْنِ مُعَاوِيَةَ عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ وَأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) قَالَ قُلْتُ لَهُ مَا مِثْلُكَ وَمِمَّنْ تَشَبَّهُونَ مِنْ مَضَى قَالَ صَاحِبُ مُوسَى وَذُو الْقَرْنَيْنِ كَانَا عَالِمَيْنِ وَلَمْ يَكُونَا نَبِيِّنِ.

5. Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from ibn abu 'Umayr from ibn 'Udhayna from Burayd ibn Mu'awiya who has said that he asked abu Ja'far and abu 'Abdallah عليه السلام the following. "What is your position? To whom of the people of the past do you resemble?" the Imam عليه السلام said, "I resemble the companion of Moses (al-Khidr) and Dhul Qarnayn who were two **scholars** but not two prophets." (Al-Kāfi)

<sup>11</sup> Allamah Baqir al-Majlisi: صحيح - Mir'at al 'Uqul Fi Sharh Akhbar Al al Rasul (3/11)

<sup>12</sup> Allamah Baqir al-Majlisi: حسن - Mir'at al 'Uqul Fi Sharh Akhbar Al al Rasul (3/12)

<sup>13</sup> Allamah Baqir al-Majlisi: صحيح - Mir'at al 'Uqul Fi Sharh Akhbar Al al Rasul (12/ 3)



The list for hadith which mention this goes on and on and remember, this is just Al-Kāfi. Al-Kulaynī narrated a little bit about everything in his Magnum opus. He covers topics like respecting scholars, Tawhid, Imamah, Prophethood and Fiqh. If we go to the books written specifically about Imamah and Ghayba then the number of narrations [on this topic] would exceed 100 (lower bound). Books like Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni'ma by Muḥammad b. Alī b. Babiwayh al-Qummi known as Al-Shaykh al-Ṣaduq رحمه الله عليه are filled to the brim with narrations like these. Furthermore, there is a specific mass transmitted hadith from *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* عليه السلام with over 40 chains. It is simply beautiful and theologically important for the Shi'a. Ibn Kathir puts it best.

*Ibn Kathir: A large number of Tabi'een have narrated from Kumayl, he has a famous (Mashhur) narration from Ali ibn Abi Talib عليه السلام that begins with: "No doubt these hearts are containers, and the best of them are those who retain most." And it is a long narration that a large number of trustworthy Huffaz have narrated it from him. There is a lot of advises in it and it is a good speech. May Allah سبحانه وتعالى be pleased with its teller. (Al-Bidaya Wa An-Nihaya, Vol 12, Pg 335)*

In Fact this hadith is so famous, scholars have stated that it doesn't need a chain.

*Abd Al-Barr: Ali ibn Abi Talib عليه السلام said to Kumayl b. Zīyād Al-Nakha'i, and that is a famous Hadith among the scholars, **which does not need a chain**, due to its fame among them... (Jami Bayaan Al-Ilm Wa Fadhila, Vol 2, Pg 984)*

RevisitingTheSalaf<sup>14</sup> has created a chart to demonstrate how mass transmitted this hadith is. This is the comment they left above it: *The following chart shows that at the first level at least seven people have narrated this narration from Kumayl, in the next level at least eleven people, at the next level at least thirteen, at the next level at least fifteen, at the next level at least seventeen, at the next level at least thirty and so on. This chart contains more than forty chains, more than eighteen from Shia sources and more than twenty three from Sunni sources. Although, this chart contains not all chains that exist, rather just some of them.*

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<sup>14</sup> Necessity For Allah's سبحانه وتعالى Proof Upon Earth

امير المؤمنين علي عليه السلام

عنہ.

I will quote it from Al-Amāli of Shaykh al-Mufid [The report is exactly the same in Sunni books]:

3. He said: Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn reported to me from his father, from Muhammad ibn Abul Qasim Majeelawayh, from Muhammad ibn Ali al-Sayrafi, from Nasr ibn Muzahim, from Amru ibn Sa'd, from Fudhail ibn Khudaij, from Kumail ibn Ziyad al-Nakha'i رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who said: Once I was with Amirul Mu'mineen عليه السلام in the mosque of Kufa, and when we completed our late evening prayers (i.e. Isha), he took me by his hands and came out of the mosque. He did not say a word till we arrived at the rear part of Kufa. As he entered the desert, he heaved a sigh and said:

"O Kumail, no doubt these hearts (i.e. minds) are containers, and the best of them are those who retain most. Remember from me what I say; people are of three categories: the learned men (of piety), the students on the path of salvation, and (the third one) the riffraff of the society, following every croak of the crows, bending as the wind blows; never benefiting from the light of knowledge, nor finding a refuge with a strong supporter. O Kumail, knowledge is better than wealth; for knowledge guards you, while you have to guard wealth; and wealth is diminished when spent, while knowledge grows and increases when put in use. O Kumail, to have liking and affinity for a learned man is the best way to entrench one's faith in Allah, it enables one to be obedient to Him during lifetime, and to be praiseworthy after one has died. O Kumail, dividend from wealth disappears with its loss, O Kumail, the hoarders of wealth have died, while the learned men exist forever; their bodies have disappeared but their teachings and wisdom are ingrained in their hearts." **(And then pointing to his chest, he said): "Here is well-grounded, plentiful knowledge; I wish it had true recipients and adherents, (I would have imparted it). But, unfortunately, some unscrupulous men of understanding have tried to misuse it, using religion as a weapon to earn the worldly gain, and seeking undue power by divine authority over Allah's سبحانه وتعالى creatures, abusing His bounties which He bestowed upon them.** So the feeble-minded people accepted them as reliable; or took them as compliant with (divine) wisdom, discarding the true guardians of truth. **(The truth is that) such people (who they have adopted as their guides) have no insight into its ramifications; with the result that with the slightest confusion, doubt enters their minds. Neither of them could be the true carrier of knowledge.** And then there are those with insatiable lust, easily misled by the pleasures of flesh, or enticed by accumulating wealth, not at all among those who care for religion. They very much resemble the grazing cattle. Thus, knowledge dies with the death of such carriers. **Yet, the earth is never devoid of either a manifest divine power, or the one in concealment, ensuring that His clear signs are not lost. Surely, with those fewer people of enormous import, Allah سبحانه وتعالى protects His proof, till they succeed to transmit it further to their likes, and plant it deep in their hearts. They are the ones overwhelmed by the (true) knowledge of certitude, and have made it easy for themselves to tread on the path which men in luxury found difficult. They derive pleasure and enjoyment from things which repel the ignorant. Though they live on earth with their bodies, their souls hang onto the higher plane. They are the (true) representatives of Allah سبحانه وتعالى on His earth, and the ones who invite (people) to His religion. Alas! How keen I am to have sight of them! And I seek forgiveness from Allah سبحانه وتعالى for me and for you all.**" Then he withdrew his hand from mine and said: "You may leave when you like." (Al-Amāli)

Any lover of *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* عليه السلام will absolutely fall in love with this narration. It is filled with wisdom. Regardless, we must stick to the topic. Ali عليه السلام says something very important in this hadith:

*Yet, the earth is never devoid of either a **manifest** divine power, or the one in **concealment**, ensuring that His clear signs are not lost.*

I feel as If every reader can “read between the lines” and understand what Ali عليه السلام is referring to here. This is exactly what we believe. Allah سبحانه وتعالى appoints a divine authority (حجة) for every age. Either this divine authority is apparent/manifest/present or he is in concealment. Surely this can only mean one thing. Ghayba! Ali عليه السلام goes on to describe these divine authorities:

*“Allah سبحانه وتعالى protects His proof, till they succeed to transmit it further to their likes, and plant it deep in their hearts. They are the ones overwhelmed by the (true) knowledge of certitude”*

One must notice that only a few lines before Ali عليه السلام said:

*(And then pointing to his chest, he said): "Here is well-grounded, plentiful knowledge; I wish it had true recipients and adherents, (I would have imparted it).*

A possible objection that can be made here is that Ali عليه السلام speaking in third person so he cant be one of these “divine authorities”:

They are the (true) representatives of Allah سبحانه وتعالى on His earth, and the ones who invite (people) to His religion. Alas! How keen I am to have sight of them!

