

YOUNG READERS 8

(ATFS)

IMAM MAHDI

SAKINA HASAN ASKARI



خکر

Chapter 1

Introduction

Imam Mahdi (AS) is our twelfth Imam. The holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) had said "There will be 12 Imams after me." They are the Guides of Muslims: "the first of them is Ali and the last is Al Qaim who will be from the line of my daughter Fatima Zahra (AS).

The Imam is the most excellent and pure being of his time. He is free of sin and has no faults. He has complete knowledge and no one can attain his rank. He has the help and support of Allah. He has all good virtues given to him by Allah.

Many verses of the holy Quraan tell us about our Imam. When Jabir ibn Abdullah asked the Holy Prophet SAW the meaning of "Ulul Amr" the holders of authority who we have to obey by Allah's command, he replied, "The first of them is Ali ibne Abi Talib. He will be followed by his sons Hasan and Hussain, then Ali ibn Hussain; then Muhammad al Baqir whom you will live to see. When you go to meet him, give him my salam. He will be followed by Jafar al Sadiq, Musa al Kazim, Ali al Reza, Muhammad al Jawad, Ali al Hadi, Hasan al Askari and finally the Expected one, the Promised Mahdi. These will be the leaders (Imams) after me."

Imam Ali (AS) said The Promised Mahdi will emerge at the end of time from among us.

Bibi Fatima (AS) told her son Hussain AS, When I gave birth to you, the Prophet came to see me and said, O Fatima, know that he is the father of nine Imams. From his descendants will appear righteous among whom the ninth will be the Qaim.

Imam Hasan AS said There will be 12 Imams following the Prophet. Nine of these will be from the off spring of my brother Hussain. The Mahdi of this umma will be among them.

Imam Hussain (AS) said Twelve Imams will be from among us. The first will be Ali ibn Abi Talib and the last will be my ninth descendant, the rightful Qaim.

Imam Ali Zainulabideen (AS) said The birth of our Qaim will be hidden from the people.

Imam Muhammad Baqir (AS) said At the end of Time, the Mahdi will emerge from among us who will protect the religion of Allah.

Imam Jafar Sadiq (AS) said Whoever accepts all the Imams but denies the existence of Mahdi is like the one who accepts all the Prophets but denies the prophethood of Muhammad SAW.

Imam Moosa e Kazim (AS) said The Qaim who will purify the earth from the enemies of God and fill it with justice is my fifth descendant. Imam Ali Reza (AS) said The promised Qaim will be old in age but young in appearance when he emerges. The rod of Moses and the seal of Solomon are with him. That person will be my fourth descendant.

Imam Muhammad Taqui (AS) said Our Qaim is the same as the promised Mahdi, whom you should await and when he appears you should obey. He will be my third descendant.

Imam Ali Naqui (AS) said Following me, my son Hasan is the Imam and following Hasan it will be the Qaim who will fill the earth with justice and equity.

Imam Hasan Askari (AS) said Let it be known to you that the Ghaibat of my son will be so long that people will fall in doubt except those whose faith Allah protects.

Each of the Masoomeen spoke of the coming of the Mahdi, who would fill the world with justice and fairness. If we die without knowing him, then it is as if we were not Muslims. So it is very important that we recognise our Imam, know him and follow his teachings.

Chapter 2

Who is Imam Mahdi

Imam Mahdi (AS), our 12th Imam is the son of our 11th Imam Hasan Askari (AS). Each of our Imams stood for justice but it will be our 12th Imam who will wipe out in justice from the world. He is the Guide towards Allah, the promise of Allah, the caller towards the Book of Allah and the perfect Word of Allah.

He is the Master of the time and has power given by Allah over everything.

He is the friend of the believers and the helper of those in distress. He is a source of pride to the Muslims, anger to the hypocrites and unbelievers. He is the one chosen by Allah to take revenge from those who killed Imam Hussain (AS) and his family and followers in Karbala. He will be helped by Allah in this task. He will bring honour to those who believe and will re-vive Islam.

The knowledge of Imam Mahdi (AS), given to him directly by Allah, is so vast that nothing is hidden from him. During his rule, people's knowledge will increase in every subject. His government will be universal. He will bring peace, order and justice.

