

*Understanding*

**The  
Significance  
of  
Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>**

*in the Sunni Islam.*



## Understanding The Significance of Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> in the Sunni Islam

Some elements in Sunni Islam sow seeds of skepticism about the holy personality of Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>, which always meet with strong factual response from their own the Sunni scholars wherever and whenever such doubts are raised.

Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal said: "You hardly see anyone applying reason (*ra'y*) [to some issue of religion or law] except that there lies, in his heart, some deep-seated resentment. An unreliable narration [from the Prophet] is thus dearer to me than the use of reason" - Muhammad Abu Zahra, *Ibn Hanbal*, p 239.

[**Hadith**: *Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* - By Jonathan A.C. Brown (2009), pg. 17]

In *Nazmul-Mutanasir*, Al-Kittani does not agree with the ideas of Ibn Khaldun and says there are a lot of hadiths regarding this issue and that these accounts are *mutawatir* (widespread). He also says that **Ibn Khaldun is not an expert** in this issue therefore it is necessary to ask the experts about it.

A noteworthy feature of the Ahadith about the Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> is that they have been reported by a large number of companions of the Prophet<sup>SAS</sup>. Indeed, this is why they are considered *mutawatir*, for so many people have reported them that they cannot possibly be false. The number of companions of the Prophet<sup>SAS</sup> relating hadith regarding the Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> is more than fifty. These include:

Ali ibn Talib, Thouban, Anas Ibn Malik, Qatada, 'A'isha, Abu Hurayra, 'Imran ibn Husayn, Nafi' ibn 'Utba, Abu Barza, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, Qaysan, 'Uthman ibn al-'As, Jabir ibn 'Abdullah, Abu Umama, Ibn Mas'ud, 'Abdulla ibn Amr, Samura ibn Jundub, Nawwas ibn Sam'an, Abd al-

In his book 'ar-Raddu,' Ala al-Din Ali ibn Abd-al-Malik Husam al-Din **al-Muttaqi al-Hindi** says:

'May Allah have compassion on you and may you know that there is no doubt about the coming of the promised Mahdi. **Three hundred and more hadiths and works have proved this.'**

Rahman ibn 'Awf, Hudhayfa ibn al-Yamani, Abu al-Asas as-Sanani, Abu Umama al Bahili, Abu al-Darda', Abu Rafi', Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, Al-Hakam ibn 'Amr al-Ghifari, Rabi' ibn Anas, 'Ammar ibn Yasir, etc., ...

Hadith about Imam Mahdi as recorded in Muhadiththeen's works:

- ❖ Tirmidhi in Sunan → 3 hadiths
- ❖ Abu Dawud in Sunan → 8 hadiths
- ❖ Ibn Majah in Sunan → 8 hadiths
- ❖ Ahmad bin Hanbal in Musnad → 12 hadiths
- ❖ Abd al-Razzak ibn Hammam in Al-Musannaf → 8 hadiths
- ❖ Ibn Abu Shayh in Al-Musannaf → 14 hadiths
- ❖ Ibn Hibban in Sahih → 7 hadiths
- ❖ Haythami in Zawaid → 20 hadiths
- ❖ Suyuti in Al-Jami al-Saghir → 8 hadiths
- ❖ Al-Muttaqi al-Hindi in Kanz al-Ummal → 59 hadiths
- ❖ Al-Haqim in Mustadraq → 12 hadiths
- ❖ Al-Firdaws in Daylami → 7 hadiths
- ❖ Al-Daraqutni in Sunan → 1 hadith

In these sources there are 159 trustworthy hadiths regarding Hazrat Mahdi (as).

Besides, the following great Islamic scholars included trustworthy hadiths in their works.

- ✓ Ibn Qasir → 3 hadiths,
- ✓ Al-Busuri → 2 hadiths,
- ✓ Zahabi → 5 hadiths,
- ✓ Munzuri → 1 hadith,
- ✓ Azimabadi → 6 hadiths,
- ✓ Albani → 6 hadiths.

These are only a portion of the trustworthy hadiths regarding Hazrat Mahdi (as). Apart from these there are many other trustworthy hadiths and explanations regarding Hazrat Mahdi (as).