Anyone unfamiliar with the hadith of Ahlulbayt عليه السلام would start to doubt but the Imams عليه السلام constantly talk in third person. This is something scattered all over the Shi'i hadith corpus.

14- أَبُو عَلِيٍّ الْأَشْعَرِيُّ عَنْ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ مُوسَى الْخَشَّابِ عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ سَمَاعَةَ عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ رِبَاطٍ عَنْ ابْنِ أُذَيْنَةَ عَنْ رِزَارَةَ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) يَقُولُ الْإِثْنَا عَشَرَ الْأَمَامَ مِنْ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كُلِّهِمْ مُحَدَّثٌ مِنْ وَلَدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) وَوَلَدِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) فَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) وَعَلِيٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) هُمَا الْوَالِدَانِ.

14. Abu Ali al-Ash'ari has narrated from 'Ubaydallah from al-Hassan ibn Musa al-Khashshab from Ali ibn Sam'Abdallah from Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ribat from 'Udhayna from Zurara who has said the following. “I heard abu Ja'far عليه السلام say, ‘There will be twelve Imams from the family of Muhammad and they all will be (Muhaddathun), persons to whom angles speak. They will be the descendants of the Messenger of Allah and Ali ibn abu Talib عليه السلام. The Messenger of Allah and Ali are their ancestors.” (Al-Kāfi)<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Allamah Baqir al-Majlisi: مجهول - Mir'at al 'Uqul Fi Sharh Akhbar Al al Rasul (6/230)

1- عَدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ بْنِ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ زُرَّارَةَ قَالَ سَأَلْتُ أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) عَنْ قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَبِيًّا مَا الرُّسُولُ وَمَا النَّبِيُّ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ الَّذِي يَرَى فِي مَنَامِهِ وَيَسْمَعُ الصَّوْتَ وَلَا يَعَيْنُ الْمَلِكَ وَالرُّسُولَ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ الصَّوْتَ وَيَرَى فِي الْمَنَامِ وَيَعَيْنُ الْمَلِكَ قُلْتُ الْإِمَامُ مَا مَنَزَلَتْهُ قَالَ يَسْمَعُ الصَّوْتَ وَلَا يَرَى وَلَا يَعَيْنُ الْمَلِكَ ثُمَّ تَلَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ وَلَا مُحَدِّثٍ.

1. A number of our people has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn abu Nasr from Tha'laba ibn Maymun from Zurara who has said the following "I asked abu 'Abdallah عليه السلام about the words of Allah عزَّ وجلَّ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَبِيًّا مَا الرُّسُولُ وَمَا النَّبِيُّ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ الَّذِي يَرَى فِي مَنَامِهِ وَيَسْمَعُ الصَّوْتَ وَلَا يَعَيْنُ الْمَلِكَ وَالرُّسُولَ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ الصَّوْتَ وَيَرَى فِي الْمَنَامِ وَيَعَيْنُ الْمَلِكَ قُلْتُ الْإِمَامُ مَا مَنَزَلَتْهُ قَالَ يَسْمَعُ الصَّوْتَ وَلَا يَرَى وَلَا يَعَيْنُ الْمَلِكَ ثُمَّ تَلَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ وَلَا مُحَدِّثٍ." The Imam said, "A prophet is one who sees things in his dream and hears the voice but does not see the angel. The messenger is one who hears the voice, in his dreams and sees the angel." I then said, "What is the position of the Imam?" The Imam عليه السلام said, "He hears the voice but does not see and observe the angel" Then he recited the following verse of the Holy Quran. 'Satan would try to tamper with the desires of every Prophet or Messenger or Muhaddith (Muhaddith is a commentary of Imam عليه السلام, whom We sent .'" (22:52) (Al-Kāfi)<sup>16</sup>

For further reading, here is a really long report where the Imam عليه السلام describes an Imam in third person: (Al-Kāfi)<sup>17</sup>

As one can clearly see, the objection is easily refuted and dismissed. This belief - or a twisted version of it - was also held by the early Shia. Farīd al-Baḥraynī, a famous polemicist in the English world, wrote an article<sup>18</sup> on a narrator named Abbād bin Ya'qūb Al-Rawājīnī described as "a third century Kufan narrator". In the article, Farīd lists Abbād's "extreme" Shi'i beliefs.

<sup>16</sup> Allamah Baqir al-Majlisi: صحيح - Mir'at al 'Uqul Fi Sharh Akhbar Al al Rasul (287/ 2)

<sup>17</sup> Allamah Baqir al-Majlisi: صحيح - Mir'at al 'Uqul Fi Sharh Akhbar Al al Rasul (2/400)

<sup>18</sup> [The Shia Narrator with a Double-Life](#)

## The Extreme Narrations of `Abbād in Shīa Books

The narrations of `Abbād bin Ya'qūb in his *as/* show another side in the character of `Abbād. These narrations contain the following beliefs:

- Allah created the Prophet – peace be upon him – , Ali, and eleven Imams, from His light.[20]
- The Imams are spoken to by angels.[21]
- The earth would collapse without the Imams.[22]
- Allah admonished Makkah, for thinking highly of itself, then praises Karbalā'. [23]
- Abū Bakr, `Omar, Abū `Ubayda, and Sālim conspired to prevent `Alī from becoming a caliph.[24]

It goes without saying that `Abbād would not been given a free pass if he was to narrate these narrations to Sunnīs.

This was based on what he narrated [Farīd is arguing that he fabricated these narrations himself]. The hadith in support of this belief basically say the same thing.