Such are his qualities that Allah says in Hadees e Qud side scribing his position in the shiny sky of Imamat: "Among them- al Qaem is like a sparkling star."

Chapter 3

His Titles

The twelfth Imam's name is Muhammad. His kunniyat is Abul Qasim. He is the only Imam who shares this name and kunniyat with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

He has many titles, which show his high position:

Sahib uz Zamaan

Sahib ul Asr

Hujjat ibn Hasan

Ainullah

Baqi atullah Mahdi

Hadi

Yousuf e Zahra

Muntazar

Qaim.

When we hear his title Qaim, we must stand up to show our respect. Imam Reza (AS) used to put his hand on his head and stand up whenever he mentioned the Imam's title al-Qaim. This title is special for the twelfth Imam. Momineen standing up whenever they hear this title show they are ready to be among the Imam's helpers.

Imam Mahdi (AS) will fulfil Allah's promise to the believers. Through him, Allah will complete His authority. The Imam will wear a ring which will have "Ana Hujjatullah" (I am Allah's Authority) engraved on it. He will bring comfort to those who are good and will punish all the evil doers. He will call people to the book of Allah and will rule the world with wisdom and truth.

Muntazar is from the word intezar: it means waiting. We are waiting for the Imam and the Imam is waiting for Allah's

command to reappear openly so the laws of Islam are followed by all.

Imam Mahdi (AS) is the perfect successor to the Prophets and Imams, so is called the Khalafe Swaleh. He will say "If you want to do the ziarat of the prophets, behold me. I am their successor." When we see flowing water, we see the mercy of Allah.

When we will witness the flowing mercy of knowledge and wisdom of Aale Muhammad SAW we will know that Allah's mercy is at hand.

Our twelfth Imam Mahdi is Ghaaib, not seen. He is present but we do not see him. He is there during Hajj. Even those who see him may not recognise him during the meeting.

He is the Baqiatullah, the one who Allah has kept alive. He will be a source of goodness for those who are true believers.

Chapter 4

His Father

Imam Mahdi's (AS) father was our eleventh Imam Hasan Askari (AS), who was the son of the 10th Imam Ali Naqui (AS). He has given us a wonderful detailed tafseer, which explains the verses of the Holy Quran.

Imam Hasan Askari (AS) lived most of his life under house arrest in Samarra, Iraq and was not allowed to meet his Shias freely. He kept in touch through letters and special followers who took his messages and collected Khums on his behalf.

Once, to impress the Imam with his huge army, the ruler collected all his soldiers together and called the Imam to see them. Imam Hasan Askari (AS) asked him to look between the Imam's fingers. What the ruler saw amazed him. The Imam's army seemed to stretch on and on and on. No wonder that the title of the Imam is "Askari", meaning soldier. We have many sayings from Imam Hasan Askari (AS) that give us guidance. He said:

The heart of a fool is in his mouth, and the mouth of a wise man is in his heart.

Anger is the key to every evil

The best of your brothers is he who forgets your wrong against him and remembers your kindness to him.

Two qualities that are better than everything else are faith in Allah and service to people. Imam Hasan Askari (AS) was given poison. He was martyred when he was only twenty eight years old. He was buried inside his house in Samarra, Iraq.

Chapter 5

His Mother

Imam Mahdi's (AS) mother was called Narjis Khatoon. She traced her family back to Simon Peter, the disciple of Jesus, on her mother's side; and the Caesar of Rome on her father's side.

Imam Ali Naqui (AS) our tenth Imam sent one of his Shia, named Bashar, with 220 gold coins and a letter to go to the bridge in Baghdad. He would see boats on the river. The Imam told Bashar that on one of the boats, he would see a veiled lady who would be refusing all offers from those who wanted to be her masters. When everyone failed, then he must approach and give the letter to the lady and the money to the trader. Bashar went to Baghdad and everything that the Imam had told him happened.

Bashar returned to Samarra with Hazrat Narjis Khatoon. When she met Imam Ali Naqui AS, she told him how twice her family had tried to organise her wedding but could not succeed. She said that then she had a wonderful dream where she saw the holy Prophet Muhammad SAW asking Jesus, son of Hazrat Maryam, for her hand in marriage to Imam Hasan Askari (AS).