**Scholars of Ahl-us Sunnah who have stated that the Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> will appear are numerous, below is the list of some prominent and distinguished ones of their times for the sake of brevity:**

- [AL-IMAM AL-A`ZAM ABU HANIFAH](#) (150 AH)
- [IMAM MALIK](#) (179 AH)
- [IMAM AL-SHAFI'I](#) (204 AH)

Similar to the Great Mahdi who is promised to come at the end of time, one or more Mahdis from the Prophet's Family have been found in every century. Indeed, one of them was among the Abbasid Caliphs who were the descendants of the Prophet's Family, and had many of the characteristics of the Great Mahdi. The reason, then, for the apparent variance between the different narrations (concerning Mahdis) is that **the qualities of the Great Mahdi were confused with those of the revivalists (mujaddids) who precede him..**" [Bediuzzaman Said Nursî, *Mektûbât* (The Letters), p. 96.]

- [IMAM AHMAD IBN HANBAL](#) (241 AH)
- [IMAM AL-BUKHARI](#) (256 AH)
- [IMAM MUSLIM](#) (261 AH)
- [IBN MAJAH](#) (273 AH)
- [ABU DAWUD](#) (275 AH)
- [IMAM AL-TIRMIDHI](#) (279 AH)
- [ABU BAKR AL-AJURRI](#) (320 AH)
- [AT-TAHAVI](#) (321 AH)
- [AL-BARBAHARI](#) (329 AH)
- [IMAM AL-MATURIDI](#) (333 AH)
- [AL-TABARANI](#) (360 AH)
- [IMAM AL-GHAZALI](#) (448 AH)
- [IMAM AL-BAYHAQI](#) (458 AH)
- [AN-NASAFI](#) (536 AH)
- [IBN AL-'ARABI](#) (543 AH)
- [SHEIKH 'ABD AL-QADIR AL-GILANI](#) (561 AH)
- [MUHYI AD-DIN IBN AL-ARABI](#) (638 AH)
- [AL-QURTUBI](#) (671 AH)
- [AN-NAWAWI](#) (676 AH)
- [IBN TAYMIYYA](#) (749 AH)
- [IBN KATHIR](#) (774 AH)
- [AL-TAFTAZANI](#) (792 AH)
- [IBN HAJAR AL-ASQALANI](#) (852 AH)
- [JALALUDDIN AL-SUYUTI](#) (911 AH)
- [IBN HAJAR AL-HAYTHAMI](#) (974 AH)
- [AL-MUTTAQI AL-HINDI](#) (975 AH)
- [IMAM RABBANI](#) (1034 AH)
- [AL-BARZANJI](#) (1128 AH)
- [ASH-SHAWKANI](#) (1229 AH)
- [SAYYID AL-ALUSI](#) (1270 AH)
- [RIFA'A AL-TAHTAWI](#) (1873 AD)
- [BEDIUZZAMAN SAID NURSI](#) (1960 AD)
- [SAYYID QUTB](#) (1966 AD)
- [NASR AL-DIN AL-ALBANI](#) (1999 AD)

All the **hadiths** related by our Prophet **about Hazrat Mahdi stating** that someone with matching name and personal traits will appear in the End Times and will fill the world with justice, **are reliable.** (*Ibn Taymiyyah, Minhaj as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah, Vol. IV, p. 291*)

'This means that it is **obligatory to believe that the Mahdi will appear**, and it is necessary to believe that in order to abide by the commands of the Prophet. This matter has been recorded and proven in the **books of faith** of the People of the Sunna.'  
(*Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Ghimari, Ibraz al-Wahm al-Maknun, pp. 3-4*)

**Taftazani** says there are many sound hadiths about the emergence of Mahdi and the descent of Hazrat Eesa (Jesus) and that although they are ahad (narrated by only one person), their meaning is mutawatir. Scholars say they have the conviction that Mahdi is an imam from the descendants of Fatima and that **Allah will send him when He wants to help His religion.** (Sharhu'l-Makasid, 5:314)