1 - Narrated to us my father; and Muhammad bin Hasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - they said: Narrated to us Saad bin Abdullah that: Narrated to us Muhammad bin Isa bin Ubaid; and Muhammad bin Husain bin Abil Khattab from Muhammad bin Fudail from Abi Hamza Thumali from Abi Abdullah عليه السلام that he asked him:

“Can the earth remain without an Imam?” He replied: “If the earth is without an Imam for a moment, **it will indeed sink into itself.**”

2 - Narrated to us Muhammad bin Hasan bin Ahmad bin Walid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he said: Narrated to us Muhammad bin Hasan as-Saffar that he said: Narrated to us Abbas bin Maroof from Ali bin Mahziyar from Muhammad bin Haitham from Muhammad bin Fudhail from Abil Hasan Reza عليه السلام that he asked him:

“Can the earth remain without an Imam?” “No,” he replied. I asked: “It has been narrated from Abi Abdullah عليه السلام that the earth will not remain without an Imam except that Allah سبحانه وتعالى will be angry on the people or on His servants?” The Imam said: “It will not remain except that **it will sink into itself.**”

3 - Narrated to us my father; and Muhammad bin Hasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - they said: Narrated to us Saad bin Abdullah that: Narrated to us Muhammad bin Isa bin Ubaid from Abi Abdullah Zakariya bin Muhammad Momin from Abi Harasa from Abi Ja'far عليه السلام that he said:

**“If the Imam is lifted from the earth for a moment, it (the earth) will sink along with its inhabitants like the sea sinks along with those in it.”**

4 - Narrated to us my father رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he said: Narrated to us Saad bin Abdullah that he said: Narrated to us Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Isa and Ibrahim bin Mahziyar from Ali bin Mahziyar from Husain bin Saeed from Abi Ali Bajali from Aban bin Uthman from Zurarah bin Uyun from Abi Abdullah عليه السلام that he said at the end of the tradition about Husain bin Ali عليه السلام: **“If the Divine Proof does not remain on the earth, it will be destroyed along with whatever is in it and upon it. The earth cannot be devoid of Divine Proof for a moment.”** (Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni‘ma)

As we can see, this belief comes from another plethora of reports which agree with the belief in a divine authority therefore Abbād bin Ya‘qūb Al-Rawājīnī believed in this. You will find hadiths of people asking the Imams عليه السلام about the hadith of Kumayl ibn Ziyad رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as well.

I said: My chief [Imam Al-Sajjād عليه السلام], **it is narrated from Amir al Mominin (a.s.) that the earth shall never be devoid of Proof of Allah سبحانه وتعالى**, the Mighty and Sublime upon His creatures. So who is the Imam and Divine Proof after you? He replied: My son, Muhammad and in Torah his name is Bāqir (splitter) and he will expound knowledge. (Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni‘ma)

As we can see this narration was famous in the time of the early Imams عليه السلام as well. In summary, the hadith of Ahlulbayt عليه السلام say that there is always an Imam and the Earth is never devoid of one. This must mean that there is an Imam right now. There are only 2 sects who believe in an Imam who is alive right now. The Twelvers and the Ismailis. Since we came into this assuming that the Imamah of the previous 11 Imams عليه السلام is proven, the only option we have left is Twelverism. Simplified below:

- There must be an Imam at all times.
- Only Twelvers and Ismaili's believe in a current Imam.
- We have already assumed the Imamah of the previous 11 Imams عليه السلام.
- Twelverism is the truth.

This alone is enough to give us CERTAINTY that Imam Al Mahdi عليه السلام exists right now. There is no other way to explain these reports. Ali's عليه السلام statement that the divine authority is either “manifest” or “in concealment” proves to us that the Imam of the time doesn't have to be present among the people and can be in occultation. If we want further certainty in our belief, we can refer to a chapter in Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni‘ma called **“After Hasan and Husain عليه السلام no two brothers can be Imams”**. There's reports saying this in Al-Kāfi and Qurb al-Isnad as well.<sup>19</sup> Here are a few narrations from the mentioned chapter.

<sup>19</sup> See “Why Did You Reject Abu Jafar Muhammad ?”

1 - Narrated to us my father and Muhammad bin Hasan - May Allah be pleased with them – they said: Narrated to us Saad bin Abdullah and Abdullah bin Ja'far Himyari, all of them from Muhammad bin Isa bin Ubaid from Yunus bin Abdur Rahman from Husain bin Thuwair bin Abi Fakhta from Abi Abdullah عليه السلام that he said:

“The Imamate will never be diverted between two brothers after al-Hasan and Husain عليه السلام; it proceeds from Ali Ibn Husain عليه السلام, as Allah, the Blessed, the Sublime, said:

Some of those who are bound by blood are closer (to each other) than others in the Book of Allah.

There was no one after Ali Ibn Husain عليه السلام, **except it went to the next descendant or the next descendant of the next descendant.”**

2 - Narrated to us Muhammad bin Hasan bin Ahmad bin Walid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: Muhammad bin Hasan al-Saffar from Yaqoob bin Yazid from Muhammad bin Isa bin Ubaid from Husain bin Hasan Farisi from Sulaiman bin Ja'far Ja'fari from Hammad bin Isa from Abi Abdullah عليه السلام that he said:

“The Imamate will never come together in two brothers after Hasan and Husain عليه السلام. **It will continue in his (Husain's) progeny one generation after another.”**

4 - Narrated to us Muhammad bin Hasan bin Ahmad bin Walid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: Narrated to us Husain bin Hasan bin Aban from Husain bin Saeed from Muhammad bin Sinan from Abi Salam from Surah bin Kulaib from Abi Baseer from Abi Ja'far عليه السلام regarding the words of Allah, the Mighty and Sublime:

And he made it a word to continue in his posterity.

That it is regarding Imam Husayn عليه السلام. **It (Imamate) will be transferred from one to another in his progeny generation after generation and it will not return to the brother or uncle.”**

5 - Narrated to us my father: Narrated to us Saad bin Abdullah and Abdullah bin Ja'far Himyari, all of them from Ibrahim bin Hashim from Abi Ja'far Muhammad bin Ja'far [from his father] from Abdul Hameed bin Nasr from Abi Ismail from Abi Abdullah عليه السلام that he said:

“Imamate will never come together in two brothers after Hasan and Husain عليه السلام. **It will continue in his (Husain's) (عليه السلام) progeny one generation after another.”**

7 - Narrated to us my father: Narrated to us Saad bin Abdullah and Abdullah bin Ja'far Himyari, all of them from Muhammad bin Husain bin Abil Khattab and Muhammad bin Isa bin Ubaid, all of them from Abdur Rahman bin



Abi Najran from Isa bin Abdullah Alawi Umari that he asked Abi Abdullah Ja'far bin Muhammad as-Sadiq عليه السلام:

"May I be sacrificed for you, may Allah not show me the day when you are not alive. If this happens, whom should we refer to? The Imam pointed to Imam Musa Kazim عليه السلام. And if Imam Musa Kazim عليه السلام passes away? He said: His son. And if his son passes away leaving **a brother who is grown up and a son who is young?** Which of them should we follow? The Imam said: **His son, it will be like this forever.** I said: What should we do if we don't know who and where he is? He replied: Say: O Allah I have attached myself to Your remaining Divine Proof **from the sons of the previous Imam.** That would be sufficient."

9 - Narrated to us Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Ishaq (r.a.): Informed us Ahmad bin Muhammad Hamadani: Narrated to us Ali bin Hasan bin Ali bin Faddal from his father from Hisham bin Saalim that: I asked As-Sadiq Ja'far bin Muhammad عليه السلام:

"Who is superior, Hasan or Husain عليه السلام ... I said: Would Imamate be inherited between two brothers after Hasan and Husain (a.s.)? He said: No, it will continue in the progeny of Husain عليه السلام like Allah, the Mighty and Sublime has said:

*And he made it a word to continue in his posterity.*

*Thus Imamate will continue in his progeny generation after generation till the Judgment Day." (Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni'ma)*

Combine these narrations with the ones in Qurb Al Isnad and Al-Kāfi and this will be - once again - mass transmitted in meaning. After seeing these narrations, not only do we have certainty that an Imam عليه السلام exists but now we also have certainty that this Imam HAS to be the son of Hasan bin Ali bin Muhammad bin Ali bin Musa bin Jafar bin Muhammad bin Ali bin Husayn bin Fatima bint Muhammad's ﷺ son. And Allah سبحانه وتعالى knows best.