She was guided to read the kalma, accepting Islam when she saw Hazrat Fatima Zahra (AS) and Hazrat Maryam (AS) in a vision. Then on reaching Samarra, she was married to Imam Hasan Askari (AS). The nikah was read by our tenth Imam Ali Naqui (AS).

When we say our salams to Hazrat Narjis Khatoon, we have been taught to recall her special status as one in whose marriage the holy Prophet showed interest; the daughter of the disciple of Jesus; the lady who bore the best of mankind, the mother of the twelfth Imam.

She was pious (Taquia) and pure (Naquia), and offered the best protection, observing the trust given to her in protecting and guarding Allah's Proof. She was similar to the mother of Moses, hiding her pregnancy when she carried the twelfth Imam in her womb. Our salams to her, her husband and her son, on her pure soul and body. Her mazar is within the zarih of the tenth and eleventh Imams.

Chapter 6

Birth of the Imam

Our twelfth Imam Mahdi (AS) was born on Friday, the 15th day of the month of Shabaan in 255 A.H. in Samarra. It is related from Hazrat Hakeema, the daughter of our tenth Imam Mohammad Taqui (AS), that one day Imam Hasan Askari (AS) called her to his house to stay the night as a son was to be born to him. She says that she was surprised for she could see no signs of pregnancy in Hazrat Narjis. The Imam replied that Allah sends His Proof like so, just as the mother of Moses had shown no signs either. Hazrat Hakeema stayed the night. When it was past midnight, she saw Hazrat Narjis wake up, do wudhu, pray namaz e shab. Then she started to feel the pains of labour.

Hazrat Hakeema did dua. Imam Hasan Askari (AS) from the next room said to her "Recite the sura of Qadr."

Hazrat Hakeema says "I could feel that the baby still in the womb was reciting the sura with me. Then after a while there seem to be a veil between Narjis and me. I was worried". Imam Hasan Askari said "Don't worry, aunt!" She says "When the veil was lifted what I saw amazed me. There was a beautiful baby in sajda, praying: "O Allah, fulfil your promise, complete my authority, fill the earth with equity and justice through me.

"Imam Hasan Askari (AS) named him Muhammad and gave him the same surname "Abul Qasim" as the holy Prophet SAW had. This was the awaited Imam Mahdi, who would be the final authority of Allah on earth. On the third day he showed him to his companions and said, "This son of mine will be your master and Imam after me. He is the Qaim who is awaited by everyone. When the earth is filled with in iustice and tyranny, he will rise and fill it with justice and equity."

Chapter 7

Infancy and Childhood

When Imam Mahdi AS was born, his father Imam Hasan Askari (AS) celebrated his aqeeqa on a large scale. Meat from several sheep and goats as well as bread was shared among the people of Samarra. This was done perhaps to make sure that many people find out about the birth of the twelfth Imam. Goat for Aqeeqa Bread for Aqeeqa.

Only some of the Shias who could be trusted by the eleventh Imam saw Imam Mahdi (AS). Ahmad son of Ishaq came to visit the eleventh Imam at his house and asked "Who will be the Imam after you?"

"Imam Hasan Askari (AS) went inside and came out holding a three year old boy, Imam Mahdi on his shoulder and said, "O Ahmad, you have honour near Allah so I am showing you my son. He is the one who will fill the earth with justice and fairness."

On another occasion, about forty people gathered at the house of Imam Hasan Askari (AS) to find out about his successor. In answer to their question, the Imam came out with a small boy whose face shone like the full moon and said "This is your Imam. Obey him. And also know that you will no more see him after today."

He also said," Praise be to Allah who did not take me out of this life till He made me see the Successor after me."

Chapter 8

Loss of his Father

Imam Mahdi (AS) was hardly five years old when his father, Imam Hasan Askari (AS) was given poison by the wicked ruler named Motamadin Samarra. For one week, the Imam was very ill. Then on 8th Rabiulaval 260 A.H. he died at the young age of twenty eight.

As his end came near, he recited the verses of the holy Qur-aan. The news of his death spread through Samarra. Thousands came out to weep at the loss of the son of the Holy Prophet SAW. Men, women, officers of the government, all gathered to pay their respect.