Responding to Javed Ghamidi's rejection of advent of Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>, prominent Sunni Scholar of mass following from Pakistan, Dr. Mohammed Tahir ul-Qadri mentioned and enumerated a long list of works of *Muhadiththun* who recorded the reports of advent of Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> tracing all the way back to the holy Prophet<sup>SAS</sup>. Here's the [Audio speech](#)

'In his book Sharh us-Sunnah Abu Al-Asbal Ahmad Ahmad Muhammad Shakir writes: According to this Sunna that has come down from many of the companions of the Prophet, belief in the Mahdi is proven, and **nobody has the right to entertain any doubts** on the matter.'  
(*Jasim Muhalhil, al-Burhan...*, Vol. 1, p. 343)



The writer Sayyid Sabik, an academic at Egypt's al-Azhar University's Department of Beliefs, makes the following comments about the coming of Hazrat Mahdi (as) in his book **Aqaid-i-Islamiya**, published as a selected text by the Islamic Conference:

'The essence of the promise regarding the Mahdi is this: He will appear soon, at the end of time ... At a time when the world is full of cruelty and injustice, he will fill it with justice and good governance. It is certain that he will bring the law of Islam to the fore and **will give new life to the weakened Sunna of the Prophet.**'

(*Aqaid-i-Islamiya*, p. 250)



The essence of the matter is that **believing in Hazrat Mahdi (as) is a fundamental belief based on tawatur hadiths transmitted from the Prophet (saas), and belief in this is obligatory.**

Because under the decree of Allah (Surat Al-Baqara, 2-4), belief in the unseen revealed is a component of faith as one of the features of those having fear of Allah. None but the ignorant deny this. I beseech Allah to die in this belief, regarded as true in the Book and the Sunnah. (Muhammad Nasiruddin **Al Albani**, "Majallat al-Tamaddun al-Islami, No. 22, p. 646)



"The memorizers (Huffadh) and scholars of Hadith have verified that there are authentic (Sahih) and acceptable (Hasan) reports among the traditions related to al-Mahdi. The majority of these traditions are related through numerous authorities (Mutawatir). There is no doubt that the status of those reports are Sahih and Mutawatir. (They have also verified) that **the belief in Mahdi is obligatory**, and that it is **one of the beliefs of Ahlussunnah wal Jama'a**. Only those ignorant of the Sunnah and innovators in doctrine deny it."

*For the transcription and reproduction of this Fatwa ["The Muslim World League" (Rabitatul 'Alamil Islami) on Oct. 11, 1976 (23 Shawwal 1396), Mecca], see, among others, the Introduction of al-Ganji al-Shafi'i, in the book named "al-Bayan," Beirut, 1399/1979, pp 76-79 and in Appendix.*



**We advise Muslims to trust in reliable hadiths and fully believe that Hazrat Mahdi (as) will appear in the End Times.** Because those who say the opposite in fact have neither religious knowledge nor any belief in the hadiths. (Hasanayn Muhammad al-Makhluf al-Misri, "*al-Syaid al-Basher Yatahadda al-Mahdi al-Muntadhar*," Introduction to the book)

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*In his work al-Futuh al-Makkiyya, Al-Shaykh al-Akbar Ibn Arabi says:*

*'It is certain that when the world is full of cruelty and injustice, the caliph of Allah will rise up and fill the earth with justice and equality ... He will divide general earnings equally among the people, govern them with justice and decide on disputes between them ... Allah will order his activities in one night, and victory will always proceed him ... He will walk in the footsteps of the Prophet and never deviate from them ... He will do away with superstitions, and only the true religion will prevail...'*

*(Ibn al-Arabi, Futuhat al-Makkiyya, Vol. 3, pages 327-328)*

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... There is no doubt that these **hadiths are mutawatir**, provisions of the decree of the Prophet.