## Argument No 2 - The Imams عليه السلام are twelve

My second argument is focused on the limiting of the number of Imams عليه السلام **which will follow the Holy Prophet ﷺ**. The hadiths which limit the Imams عليه السلام to twelve are mass transmitted. Shia scholars have written entire books compiling these narrations in thick books. Since we approached this believing that the Imamate of the previous 11 عليه السلام is already proven, we only have one Imam left who will be the last successor of the Prophet ﷺ. As shown previously, the 9 Imams عليه السلام after Husayn عليه السلام will all come generation after generation. The Imamate will go from father to son. Therefore, the Imam after Hasan Al Askari عليه السلام must be his son. This is all based on mass transmitted narrations from the Ahlulbayt عليه السلام. Reference to limiting the numbers of the Imams عليه السلام can also be found in Sunni works like the Kutub al-Sittah.

*It has been narrated on the authority of Jabir b. Samura who said:*

*I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say: Islam will continue to be triumphant until there have been twelve Caliphs. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said something which I could not understand. I asked my father: What did he say? He said: He has said that all of them (twelve Caliphs) will be from the Quraish. (Muslim)<sup>20</sup>*

The shias treat this hadith like a prophecy, a subtle reference to the 12 Imams عليه السلام. We do believe that the Prophet did tell the companions that Ali عليه السلام was the first of them. I personally am not of the view that he openly told ALL the companions the names and lineages of all 12 rather just his close special companions like Jabir bin Abdullah Al Ansari عليه السلام.

[2/-] عيون الأخبار: أحمد بن محمد بن يحيى العطار، عن أبي، عن محمد بن الحسين بن أبي الخطاب، عن الحسن بن محبوب، عن أبي الجارود، عن أبي جعفر، عن جابر بن عبد الله الأنصاري قال: دخلت على فاطمة عليها السلام وبين يديها لوح فيه أسماء الأوصياء فعددت اثنا عشر آخرهم القائم ثلاثة منهم محمد وأربعة منهم علي عليهم السلام

2. [2/-] Uyun al-Akhbar: Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Yahya al-Attar from his father from Muhammad b. al-Husayn b. Abi al-Khattab from al-Hasan b. Mahbub from Abi al-Jarud from Abi Ja'far from Jabir b. Abdallah al-Ansari who said: I entered to meet Fatima عليها السلام and found a tablet in front of her which had the names of the Awsiya (Heirs). I counted twelve [names] the last of them being the Qaim, three of them were Muhammad and four of them had names of Ali عليهم السلام. (Mu'jam al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'tabara)<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Refer to Sayed Ali Abul Hasan's excellent explanation of this narration which can be found on the Purified Truth YouTube channel with English subtitles:

[Hadith of the 12 Imams || Sayed Ali Abu al-Hassan || Part 1]

[Hadith of the 12 Imams || Sayed Ali Abu al-Hassan || Part 2]

<sup>21</sup> Shaykh Asif al-Mohseni: معتبر - Mu'jam al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'tabara

This hadith comes from multiple paths. RevisitingTheSalaf has elaborated on the authenticity and mass transmission of this narration in the eyes of Shia in this [article](#). Jabir bin Abdullah عليه السلام says “I counted twelve [names] the last of them being the Qaim, three of them were Muhammad and four of them had names of Ali عليهم السلام.” Jabir mentions that the last of the twelve is the Qaim (The Riser). There are dozens of reports which corroborate this in books like Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni‘ma. I would like to mention that the reason I quote Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni‘ma multiple times is because Shaykh al-Ṣaduq wrote the said book just to prove the existence of Al-Qaim عليه السلام. If you would like to read deeper into the topic then obviously it is better to refer to the books of our top scholars like Shaykh al-Ṣaduq and al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī (Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni‘ma and Kitāb al-Ghayba).

Not only does this authentic report tell us that the last of the 12 is the Mahdi عليه السلام but it also tells us his name. The Imams which are named Muhammad out of the 11 عليهم السلام who’s Imamate is already established are:

1. Abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn Ali Bāqir al-‘Ulūm عليهم السلام
2. Abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn Ali [ibn Musa] al-Jawwād عليهم السلام

Therefore to reach 3 Muhammad’s, the name of the 12th Imam عليه السلام MUST be M-H-M-D.<sup>22</sup>

*Narrated Abdullah ibn Mas'ud:*

*The Prophet (ﷺ) said: If only one day of this world remained. Allah would lengthen that day (according to the version of Za'idah), till He raised up in it a man who belongs to me or to my family whose father's name is the same as my father's<sup>23</sup>, who will fill the earth with equity and justice as it has been filled with oppression and tyranny (according to the version of Fitr). Sufyan's version says: The world will not pass away before the Arabs are ruled by a man of my family whose name will be the same as mine. Abu Dawud said: The version of 'Umar and Abu Bakr is the same as that of Sufyan. (Sunan Abu Dawud)<sup>24</sup>*

*3 - Narrated to us more than one of our associates: Narrated to us Muhammad bin Hamam from Ja'far bin Muhammad bin Malik Fazari: Narrated to me Hasan bin Muhammad bin Sama-a from Ahmad bin Harith: Narrated to me Mufaddal bin Umar from Yunus bin Zabyan from Jabir bin Yazid al-Jofi that he said: I heard Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari عليهم السلام say: [The Prophet names the 12 Imams to Jabir عليهم السلام] ...then al-Hasan Ibn Ali, then the one who will be my namesake and bear my agnomen<sup>25</sup>, the proof of Allah in His earth and His*

<sup>22</sup> Maybe this is why some splinter sects believed Sayed Muhammad bin Ali Al Hadi عليه السلام to be the Imam after his brother Hasan عليه السلام. I will cover the splinter sects which emerged after Imam Hasan Al Askari عليه السلام later.

<sup>23</sup> For more on this see Toyib Olawuyi's book called “*Imam Al Mahdi, The Twelfth Khalifah In The Sahih Sunni Ahadith*”.

<sup>24</sup> Grade: Hasan Sahih (Al-Albani)

<sup>25</sup> Meaning that he will have the same name and Kunya [Abul Qasim Muhammad]

remainder among His servants, the son of Hasan Ibn Ali. He عليه السلام is the one in whose hands Allah, High be His remembrance, will open the east of the earth and its west.