As the time came to read the namaz for the funeral of the Imam, his brother Jafar stepped forward. But before the namaz could begin, a five year old boy (Imam Mahdi) stopped him saying: "The namaz for an Imam can only be read by an Imam." Saying this, Imam Mahdi (AS) led the namaz.

Imam Hasan Askari (AS) was buried next to his father, Imam Ali Naqui(AS). The tombs of Hazrat Narjis Khatoon and Hazrat Hakeema are also inside the same zareeh in Samarra. Our salams to them all. When the rulers found out that a young child of the eleventh Imam had led the funeral prayer, spies were sent to search and kill him. They came into the house and looked everywhere but could not see him. Allah hid him from his enemies.

It is said that some saw him saying his namazon a musalla that was floating on water. The spies sent by the ruler were scared. They did not want other people to know about this miracle, so kept quiet.

Chapter 9

Hidden from View

After the shahadat of his father, Imam Mahdi (AS) has lived, hidden from people. The first part of this period lasted for about seventy years. This is called Ghaibat e Sughra. During this time, only the special deputy, named by the Imam was able to meet him.

This special Deputy/Naaib would get the answers to the questions directly from the Imam. They were very pious and learned and were chosen by Imam Mahdi (AS) himself. When one Deputy died, then the next one took over by the orders of the Imam.

1. Usman ibn Saeed Umravi. He was the most trustworthy and well known companion of Imam Hasan Askari (AS) and had also served Imam Ali Naqui (AS). He was highly respected and reliable. The Imam said “. If he relates something for you then he is telling the truth. Listen to him and obey him because I trust him.”

2. Muhammad ibn Usman ibn Saeed Umravi was the son of the first deputy and succeeded his father on the orders of the 12th Imam. He also enjoyed the highest respect in the eyes of his Master. He was the Imam's deputy for almost fifty years.

3. Hussain ibn Rooh, was very learned and was made the third Deputy by the Master of the Age. He was trusted by the Imam above all others. When we write our areeza and put it in flowing water, we read a dua calling Hussain ibn Rooh to deliver it to the Imam's presence.

4. Abul Hasan Ali ibn Muhammad Samarri, the fourth Deputy of the Hidden Imam, had also the honour of serving the 10th and 11th Imams. He got a letter from Imam Mahdi (AS) which he read out to the people. It said “In the name Of Allah, O Ali

ibn Muhammad Samarri. May Allah reward your brothers in your death, which is going to take place in six days time. So take care of your affairs and do not appoint any one in your place.”

During the time of Ghaibat e Sughra, the Shias could contact the Imam through his special deputies. But now with the death of the fourth deputy, the time had come for the Ghaibat e Kubra.

This is the period when the Imam will remain hidden from view for a long time. In this period, the Shia follow their Leader who is a Mujtahid, an expert in religion and who governs the Muslim nation. This Leader is called Wali Faqih, and under the rule of this Leader, Shias strive to prepare the ground for the Imam's reappearance, Inshallah.

Shia Muslims are deeply saddened by the suffering of the people in many parts of the world. They do not sit idle and just wait. They support the helpless, and stand against the cruel people. By doing this, they support the cause of Imam Mahdi (AS) which is to bring justice to the world.

There is no time limit for this period. Imam Mahdi (AS) himself wrote “I will not appear until Allah permits me to do so (may His name be exalted) and that will be after a long time and after hearts become hard and the earth is filled with wickedness” This second period of the Imam in hiding will last till his Zahoor, or Reappearance.

Chapter 10

Meeting the Imam

Those people who have had the honour of meeting Imam Mahdi (AS) can be grouped into two:

Those who met the Imam in the first phase of his Ghaibat

Those who met the Imam in the second phase of his Ghaibat.

In the first group we have more than thirty names of men, who met the Imam. They were members of the family, Shias of the eleventh Imam, the four Deputies and others.

During the time of second phase, called Ghaibat e Kubra, those people who have seen and met the Imam did not realise his identity in the meeting. Many incidents have been reported across the centuries giving details of how Imam Mahdi (AS) helped them to overcome their problems.

An incident that has been reported recently is when a little girl was lost, while she was going round the Kaaba.

