

Topic: The Imams & the Mahdi in the Traditions

### **The Traditions about the Twelve Imams**

There are many repeated traditions in many books from Shi'a and Sunni about the caliphate of the twelve Imams in the words of the Prophet.

For example: "Jabir ibn Samarah says, 'I heard the Prophet say, "There will be twelve leaders after me." Then he said, 'I heard that my father said he heard the Prophet say, "They will be from the Quraysh ..."' (*Sahih Bukhari*, part 9, *Kitab al-Maqadam*, p. 100).

### **The Imams by Name**

It should be noted that in some of the traditions which have reached us even from the famous Sunnis, the names of the twelve Imams are explicitly declared by the holy Prophet.

In Sunni books as in Shi'a books, it is recorded from the Prophet, "a person who dies without knowing the imam of his/her time, dies as if he has (lived and) died in the (pre-Islam) age of ignorance." This shows that there is a living Imam in every age.

(A man by the name of) Sulayman says, 'I asked al-Sadiq (as), 'So how does mankind benefit from an invisible and hidden representative?' He replied, just as they benefit from the sun when the clouds hide it!' (*Bihar al-Anwar*, volume 52, chapter 20, page 92)

After all these centuries of conflict, crime, corruption and so on, each religion believes a reviver and savior of the world will come and that behind this dark night lies the morning of hope.

## **The Quran and the Manifestation of Mahdi**

*"God has promised to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds that He will of surety grant them in the land, inheritance (of power) as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religion - the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state) after the fear in which they (lived) to one of security and peace."* (24/55)

Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, in commentating upon this verse said, "This group, I swear by God, is those very followers of our school. God, by means of a man from our family, will realize this promise and he is the Mahdi of this *ummah*."

## **The Mahdi in the Traditions**

The Traditions about the world rule and its realization along with peace and justice, by means of an individual from the family of the Holy Prophet who is called the Mahdi, are numerous in the Sunni and Shi'ite sourcebooks.

The Holy Prophet of Islam said, "If only one day remains from the life of this world, God will lengthen it so that the Mahdi will be sent by God to fill the earth, which is filled with tyranny and oppression, with justice and equity."

In a Tradition of Imam Sadiq, we read, "When the time of the arising of the rule of the Redeemer comes, he will establish it upon justice. Tyranny and oppression, during his rule, will be eliminated; roads and passageways, will be safe and the earth will be blessed. Every right will be given to its rightful owner and he, among the people, will judge like David and Muhammad. At this time, the earth will

reveal its treasures and it will reveal its blessings. No needy person will be found because all believers will be without need.”