He عليه السلام is the one who will be concealed from his Shias and his friends, **an occultation in which none will be steadfast on the belief of his Imamate except the one whose heart has been tested by Allah for faith.**

Jabir says that he asked, 'O Messenger of Allah (S)! **Will the Shias benefit from him during the occultation?**'

He replied, "Yes, by the One Who sent me with Prophethood! **Surely they will benefit with his light and gain from his mastership in his occultation like the people derive benefit from the sun when the clouds hide it.**

O Jabir! **This is from the hidden secrets of Allah and the treasures of His knowledge, so hide it except from the ones worthy of it.**"<sup>26</sup> (*Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni'ma*)

15. عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنِ ابْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ غَزْوَانَ عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) قَالَ يَكُونُ تِسْعَةُ أئِمَّةٍ بَعْدَ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ تَأْسِعُهُمْ فَاثَمُهُمْ.

15. Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from ibn abu 'Umayr from Sa'id ibn Ghazwan from abu Basir who has said the following. "I heard Abu Ja'far say, 'after al-Husayn ibn Ali عليه السلام there will be nine Imams. **The ninth of them will be Al-Qa'im** عليه السلام (the one who will have Divine Authority)." (*Al-Kāfi*)<sup>27</sup>

16. الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ مُعَلَّى بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنِ الْوَشَّاءِ عَنْ أَبَانَ عَنْ زُرَّارَةَ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) يَقُولُ نَحْنُ اثْنَا عَشَرَ إِمَامًا مِنْهُمْ حَسَنٌ وَحُسَيْنٌ ثُمَّ الْأَئِمَّةُ مِنْ وَلَدِ الْحُسَيْنِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام)

16. Al-Husayn ibn Muhammad has narrated from Mu'alla ibn mmd from al-Washsha' from Aban from Zurara who has said the following. "I heard Abu Ja'far عليه السلام say, 'We عليه السلام are twelve Imams. Al-Hassan and al-Husayn عليه السلام are of them then the Imams from the descendants of al-Husayn (a.s.)." (*Al-Kāfi*)<sup>28</sup>

Any Shi'i scholar can go on and on about the mass transmitted reports on the number of the Imams عليه السلام. My intention is to remove the doubts from the minds of the lesser educated Shia so my arguments will be simple in nature. Perhaps in the future, I might write a more academic and more researched work on the topic at hand. For now, I would like to leave the reader with a book written by one of our top Ulema Safi Golpaygani<sup>29</sup> (صافي گلپایگانی/الصابي الكلبايكاني) called "منتخب الأثر في الإمام الثاني عشر عليه السلام" [The selected Narrations about the Twelfth Imam]<sup>30</sup>. In his book he compiles narrations<sup>31</sup> about the 12th Imam عليه السلام [It is available in English].

<sup>26</sup> This is evidence for my belief that the names of the 12 Imams عليه السلام were only known to a select group of companions.

<sup>27</sup> Allamah Baqir al-Majlisi: حسن كالصحيح - Mir'at al 'Uqul Fi Sharh Akhbar Al al Rasul (6/231)

<sup>28</sup> Allamah Baqir al-Majlisi: ضعيف على المشهور - Mir'at al 'Uqul Fi Sharh Akhbar Al al Rasul (231/ 6)

<sup>29</sup> Around 2-3 days after writing this, Luṭf Allāh Ṣāfi Gulpāyigāni عليه رحمة الله passed away at the age of 103.

<sup>30</sup> You can find a PDF of the book here on [AlFeker.net](http://AlFeker.net) and an English translation here: [Vol 1][Vol 2]

<sup>31</sup> Read his other book about Imam Al Mahdi عليه السلام: *Discussions Concerning al-Mahdi*

### **Number of narrations on Imam Al Mahdi (as)**

- 1- The traditions that give glad-tidings about him and his reappearance in the end of times.): 1092 **narrations**
- 2- The traditions that indicate he will fill the earth with fairness and justice just as it will be filled with injustice and unfairness: **148 narrations.**
- 3- The traditions that prove he is from the progeny of the Messenger of Allah, Allah's blessings be on him and his family, from his Ahl al-Bait, and from his seed: 407 **narrations.**
- 4 - The traditions that indicate he is the ninth descendant of (Imam) al-Husayn, peace be on him: 160 **narrations.**
- 5- Narrations that say that he is the son of Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-Askari (as): **108 narrations.**
- 6- The narrations that say that he is the twelfth of the imams and their seal: **151 narrations.**
- 7- On his birth (peace be upon him), its date and some aspects about his mother: **214 narrations.**
- 8 - The traditions that indicate he will have two occultations and one will be shorter than the other: 10 **narrations.**
- 9 - The traditions that indicate he will have a long occultation until Allah, the Exalted, allows him to emerge: 100 **narrations.**
- 10- The traditions that indicate he will live a very long life: **363 narrations.**

As we can see, there is an abundance of narrations limiting the numbers of the Imams عليهم السلام and other details such as him being the 9th son of Husayn عليهم السلام, or about him being the son of Hasan al Askari عليهم السلام. This isn't even the entire book, there are dozens of chapters I didn't name. I don't think this argument needs any more elaboration. And Allah سبحانه وتعالى knows best.

- There are 12 Imams عليهم السلام and the last is the Qaim عليهم السلام.
- Imamah of 11 عليهم السلام established.
- No 2 brothers will be Imams after Hasan and Husayn عليهم السلام and Imamah will go from father to son.
- 3 among the 12 عليهم السلام will be named M-H-M-D.
- The 12th and final Imam MUST be the son of Hasan Al Askari عليهم السلام and he MUST be named M-H-M-D.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Reason why I am not naming the Imam عليهم السلام: *The Prohibition on Mentioning his Name*

## Argument No 3 - Secret Birth of the Imam عليهم السلام

We still haven't given a plausible explanation as to why all the reports regarding the birth of the Imam عليهم السلام are weak [Again, This is not true but for the sake of argument we are assuming it is]<sup>33</sup>. Well, it's simple. The birth was a secret. What I mean by that is the general public was not aware of it. Even the neighbor of Imam Hasan al Askari عليهم السلام probably didn't know that a son was born to him. Why? Well, let Imam Hasan Al Askari عليهم السلام answer that himself.

13. Narrated to us **Abdullah ibn al-Husayn ibn Sa'd al-Katib** رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, saying: Abu Muhammad [al-Hasan al-'Askari] عليهم السلام said:

**"The Umayyads and the Abbasids kept us under their sword for two reasons:**

1. "First: They knew very well that they had no right to the caliphate; so they were afraid that we would lay claim on it and [consequently] it would settle down in its [true] center.
2. "Second: They had known from mutawatir hadith that the end of the rule of oppressors and tyrants will be at the hand of our Qa'im and they had no doubt that they were oppressors and tyrants. Therefore, they endeavored to kill the Ahlul-Bayt عليهم السلام of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and to annihilate his progeny - hoping in this way to prevent the birth of al-Qa'im i or to kill him. **But Allah, the High, refused to disclose his affairs to any of them;** rather He [decided] to complete His light, although the polytheists may be averse to it." (lthbatu ar-Raj'ah translated into the english "[The Return of Al-Mahdi](#)")

This book was written by Faḍl b. Shādhān al-Nishābūrī, who died just before [same year] Imam Hasan Al Askari عليهم السلام [Notice how there's only one person in the chain between him and the Imam عليهم السلام] who penned hundreds of books.