Because there can be no questioning this subject and individual opinions are invalid... Accordingly, since the accounts regarding the antichrist and the Messiah are **mutawatir**, so those regarding **Hazrat Mahdi (as) are mutawatir**. (Al-Muhib ibn Salih al-Buraim, "Iqdud Durar fi Akhbar al-Muntadhar," pp. 14 and 15)

“People have disagreed on the subject pertaining to the signs of Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>. Thus one group has hesitated (due to their honesty) and left the knowledge pertaining to the signs of Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> to its knower (i.e. Allah swt) and agreed on this thing that he will be a person from the progeny of Fatima<sup>RZ</sup> daughter of the Prophet Muhammad<sup>SAS</sup>, he will appear during the last period and **Allah SWT will bring him at a time of His reckoning and he will be sent to help His religion**”. [Imam Baihaqi, *Shu'ab Al Iman*]

Shaikh Ahmad Muhammad Shakir (d. 1377/1958), one of the greatest contemporary scholar of Hadith and Tafsir, whose major work was his commentary on Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (for a biography of Ahmad Shakir, see al-Aalam, v1, p253; Mu'jam al-Mu'allifeen, v13, p368) wrote in his commentary: "**Belief in al-Mahdi is not particular to the Shi'a** because it is from the narration of many companions of the Prophet in such way that NO one can cast doubt the truth (of this belief)." After this, he proceeds to a strong refutation of Ibn Khaldoon's weakening the traditions regarding al-Mahdi. (See [Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal with commentary of Ahmad Muhammad Shakir](#), Pub. by Dar al-Ma'arif, Egypt, v5, pp 196-198, v14, p288).

Al-Hafidh Muhammad Ibn 'Ali **al-Shawkani** (d. 1250/1834) wrote in a book called "al-Tawdhiih fi twawatur ma jaa'a fil muntadar wad-djjal wal masih" (the explanation about the frequent reports concerning the Awaited one, the Dajjal, and the messiah) in which he wrote about Imam al-Mahdi (as) that: "The traditions about al-Mahdi have been related by numerous authorities and **are therefore reliable beyond doubt** or confusion, because in jurisprudence the qualification of Mutawatir is valid even for (traditions) with less than this number of narrations.

al-Hafidh Abul-Hasan Muhammad Ibn al-Husayn al-Sijistani al-Aburi al-Shafi'i (d. 363/974) said: "The traditions **were related by numerous authorities** and were spread far and wide by many narrators, from al-Mustafa (S) concerning al-Mahdi who is from the household (of the Prophet) and who will fill the world with justice.."

This statement was accepted by the subsequent scholars as testified by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (See [Tahdhib al-Tahdhib](#), v9, p144; [Fat'h al-Bari](#), v7, p305), al-Qurtubi ([al-Tathkirah](#), p617), al-Suyuti ([al-Hawi](#), v2, pp 165-166), al-Muttaqi al-Hindi ([al-Burhan fi Alamat Mahdi Akhir al-Zaman](#), pp 175-176), Ibn Hajar al-Haythami ([al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah](#), Ch. 11, section 1, p249), al-Zurqani ([Sharh al-Mawahib al-Ladunniyyah](#), v5, p348), al-Sakhawi ([Fat'h al-Mugheeth](#), v3, p41), etc.

Many prominent Sunni scholars have written numerous books exclusively on the subject of Imam al-Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>. Few of them are listed below:

1. “*al-'Arf al-Wardi fi Akhbar al-Mahdi*” (The roselike fragrance in the reports of al-Mahdi) and “*Alamat al-Mahdi*,” by Jalaluddin **al-Suyuti**.
2. “*Al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar fi Alamat al-Mahdi al-Muntazar*,” (The Brief Discourse on the Portents of the Awaited Mahdi) by **Ibn Hajar al-Haytamî**.
3. “*Al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib al-Zaman*,” by Allamah Abu Abdullah Ibn Muhammad Yusuf **al-Ganji** al-Shafi'i.
4. “*Iqd al-Durar fi Akbar al-Imam al-Muntazar*,” by Shaikh Jamaluddin **Yusuf al-Damishqi**.
5. “*Mahdi Aale Rasool*,” by Ali Ibn Sultan **Muhammad al-Qari al-Harawi** al-Hanafi (Mulla Ali Qari).
6. “*Manaqib al-Mahdi*,” and “*Akhbar al-Mahdi*,” by al-Hafidh **Abu Nu'aym al-Isfahani**.
7. “*Al-Burhan fi Alamat al-Mahdi Akhir al-Zaman*,” by **al-Muttaqi** al-Hindi. (the author of 'Kanz al-Ummal')
8. “*Arba'in Hadith fi al-Mahdi*,” by Abdul Ala **al-Hamadani**.