There were millions of people. She was with her mother, but suddenly in the rush of people, she lost hold of her mother's hand. She felt scared and called out "Ya Sahib uz Zamaanad-rikni O Master of this Age, help me!" She didn't know what to do.

Suddenly she heard someone call her by her name. He was in ihraam and told her to do as he did in the tawaf. When the tawaf finished and she completed the seven rounds, he pointed which way she had to go. She was amazed to see her mother right there.

No wonder! Our Imam says: "I am aware of your affairs. Nothing about you is hidden from me. I am there to protect you. "

Chapter 11

Our Duties as Shia

We live during the time of our twelfth Imam but cannot see him with our eyes. Imam Mahdi (AS) is also waiting for the command from Allah to come out openly before the world. The Earth cannot be without a divine proof.

His presence though hidden still benefits us. The Imam himself has said that “people can benefit from me in ghaibat just as they derive benefit from the Sun when it is hidden behind the clouds.

Imam Mahdi (AS) is the reminder of Allah in his creation and has said to his followers “Then each of you should do those deeds which bring you closer to our love.” He asked us to keep away from all acts that displease him and make him angry. What keeps him away from us is that we attach ourselves to what he dislikes.

If we think, then we will realise that if we follow the rules set by the Quran and shown by the Ahle Bayt then we will please our Imam. In one of his letters, he has written “Nothing is better than namaz to make Shaitan bite the dust, then perform namaz and make Shaitan bite the dust.”

Another important duty that our Imam has reminded us about is the giving of Khums. This is one fifth of your yearly savings. Khums is divided into two parts: one half is Sehme Imam, which must be given to the representative of the Imam and the other half Sehme Sadaat to be used to feed, clothe and educate the poor among the Syed families of the Shia community.

We must always remember our Imam. We must pray to Allah to hasten his return. We can recite Dua e Nudba every Friday:

“Wish I knew where the far off place where you are settled. How long must I wait for you my Master?”

We should remain sad at the lack of contact with our Imam and at the state of affairs while there is so much cruelty in the world, specially the suffering of the momineen. We must try to create conditions which will be favourable for our Imam. When Imam Mahdi (AS) returns then it will be time to celebrate.

We should perform Hajj and Umra on his behalf. We should give alms in the name of the Imam. Giving charity said our first Imam prevents mishaps.

Before we give charity for ourselves we should give alms for our Imam. Imam Mahdi (AS) has said if you cannot give to him directly then “he should give it to our pious Shias. You will get the same reward of giving to us.”

Before we pray for our own needs, we should pray for our Imam Mahdi (AS). We must pray for his safety every day. The Ahlul Bait have shown us many duas where we pray for his return.

We must celebrate Imam Mahdi’s birthday on 15th Shabaan in such a way that we spread knowledge about him. We should organise meetings to remember him.

We must offer our sympathy to the Imam on the day of Ashoora, as he is the remaining son of Imam Hussain (AS). We should remain in touch with Imam Mahdi (AS) always for he has immense love and affection for his Shia.

We must pray for the protection of Islam and eimaan. Indistress, we should read the isteghasa, a dua shown by the Imam. Our Imam is the best waseela, a means of approach to Allah for the acceptance of duas.

We can also write our needs in the form of a letter, an areeza. This can be then put in flowing water. Some people put their areeza in the well at the Masjid e Jamkaran, a place dedicated to the living Imam Mahdi (AS).

During the time of Ghaibat e kubra, we have to follow the rulings of a mujtahid (marja) in the way we live, showing in our actions that we are true followers of Islam. This is called Taqleed. A mujtahid is a pious and just man who is trained in the laws of Islam and can guide us in the day to day rules. He has a book of guidance called “Risala” to explain do’s and don’ts.

Chapter 12

Signs of His Zahoor

The holy Prophet Muhammad(SAW) said that even if one day is left before the end of the world,Allah will expand that day so that a person from his Ahlebait will fill the Earth with justice as it will have been full of injustice and tyranny.

Many signs have been forecast to show when the time of the Imam's return is near.

Rulers and kings will be harshand cruel.

There will be many natural disasters, like earthquakes and black winds.

Fear will cover the people of Iraq and Baghdad.

Swift death will occur and lives, property and harvests will be lost.

A reddish yellow fire will appear for a long time in the East.

A solar eclipse will be seen in mid-Ramadan and a lunar eclipse at the end of the month.

A pure soul will be killed outside Koofa with 70 men

A call will be heard from the sky in such a way that people will hear it in their own language.

Chapter 13

The Reappearance

When Imam Mahdi (AS) reappears he will be supported by Prophet Jesus (AS), Prophet Khizr (AS) and Prophet Ilyas (AS). The angel Jibraeel will be sent by Allah to name the 313 companions of the Imam who will help him. These 313 supporters will be pious and brave with great faith in the Imam. They will be ready to assist and help the Imam in every way. Another 1000 people will be in the army of the Imam. These people will fight battles and kill enemies like Dajjal.

The Imam will appear first in Mecca, on the day of Ashoora. He will go to the Kaaba and announce his coming with this verse of the Holy Quraan:

Wa qul ja al Haq wa zahaq al batilinnal batil kaana zahuqa
And say Truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Indeed-
falsehood is bound to vanish

His Shias will come to him from the ends of earth to do his bayat. Those who oppose him will be punished.

He will then go from Mecca to Koofa. The Imam's residence will be in the Masjide Sahla, near Koofa.

When Imam Mahdi (AS) will read namaz, Prophet Jesus (AS) will be behind him. He will invite people to Islam and guide them. He will rule with justice and every due will be restored to its proper owner. Roads will be safe. Blessings from Allah will be such that there will be no one in need of charity. Everyone will be rich.

Imam Mahdi (AS) will teach the Quran as it should be taught. He will judge among the people with the style of Prophet David (AS). The world will be filled with justice. The successor of Imam Hussain (AS) will avenge the blood of his grandfather to defeat all tyranny.

Let us pray to Allah to hasten there appearance of our Imam and give us the faith to be with the Imam among his helpers, when he establishes justice in the world.

Chapter 14

Dua for the Imam

Imam Mahdi (AS) in one of his letters has said “Pray more for my reappearance because in it is your salvation.”

O Allah, be, for Your representative, the Hujjat (proof),son of Al Hasan,

Your blessings be on him and his fore fathers,in this hour and in every hour,

a guardian, a protector,a leader, a helper,a proof, and an eye.Until You make him live on the earth,in obedience (to You), and cause him to live in it for a long time.

Allaahumma kun le-waliyyekalhujjatibnil hasane salawaatokaal'layhe wa a'laa aabaa-ehi

Fee haazehis saa-a'te wa feekulle saa-a'tinWaliyyawn wa haafezawn Wa qaa-edawn wa naaserawnwa daleelawn wa a'ynan

Hattaa tuskenahu arzaka taw-a'nwa tomatte-a'hu feehaa taweelaa.

Chapter 15

Salams to the Imam

- Salam on the off spring of Yaseen
- Salam on you the caller of Allah and His sign
- Salam on you the proof of Allah..
- Salam on you the reciter of His book and its explainer
- Salam on you in your night and in your day... ..
- Salam on you while you are standing
- Salam on you while you are sitting
- Salam on you while you are reading and explaining
- Salam on you while you are praying namaz and dua
- Salam on you while you are doing ruku and sajda
- Salam on you while you are saying “La ilaha illallah” and “Al-lah o Akbar”
- Salam on you while you are praising Allah and seeking forgiveness
- Salam on you when you enter the morning and evening
- Salam on you in the night when it gathers and the day when it is seen
- Salam on you the Imam, the protected one... .
- Salam on you by the set of salams

Chapter 16

The Twelve Imams

1. Imam Ali Mutuza AS
2. Imam Hasan Mujtaba AS
3. Imam Hussain AS
4. Imam Ali Zainulabideen AS
5. Imam Muhammad Baqar AS
6. Imam Jafar Sadiq AS
7. Imam Moosa Kazim AS
8. Imam Ali Reza AS
9. Imam Muhammad Taqui (AS)
10. Imam Ali Naqui AS
11. Imam Hasan Askari(AS)
12. Imam Muhammad Mahdi AS

Please recite sura Fatiha for all momineen and mominaat. May Allah forgive our faults And keep us on the straight path.

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*"Wisdom is the lost property of the Believer,
let him claim it wherever he finds it"*

Imam Ali (as)