*Al-Najāshī: Faḍl bin Shādhān bin Khalīl, Abū Muḥammad al-Azdī al-Nishābūrī. His father was one of the companions of Yunus. He has narrated from Abu Ja'far the second (al-Jawwād عليهم السلام) and it is said also from ar-Riḍā عليهم السلام and he was trustworthy, one of our scholars in theology and jurisprudence. He has a high esteem among our people and his position is higher than to be mentioned. Al-Kanji has mentioned that he has written 180 books, his books that we have received are....Book of lthbatu ar-Raj'ah... (Rijal Al-Najashi, Pg 295.)*

*al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī: Faḍl b. Shādhān al-Nishābūrī, the jurisprudent and theologian, owner of high esteem, he has books and writings, among them are: ...Book of lthbatu ar-Raj'ah... (Al-Fehrist, Pg 197-199.)*

Below are some examples of reports stating that Al Qaim عليهم السلام will have a secret birth.

<sup>33</sup> Refer to article on RevisitingTheSalaf about said topic: [The Birth Of Imam Al-Mahdi عليهم السلام](#)

الهمداني، عن علي، عن أبيه، عن محمد بن زياد الأزدي، عن موسى بن جعفر (ع) أنه قال عند ذكر القائم (ع): يخفى على الناس ولادته ولا يحل لهم تسميته حتى يظهره الله (عز وجل) فيملا به الأرض قسطا وعدلا كما ملئت جورا وظلما.

عليه السلام al-Hamadani from Ali from his father from Muhammad b. Ziyad al-Azidi from Musa b. Ja'far

He said at the mentioning of the Qa'im عليه السلام: **His birth will be hidden from the people**, and it is not permissible for them to reveal his name until Allah عز و جل makes him appear and fill equity and justice into the world, as it would have been fraught with injustice and oppression. (Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni'ma)<sup>34</sup>

ابن المتوكل، عن علي، عن أبيه، عن الهروي، عن الرضا عن آبائه (ع) قال: قال النبي (ص) والذي بعثني بالحق بشيرا ليغيبن القائم من ولدي بعهد معهود إليه مني حتى يقول أكثر الناس ماله في آل محمد حاجة، ويشك آخرون في ولادته فن أدرك زمانه فليتمسك بدينه، ولا يجعل للشيطان إليه سبيلا بشكه، فيزيله عن ملتي ويخرجه من ديني فقد أخرج أبويكم من الجنة من قبل وإن الله (عز وجل) جعل الشياطين أولياء للذين لا يؤمنون.

Muhammad b. Musa b. al-Mutawakkil رضي الله عنه from `Ali b. Ibrahim from his father from `Abd as-Salam b. Salih al-Harawi from ar-Rida from his forefathers عليهم السلام.

He said: The Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله said: By the One who sent me with the Truth as a herald, **the Qa'im from my offspring will go into occultation** with a covenant from me confided in him until the majority of people say: What remains for Allah in the family of Muhammad? **And the remainders will doubt his birth. Whoever sees this era must grasp his religion**, and he must not give Satan a way to him, as he will only take him off my path and away from my religion, just as he brought out your father and mother from Paradise before. Verily, Allah عز و جل has made devils the masters of the disbelievers. (Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni'ma)<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> (sahih) (صحيح) [Brother Qa'im's own gradings]

<sup>35</sup> (sahih or muwathaq) (صحيح أو موثق)



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Brother Qa'im from ShiaChat created this diagram so we can visualize the mass transmission of the hadiths which state his birth will be a secret. He leaves this message under it:

*I have created a visual diagram of the transmission of this tradition. The results of the isnad tree below were created just out of a very brief review of a few books. A **comprehensive tree would presumably be even larger.** Here, we see that traditions about the secret birth pass through books of Saduq, Kulayni, and Nu'mani, going back to at least six of the twelve Imams, through at least fifty-six narrators. From them are even giants like Abu Baseer, Zurara, Muhammad b. Abi `Umayr, Ibn Faddal, Ibrahim b. Hashim, and many others. This isn't some argue belief that was disseminated by the ghulat – it was transmitted through a plethora of the biggest and the best. **It would have been impossible for this tradition to have been fabricated**, as it survives through dozens of chains, many of which are reliable. **These ahadith would have been preserved in different usool books prior to the birth of the Twelfth Imam عليه السلام – therefore, to fabricate a doctrine of this magnitude after his birth would have not been possible.** (ShiaChat)*

The point I was making is that the birth of the Imam عليهم السلام being a secret is reported from 6 Imams عليهم السلام from 56 different narrators reaching 3 scholars. (Diagram only contains traditions in al-Kāfi, Kitāb al-Ghayba (al-Nu'mānī) and Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni'ma). Such mass transmission simply cannot be faked post-ghayba and these come from the best narrators of the Shia and many of the reports are authentic. Therefore, the reason why all reports about the birth of the Imam عليهم السلام are weak (I would like to clarify again that this isn't true and not what I believe either. I am just agreeing with it for the sake of argument. You can refer back to my introduction for more clarification and you can refer to the [RevisitingTheSalaf article](#) on said topic) is because his birth was hidden and secretive due to the context that the Imams عليهم السلام were living in (as explained by Imam Hasan Al Askari عليهم السلام above). This alone is a good enough explanation if we assume that this is actually true. And Allah سبحانه وتعالى knows best.

## Argument No 4 - Why splinter sects?

When we want to learn about the splinter Shi'a sects, the most famous source to refer to is *Firaq al-Shi'a* by Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Nawbakhtī.

*Firaq al-Shi'a provides comprehensive information on Shi'a branches, their groupings, and the reason behind their schisms until the time of the author. In addition to Shi'a sects, the book contains useful information on other religious or political Muslim groups in the first three centuries after Hijra. Because of this, it has been an important source for later heresiographers. Since al-Nawbakhti lived in the Minor Occultation period, he provides us with first-hand information on this stage in Shi'a history. (WikiShia)*

He covers the different groups that were formed after the death of each Imam<sup>36</sup> عليهم السلام like the Waqifa for example. Since we came into this already affirming the Imamah of the first 11 Imams عليهم السلام, we do not need to go through most of the book. We are only concerned with the last chapter of the book which is on the sects formed after the death of Hasan Al Askari عليهم السلام:

## The Divergence After the Death of al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī

His followers became fourteen<sup>1</sup> sects after his death.

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Nawbakhtī mentions fourteen sects, but he provides descriptions for thirteen sects only. The fourteenth sect is reported from al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā's book, *al-Fuṣūl al-Mukhtāra*, wherein a sect is reported as having claimed, "The Imam, after al-Ḥasan, is his son, Muḥammad, and he is the awaited one (*al-Muntaẓar*), but he died; he will return with the sword and will fill the earth with fairness and justice, as it was filled with oppression and injustice."

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<sup>36</sup> Further reading: *How to Know Your Imam (Pt. I)*

The first thing to note about these sects, is that only one of them exists today and they are known as the Twelvers - us. This already proves that Twelverism is the correct sect since its the only one who believes in Hasan Al Askari عليه السلام and as you already know, we are assuming his Imamah عليه السلام is already proven. I intend to summarize what Al-Nawbakhti said about all 13 groups [in the same sequence that al-Nawbakhti lists them] and show you that each one contradicts at least one sort of mass transmitted principle/rule from the previous Imams عليه السلام.

### **First Sect**

- Hasan Al Askari عليه السلام is alive and is the Mahdi
- It is impossible for him to die and not leave behind a son because the world will come to an end (necessity of a divine authority at all times)
- He has two occultations
- Only difference between them and the Waqifa is that the Waqifa stop at Imam Musa al-Kāzīm عليه السلام

### **Refutation**

- The Mahdi is the last of the Imams عليه السلام as Jabir bin Abdullah عليه السلام mentions and his last name must be M-H-M-D
- There's 12 Imams عليه السلام

### **Second Sect**

- Imam Hasan Al Askari عليه السلام died and came back to life
- He is the Mahdi عليه السلام
- If he leaves behind a son then Imamah is his
- Since he didn't leave behind any, he must be the Mahdi عليه السلام
- He is in Ghayba because of the statement of Ali عليه السلام stating that the Earth cannot be without an Imam (Kumayl b. Ziyād narration covered earlier), either apparent or concealed

### **Refutation**

- The Mahdi is the last of the Imams عليه السلام as Jabir bin Abdullah عليه السلام mentions and his last name must be M-H-M-D
- There's 12 Imams عليه السلام
- When Imam Al Askari عليه السلام died according to these people there was no Imam on Earth

### **Third Sect**

- Imam after Hasan Al Askari عليهم السلام is Jafar bin Ali Al Hadi (Also known as Jafar al Kathab)
- Imam Al Askari عليهم السلام designated him when alive
- Jafar and Hasan عليهم السلام were actually on good terms
- They accepted Imamah of Abdullah bin Jafar after denying it for the sake of consistency

### **Refutation**

- Two brothers after Hasan and Husayn عليهم السلام cannot be Imam's
- The last of the 12 will go into occultation
- Jafar wasn't the best of people

### **Fourth Sect**

- Jafar was the Imam after Ali Al Hadi عليهم السلام and not Sayed Muhammad عليهم السلام or Hasan عليهم السلام
- Sayed Muhammad عليهم السلام wasn't because he died during his father's life and Hasan عليهم السلام wasn't since he didn't leave behind progeny
- Imamah cannot belong to Hasan عليهم السلام and Jafar because of the hadiths of the previous Imam's عليهم السلام saying two brothers cannot be Imams after Hasan and Husayn عليهم السلام

### **Refutation**

- Jafar was a sinner and was misguided
- Imam Ali Al Hadi عليهم السلام had already designated Imam Hasan Al Askari عليهم السلام (Remember we came into this believing in the previous 11 already)

### **Fifth Sect**

- Sayed Muhammad عليهم السلام was the Imam after his father Ali Al Hadi عليهم السلام
- Hasan عليهم السلام and Jafar claimed what was not theirs (Imamah)
- Hasan عليهم السلام did not leave behind progeny
- Jafar was impious

- Sayed Muhammad عليهم السلام is the Mahdi

### **Refutation**

- Sayed Muhammad عليهم السلام had already passed
- Imam's عليهم السلام do not equal 12
- Imam Ali Al Hadi عليهم السلام had already designated Imam Hasan Al Askari عليهم السلام (Remember we came into this believing in the previous 11 already)

### **Sixth Sect**

- Hasan al Askari عليهم السلام had a son named M-H-M-D
- He is in one of his [two] occultations
- He is the Mahdi عليهم السلام
- His father designated him
- Since his father has no other son, we can say he is the Imam with certainty

### **Seventh Sect**

- Hasan Al Askari عليهم السلام had a son 8 months after he died
- Ordered him to be named M-H-M-D
- Support their claim with a report attributed to Imam ar-Riḍā عليهم السلام which says "You will be tested by the fetus in his mother's womb and by the infant"

### **Refutation**

- For those 8 month's there was no Imam
- Solitary report as evidence

### **Eighth Sect**

- Hasan عليهم السلام did not have a son
- His sons existence cannot be proven therefore we cannot attribute progeny to him

### **Refutation**

- There is no Imam
- The Imam's عليهم السلام will number 12

### **Ninth Sect**

- Hasan عليهم السلام was an Imam and his death was established
- There is no Imam after him عليهم السلام just like there is no Prophet after Muhammad ﷺ
- Attribute a narration to the two Sadiq's عليهم السلام: "The Earth cannot be without an Imam unless Allah سبحانه وتعالى becomes angry with the people on Earth because of their disobedience, then he removes the Imam for a certain time"
- The Earth is without an Imam until Allah سبحانه وتعالى sends Al Mahdi عليهم السلام

### **Refutation**

- Solitary report vs mass transmission

### **Tenth Sect**

- Abu Jafar Muhammad bin Ali who died before his father was the Imam
- He was designated by his father عليهم السلام
- He designated a young servant of his father Nafis whom he gave his books, knowledge and the weapons
- He asked him to give all this to Jafar
- When Abu Jafar Muhammad bin Ali عليهم السلام died, fearing the supporters of Hasan عليهم السلام, he appointed Jafar
- They fabricated a lot about Hasan عليهم السلام
- They call Jafar Al Qaim
- They prefer him over Imam Ali عليهم السلام and put him as the best of creation after the Holy Prophet ﷺ
- Nafis was taken and thrown in a big basin in the house containing a lot of water
- He drowned in it
- This sect is called the Nafisiyyah

### **Refutation**

- Two brothers after Hasan and Husayn عليهم السلام cannot be Imam's
- Imam's عليهم السلام are 12

### **Eleventh Sect**

- Don't have a position
- Hasan Al Askari عليه السلام was an Imam and he died and the Earth is never devoid of an Imam
- Say nothing after this

### **Refutation**

- Can't really say anything since they have no clue what's going on

### **Twelfth Sect**

- Imamah continues in the progeny of Hasan bin Ali Al Hadi عليه السلام
- Imamate cannot be in two brothers after Hasan and Husayn عليه السلام so it must be in his son
- Even if there's two men, one of them is the Mahdi <sup>37</sup> عليه السلام
- The world cannot be without an Imam just as Ali عليه السلام says in the famous report of Kumayl
- Not permissible to mention his [Imam Al Mahdi عليه السلام] name neither ask about his location
- Many reports reached them saying the birth of the Mahdi عليه السلام will not be known and it wouldn't be common knowledge

### **Thirteenth Sect**

- They followed the claims of their jurists Abdullah bin Bukayr bin Ay'an
- Jafar was the Imam after Hasan عليه السلام
- Claimed "There are no two brothers who will reach Imamah after Hasan and Husayn عليه السلام" is conditional and only when one of them has progeny
- This was the Fathiyyah

### **Refutation**

- Their understanding of this hadith is unfounded and baseless

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<sup>37</sup> Al-Kāfi - Volume 1 > The Issue that even if only two people would remain on earth one of them would certainly be the Imam, the person with divine authority

As we can see, all sects other than the 12th sect, contradict at-least one mass transmitted concept/belief/hadith reported from the Imam عليهم السلام. Some of these splinter sects were very small and some of their beliefs were ridiculous like the tenth sect mentioned (Nafisiyyah).

- All sects (other than Imamiyyah (Twelfth Sect)) are dead
- All other sects are contradicting mass transmitted hadiths from the Imams عليهم السلام
- All other sects are wrong
- Imamism does not contradict any mass transmitted hadith among the Imamis

To add on as a side point, the belief in 2 occultations for Al Mahdi عليه السلام was present at the time of Imam Al-Kāzīm عليهم السلام. The Waqfiya applied this to Imam Imam Al-Kāzīm عليهم السلام instead of Al Qaim عليه السلام. Fee Nusrat Al Waqifa, a waqifi book that survives today thanks to al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, contains multiple narrations supporting this:

28 – One of our companions narrated from Muhammad the clothier. He said: `Amr b. Minhal al-Qammat narrated to me from Hadid as-Sabati from Abu `Abdillah عليه السلام.

He said: **There are two disappearances (ghayba)** for Abu 'l-Hasan عليه السلام, the first of them is lesser and the other is prolonged, until there comes to you one who claims that he died, and (that he) prayed over him and buried him and shook off the dirt of the grave from his hand. So in that he is a liar, a wasi will not die until he establishes (?) a wasi, and none but the wasi follows (?) the wasi, for if someone other than wasi follows him, he goes blind (?).

36 – Ibrahim b. al-Mustani narrated from al-Mufaddal. He said:

I heard Abu `Abdillah عليه السلام saying: **The master of this authority will have two disappearances (ghayba)**, one of them is longer, until it said: He died, and some will say: He was killed. So none will remain upon his affair save but a small band from his companions. And no one will be informed of his location and his affair, and not other than him to the mawla who will follow (?) his authority. (Fee Nusrat al-Waqifa)

In Fact so was the belief in 12 Imams عليه السلام:

20 – Muhammad b. `Ata Darghama narrated to me from Khallad the pearl seller. He said: Sa'id al-Makki narrated to me from Abu `Abdillah عليه السلام – and he had a station from him. He said:



Abu `Abdillah عليه السلام said: O Sa`id, **twelve**. When six pass, Allah will grant victory (lit. open) upon the seventh, and five from us, the People of the House, will rule, and the sun will rise from its place of setting (its west) upon the hand of the sixth. (*Fee Nusrat al-Waqifa*)

- Solitary Report
- Proves the concept of 12 Imams was flying around
- “When six pass” could mean the Imams AS which are to follow (including Imam Sadiq AS himself)
- That would mean that “the seventh” is Imam Mahdi AS
- Imam Sadiq [1], Imam Kadhim AS [2], Imam Ridha AS [3], Imam Jawad AS [4], Imam Al Hadi AS [5], Imam Al Askari AS [6] and Imam Al Mahdi AS [7]
- “and five from us, the People of the House, will rule” May refer to Raj’ah

If you would like to learn more about the Waqifa and Fee Nusrat Al-Waqifa then refer to al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī’s Kitāb al-Ghayba where he records all these reports than tries to “cope” around them. I am talking about many topics without going into detail because at the end, I will link some articles/books for further reading. I don’t want to give you [the reader] a detailed re-telling of history for no reason so I am leaving the decision to research deeper into the topic to the reader himself. And Allah سبحانه وتعالى knows best.

## Concluding Remarks

To recap, I have made 4 simple arguments (each containing multiple arguments) built upon mass transmitted hadiths to prove the existence of Imam Al Mahdi عليه السلام after considering that all hadiths about his birth are weak. I obviously reminded the reader multiple times that this isn't true and I am only saying this for the sake of argument. We began by dissecting the argument in its simplest form by asking the question: Does not having a single Sahih hadith about the birth story of the Imam عليه السلام render it false?. We came to the conclusion that this is simply not true and doesn't make any sense logically. I then summarized the out of context clip of Sayed Kamal Al Haydari and explained what was going on to the less educated Shia who could get lost between all the books, words and names being mentioned.

The first argument I made was that there must always be an Imam on Earth according to the narrations of Ahlulbayt عليه السلام [We also focused on the mass transmission and authenticity of this] therefore there must be one now. Using some additional hadiths, we came to the conclusion that he must be the son of Hasan Al Askari عليه السلام. The second argument was based around the limiting of the number of Imams to 12. Since the Imamah of the previous 11 عليه السلام is already established, the Imam after Hasan al Askari عليه السلام has to be the last. Using other reports as proof, we also proved that his name must be M-H-M-D and that he must be Al-Qaim عليه السلام. In the third argument, I tried giving a possible explanation as to why all these reports are weak. We showed how the idea that the birth will be a secret is mass transmitted to strengthen our position. In the fourth argument, I argued that all sects which claimed to follow Hasan Al Askari عليه السلام (Who's Imamah is established) died except the Imamiyyah (Us). I then demonstrated how these sects contradicted principles [Always an Imam on Earth, No 2 brothers will become Imams after Hasan and Husayn عليه السلام etc.] set by the previous Imams عليه السلام. My fifth argument was going to be "The Shia knew about the Ghayba beforehand"<sup>38</sup> but it was going to get too technical and the research that would need to be done for that would take weeks, maybe months. As I hinted before, it is possible that in the future, I return for a similar project which goes deeper into the subject and isn't written for less educated English speaking Shias. And Allah سبحانه وتعالى knows best.

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<sup>38</sup> Also Allah (swt) did not authenticate the testimony of people except when it was based on their knowledge and understanding. Hence one who has faith in Imam Mahdi (as) will not be benefited till he has thorough recognition of his occultation. **The Imams (a.s) informed their Shias of his occultation and this is recorded in the books. They are found in the books written about two hundred years before the commencement of occultation. None of the followers of the Imam is such that he has not included it in his books. These books are called 'Usool' among the Shias and they were compiled about two hundred years before the commencement of the occultation.** I have mentioned all the traditions about occultation, which I came across in appropriate places in this book. The writers of these books fall under one of these two conditions – either they had come to know about present occultation before on their own which is logically impossible or they falsely predicted occultation in their books in spite of being from different countries and beliefs and later on it proved to be correct. The second condition is also not acceptable like the first. On this basis, there is no way left but to agree that the writers have recorded the discourse of their holy Imams (a.s) who are the protectors of the will of the Holy Prophet (saw). As a result of these proofs, truth triumphed and falsehood was devastated as it was bound to be destroyed. Our enemies have intentions to misguide those who opposed the Qaim's occultation, and decided to put a curtain on the eyes of those who believe in his occultation so that people who do not have solid faith start doubting the truth. (Kamaaluddin wa Tamaamun Ni'ma, Pg 30-31)

## Further Reading

If you are interested in deeper discussions on the topic at hand, maybe refer to the following books/articles available in the English Language:

### **Imam Al Mahdi عليه السلام**

Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni‘ma	-	al-Shaykh al-Ṣaduq
Kitāb al-Ghayba	-	al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī
The selected Narrations about the Twelfth Imam عليه السلام	-	Luṭf Allāh Ṣāfī Gulpāyigānī
Discussions Concerning al-Mahdi	-	Luṭf Allāh Ṣāfī Gulpāyigānī
Kitāb al-Ghayba	-	Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Nu‘mānī

### **The Waqifah**

Kitāb al-Ghayba	-	al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī
Firaq al-Shi‘a	-	al-Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Nawbakhtī

### **Imamah in Early Shi‘ism**

How to Know Your Imam (Pt. I)	-	Al-dodomi
Firaq al-Shi‘a	-	al-Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Nawbakhtī

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