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*The emergence of the Dajjal (the Anti-christ) and Yajuj (Gog), the Sun rising in the West, the descent from the sky of the Prophet 'Isa (as) and the other portents of the Last Hour related in sahih(trustworthy) reports are all true and will definitely take place. There are other great portents of the Hour, such as the coming of the Mahdi. As trustworthy accounts say, all these phenomena are true and will take place.” (Al-Fiqh al-Akbar, al-Imam al-A'zam **Abu Hanifah**, p. 99)*

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Many ahl-hadith scholars during al-Bukhari and Muslim's time therefore criticized the compilation of the Sahihayn. A famous hadith scholar from Rayy in Iran, Abu Zur'a al-Razi (d. 264/878), said of the two authors, 'These are the people who wanted prominence before their time, so they did something of which they could boast; they wrote books the likes of which none had written before to gain for themselves precedence.' The ahl-hadith also worried if hadith scholars wrote books limited to authentic hadiths, their opponents from the ahl al-ra'y would use that as a weapon against them. Abu Zura described Muslim as 'making a path for the people of heresy against us, for they see that they can respond to a hadith that we use as proof against them by saying "That is not in the Sahih!"' Under fire from such critics, **al-Bukhari and Muslim defended themselves by saying that their books did not include all the sahih hadiths in circulation.** Al-Bukhari had only selected sahih hadiths useful for his legal discussions, and Muslim had limited his book to hadiths whose authenticity he believed was agreed on by all.

- [Abu Zur'a al-Razi, *Abu Zur'a al-Razi wa juhuduhu fi al-sunna al-nabawiyya*, p. 2:674-676; Jonathan A.C. Brown, *The Canonization of Al-Bukhari and Muslim*, pp. 92-94]

[*Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* - By Jonathan A.C. Brown (2009), pg. 38]

As well as the sources cited above, many writers in countless works have stated that the hadiths which have come down to us on the subject of Hazrat Mahdi (AS) possess a '**tawatur**' level of certainty. Some of these Islamic scholars and their works are:

- Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Yusuf Ganji, *al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sa'hibi-z-Zaman*, p. 126
- Muhammad ibn Ahmad Qurtubi, *Kitab Al-Tadhkirah Bi-Ahwal Al-Mawta Wa-Umur Al-akhirah*, p. 710
- Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya Muhammad b. Abi Bakr Dimishqi, *Al-Manar al-Munif*, p. 142

- Ahmad ibn Ali Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Al-Nukat ala Taqrib Al-Tahdhib*, V.9, p. 126
- Jalal Ad-Din As-Suyuti, *Al-'Arf al-Wardi, Al hawi Lilfatawi*, V.2, p. 165
- Ab'ul-Abbas Ibn Hajar Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Haytami, *Al-Sawa`iq al-Muhriqa*, p. 99 / *Al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar*, p. 23
- Muhammad Ibn 'Abd Al-Rasul Al-Barzanji Madani, *Al-Isha'at li Ashratis Saa'at'*, pp. 147, 185
- Shams Ud-Din Muhammad Bin Ahmad As-Safarayni, *al-Anwar al-bahiya*, V.2, p. 89 / *Ahwal Yaum al-Qiyamah*, p. 33
- Muhammad b. `Ali al-Sabban al-Misri, *Is`af al-raghibin*, Nur'ul-Ebsar printed footnotes p. 192 directly from *Al-Sawa`iq al-Muhriqa*.
- Shablanji, Shaykh Mumin bin Hasan Mumin, *Nur ul Absar*, p. 189
- Muhammad Siddiq Khan al-Qunuji, *al-Izae*, p. 120
- Abu Abd-Allah Muhammad B. Jafar Al-Idrisi Al-Qatani, *Nazmu'ul-Mutanasir Fi'l-Hadith'il-Mutawatir*, p. 145
- Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Ghimari, *Ibraz al-Wahm al-Maknun*, pp. 3-4
- Abdul Muhsin al Abbad, *Majallat al-Jami`ah al-Islamiyah*, No. 3, Year 1, p. 598

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ مَنْ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَى

