

(The Twelfth Imam Imam Mehdi (A.S

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Introduction

First Heavenly concealment: 8th of Rabi-ul-Awwal, 260 A.H.

Final Heavenly concealment: 10th of Shawwal, 328 A.H.

There existed a good deal of harmony and uniformity between the aspects pertaining to the births of Prophet Muhammad, the last Apostle of Allah and Imam Mehdi, the last Apostolical Imam. Just as the coming of the Holy Prophet was prophesied well in advance by the preceeding Prophets similarly the impending news of the gracious birth of Imam al-Mehdi was foretold by the Holy Prophet.

Innumerable traditions in this context, quoted right from The Holy Prophet from the glowing contents of many books of Masanid, Sehan, and Akhbar and of Shia Scholars existed. Many Sunni scholars have accumulated these traditions in complete volumes also.

BIRTH

He was born on the 15th Shaban 255 A.H. in the city of Samarra. The momenton us and singlar aspects of his birth greatly resembled those under which the Prophet Musa was born. The birth of Hazart Musa had signalled the downfall and extinction of the empire of Pharoah, who had ordered the slaying of all the newly born children of Bani-Israel. The Abbaside kings were similarly apprehnesive of the continuous traditions of the Holy Prophet about the birth of Imam Mehdi, who was to bring about a curse to their (Abbaside) very empire. They were, therefore, laying in ambush to discover the birth of the Imam and to put an end to his life. But the event of the Imam's birth was enveloped and shielded by the same Divine protection and miraculous phenomena which had makred the historical birth of Prophet Musa. His birth remained strictly confidential and his nursery shrouded in secrecy except to a few devotees. The Imam's birth had coincided with the reign of al-Mutamad, the well-known Abbaside king. He, being aware of the prophecy of the twelfth Imam's birth occuring in his reign, was extremely worried and anxious to trace him out.

But on the death of Imam Hasan Askari, when he was informed about the Imam's funeral prayer having been conducted by his four year old son, his perplexity knew no bounds. It struck his mind that this very boy must be the Imam, but he managed to hide his inner concern at the news of the existence of the young Imam. In order to get confirmation that the young Imam did in fact exist, he ordered the arrest of the Imam's mother, Janab-e-Nargis

MISC. Information on Imam Mehdi (AS)

In a tradition upon whose authenticity all Muslims agree, the Holy Prophet has said:

"Even if the entire duration of the world's existence has already been exhausted and only one day is left before Doomsday (Day of judgment), Allah will expand that day to such a length of time, as to accommodate the kingdom of a person out of my Ahlul-Bayt who will be called by my name. He will then fill out the earth with peace and justice as it will have been full of injustice and tyranny before then."

Sunni Reference: Sahih Tirmidhi, V2, P86, V9, P74-75 (There are many more.)

The context of the above precious tradition informs the golden divine promises will take place, sooner or later, one way or another, as mentioned in most of the Shi'ite and Sunnit sources.

In a tradition the Holy Prophet said to the Commander of believers, Ali, that:

"There will be twelve Guides (Imams) after me, the first of whom is you, O' Ali, and the last one will be the 'Support' (al-Qa'im), who with the grace of Allah, will gain victory over the whole east and west of the world."

The occultation of the twelfth Imam is divided into two parts: the first, the minor occultation (ghaybat al-Sughra) which began in 259/873 and ended in 329/939, lasting about seventy year. On that period, people were in contact with him through four special deputies. That period served as preparing people for the absence of Imam. The second, the major occultation which commenced in 329/939 and will continue as long as God wills it. There is no special deputy in direct contact with him in this period, and Muslim scholars are regular deputies of him at this time without having ability to see him.

Imam Mahdi (AS) said:

"Rest assured that no one has a special relationship with Allah. Whoever denies me is not from my (community). The appearance of the Relief (al- Faraj) depends solely upon Allah. Therefore those who propose a certain time for it are liars. As to the benefit of my existence in occultation, it is like the benefit of the sun behind the clouds where the eyes do not see it. Indeed, my existence is an amnesty for inhabitants of the earth. Pray much to Allah to hasten the Relief, for therein also lies the release from your sufferings."

Sunni Documentation on Imam Mahdi (AS)

For our respected Sunni brothers, there are six authentic collections of traditions based on the Sunni standards for verifying the authenticity of a tradition. These six books are: Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sahih al-Tirmidhi, Sunan Ibn Majah, Sunan Abu Dawud, and Sahih al-

Nisa'i. I just quote few traditions from these six books to prove that a knowledgeable Sunni brother/sister can NOT deny that:

1. Mahdi is going to come in the last days to make a universal Government,
2. Mahdi is from the Ahlul-Bayt of Prophet,
3. Mahdi is from the children of Fatimah (AS), the daughter of Prophet,
4. Mahdi is different than Jesus (the messiah),
5. Jesus will be one of the followers of Imam Mahdi and prays behind him.

The following are only some of the traditions out of many, about Imam Mahdi, and are ALL traditions that the Sunnis admit to their authenticity and existence:

The Prophet (PBUH) said: *"Even if the entire duration of the world's existence has already been exhausted and only one day is left before Doomsday (Day of judgment), Allah will expand that day to such a length of time, as to accommodate the kingdom of a person out of my Ahlul-Bayt who will be called by my name. He will then fill out the earth with peace and justice as it will have been full of injustice and tyranny before then."*

Sunni References:

1. Sahih Tirmidhi, V2, P86, V9, PP 74-75
2. Sanan Abi Dawud, V2, P7
3. Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, V1, P376 & V3, P63
4. Mustadrak al-Sahihain, by al-Hakim, V4, P557
5. Al-Majma', by Tabarani, P217
6. Tahdhib al-Thabit, by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, V9, P144
7. Sawaiq al-Muhraqa, Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, P167
8. Fathul Bari, by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, V7, P305
9. al-Tathkirah, by al-Qurtubi, P617
10. al-Hawi, by al-Suyuti, V2, pp165-166
11. Sharh al-Mawahib al-Ladunniyyah, by al-Zurqani, V5, P348
12. Fathul Mughith, by al-Sakhawi, V3, P41
13. al-Hafidh Abul-Hasan Muhammad Ibn al-Husayn al-Sijistani al-Aburi
14. al-Shafi'i (d. 363/974). (who said the above hadith is related by numerous authorities and were spread far and wide by many narrators).
and also in the works of Ibn Habban, Abu Nua'ym, Ibn Asakir, etc.

Also:

The Prophet (PBUH) said: *"Al-Mahdi is one of us, the members of the household (Ahlul-*

Bayt)."

Sunni reference: Sunan Ibn Majah, V2, Tradition #4085

As we see Imam Mahdi is from the Ahlul Bayt of Prophet Muhammad, so he can not be Jesus (the Messiah; al-Maseeh). Mahdi and Messiah are two different personalities but they come at the same time, Mahdi as Imam and Jesus as his follower. The following tradition clearly mentions that Imam Mahdi is one of the children of the daughter of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH&HF):

The Messenger of Allah said: *"Al-Mahdi is one of the children of Fatimah (the Prophet's daughter)."*

Sunni reference: Sunan Ibn Majah, V2, Tradition #4086

Also:

The Prophet (PBUH) said: *"We the children of Abd Al-Mutalib are the Masters of the inhabitants of Heaven: Myself, Hamza (RA), Ali (AS), Jafar (RA), Hasan (AS), Hussain (AS), and Al-Mahdi (AS)."*

Sunni reference: Sunan Ibn Majah, V2, Tradition #4087

The Prophet (PBUH) said: *"The Mahdi will appear in my Ummah. He will appear for a minimum of 7 or a maximum of 9 years; in that time, my Ummah will experience a bountiful favor like never before. It shall have a great abundance of food, of which it need not save anything, and the wealth at that time is in great quantities, such that if a man asks the Mahdi to give him some, and the Mahdi (AS) will say: Here! Take!"*

Sunni reference: Sunan Ibn Majah, V2, Tradition #5083

Remark: According to Shi'i sources, the Government of Peace and equality that Imam Mahdi will establish will last hundreds of years with no rival, and then the day of Judgment will be set. What is mentioned in the above tradition as 7 or 9 years is related to the length of time that Imam Mahdi will fight to conquer the world when he starts his mission.

The Prophet (PBUH) said: *"We (I and my family) are members of a household that Allah (SWT) has chosen for them the life of the Hereafter over the life of this world; and the members of my household (Ahlul-Bayt) shall suffer a great affliction and they shall be forcefully expelled from their homes after my death; then there will come people from the East carrying black flags, and they will ask for some good to be given to them, but they shall be refused service; as such, they will wage war and emerge victorious, and will be offered that which they desired in the first place, but they will refuse to accept it, until a man from my family (Ahlul-Bayt) appears to fill the Earth with justice as it has been filled with corruption. So whoever reaches that (time) ought to come to them even if crawling on the ice/snow."*

Sunni ref: Sunan Ibn Majah, V2, Tradition #4082, also in the History Tabari

The Messenger of Allah said: *"The world will not perish until a man among the Arabs appears whose name matches my name."*

Sunni reference: Sahih Tirmidhi, V9, P74

Also:

The Messenger of Allah said: *"Mahdi from my family will bring about a revolution and will fill the world with justice and equity before which it was filled up with injustice and inequity."*

Sunni references:

1. Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, V1, P84
2. Jami'us Sagheer, by al-Suyuti, PP 2,160
3. al-Urful Vardi, by al-Suyuti, P2
4. Kanzul Ummal, V7 P186
5. Aqd al-Durar Fi Akhbaar al-Mahdi al-Muntazir, V12, Chapter 1,
6. al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib al-Zaman, By Ganji Shafi'i, Chapter 12
7. al-Fusool al-Muhimmah, by Ibn Sabbagh Maliki, Chapter 12
8. Arjahul Matalib, by Ubaidallah Hindi hanafi, P380
9. Muqaddimah, by Ibn Khaldoon, P266

Also Ahmad Ibn Hanbal narrated that:

The Prophet (PBUH) said: *"Allah will bring out from concealment Mahdi from my Family and Progeny before the Day of Judgement, even if only one day were to remain in the life of the world, and he will spread on this earth justice, and equity and eradicate tyranny and oppression."*

1. Sunni reference: Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v1, p99

Ibn Majah in his Sunan quotes Mohammad Ibn Hanafiyyah and Imam Ali saying that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Mahdi is from our Ahlul-Bayt, no doubt Allah will enforce his Amr (appearance) within a night (i.e., his coming is very unpredicted)."

Sunni reference: Sunan Ibn Majah, V2, P269

The more recent fatwa in this issue is given in Mecca by the Muslim World League (Rabitatul `Alamul Islami) on Oct. 11, 1976 (23 Shawwal 1396). This fatwa states that more than twenty companions narrated traditions concerning al-Mahdi, and gives a list of those scholars of Hadith who have transmitted these narrations, and those who have written books on al-Mahdi.

The fatwa states:

"The memorizers (Hafiz) 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 Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama'a. Only those ignorant of the Sunnah and innovators in doctrine deny it.

For the transcription and reproduction of this fatwa, see, among others, the Introduction of al-Ganji al-Shafi'i, in the book named "al-Bayan," Beitut, 1399/1979, PP 76-79 and in Appendix.

Among Shi'ite scholars, I would like to mention the masterpiece of Lutifullah Al-Safi al-Golpaygani, who compiled an encyclopedia called "Muntakhab al-Athar". In this book, there is a comprehensive narration of the traditions relating to the appearance of the Mahdi (AS). He has used over 60 Sunni sources, including their Six Authentic Books of Tradition; and over 90 Shi'ite sources to illuminate the fact that Al-Mahdi is NOT a fabricated event. The Prophet (PBUH&HF) said: "He who dies not knowing the Imam of his era, has died the death of Al-Jahiliyya (Days of Ignorance; the era before Islam)."

Special specifications of Imam Mahdi (AS)

In the previous part, I provided extensive traditions from the six authentic Sunni collections concerning the fact that Imam Mahdi (AS) who is different than Jesus (the messiah) WILL come and he is the descendant of Prophet and his daughter Fatimah. The traditions further illuminated the fact that Jesus (who was a great Prophet) will pray behind al-Mahdi (who is an Imam). Also I gave the fatwa of Sunni scholars who stated that the belief in the "Mahdi of the House of Prophet" is one of the Islamic tenets for "Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama'a", and any one who denies it is either ignorant or an innovator.

In this part however, I would like to talk about some special specifications of Imam Mahdi which is questionable for a majority of Sunnis. Imam Mahdi's Identification: Shia believe that Imam Mahdi is the only son of Imam Hasan al-Askari (the 11th Imam) who was born on 15th of Sha'ban 255/869 in Samarra, Iraq. He became the God-appointed Imam when his father was martyred in 260/874. Imam Mahdi went into occultation (disappearance; leaving among people while they can't recognize him) at the same time. He will re-appear when Allah wills. More specifically:

His title is "***al-Mahdi***" which means "***The Guided One.***"

His name is Muhammad Ibn al-Hasan (AS).

His lineage, traced back to al-Imam Ali (AS), is: Muhammad Ibn al-Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Musa Ibn Ja'far Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn al-Husain Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Talib (AS).

On the other hand, the majority of Sunnis are not so sure that he has been born yet. They

believe he will be born some time before his mission. The name of Imam Mahdi is Muhammad (which is the same as what Shia believe). There is however one single Sunni report which adds that the name of the father of Imam Mahdi is Abdullah.

Now let us see what is the argument of each side:

Question 1:

Some Sunnis question Shia that how a five year old boy can become an Imam for the people?

And why attribute all this importance to him?

Answer 1:

First, we must question whether or not in the history of religion, the phenomenon of young leaders has a parallel. Undoubtedly, there is. The Quran strikes two examples which are worthy of mentioning:

We have the example of Jesus (AS) who became Prophet and spoke people when he was a baby in the cradle:

"But she pointed to the baby. They said: 'How can we talk to one who is a CHILD in the cradle?' He said: 'I am indeed a servant of Allah. He HAS GIVEN me Scripture and ASSIGNED me a Prophet, and He has made me blessed wherever I be, and has enjoined on me Prayer and zakat as long as I live.'" (Quran 19:29-31)

Thus Jesus (AS) became Prophet and received revelation and book while he was less than two years old!

Furthermore, in few verses before, Quran mentions the case of Prophet Yahya (John), to whom Allah (SWT) said:

"O Yahya! Take hold of the Book with might:' And We gave him the appointment (of prophethood) in his CHILDHOOD." (Quran 19:12)

So if a two-year old boy can become a prophet and receives revelation, then why can not a five-year old boy become Imam?

Have you ever heard of prodigies? They are kids between the ages of four to 18 that exhibit signs of exceptional skills that are usually found in highly qualified adults only. Here are some examples from history:

"John Stuart Mill (1806-73), a 19th-century English philosopher and economist, advocated utilitarian reforms in his many writings and as member of Parliament. A child prodigy, Mill had mastered Greek by the age of 7 and studied economics at the age of 13. His works express his social thought with great clarity and thoroughness. (The Bettmann Archive)"

"The French thinker, mathematician, and scientist Blaise Pascal, b. June 19, 1623, d. Aug. 19, 1662, has been credited not only with imaginative and subtle work in geometry and other

branches of mathematics, but with profoundly influencing later generations of theologians and philosophers. A prodigy in mathematics, Pascal had mastered Euclid's Elements by the age of 12. Pascal invented and sold the first calculating machine (1645)."

"Wolfgang was the greatest musical child prodigy who ever lived. He began composing minuets at the age of 5 and symphonies at 9."

"Beethoven's own talent was such that at the age of 12 he was already an assistant to the organist Christian Gottlob Neefe, with whom he studied."

"Sarah Caldwell, born Maryville, Mo., Mar. 6, 1924, is a conductor and producer. A child prodigy in both mathematics and music, before reaching the age of ten."

While not exhaustive, the list serves the purpose of demonstrating that this phenomenon occurs naturally among normal human beings from all walks of life. So scientifically speaking, it is quite possible that a child demonstrates abilities that adults can not. Also religiously speaking anything Allah desires will happen no matter how strange. Indeed Allah (SWT) asserts unequivocally in Quran that if He wanted something, all He has to do is to say to it: "Be! and it will be!".

Question 2:

Every body is mortal. How can he live so long?

Answer 2:

Yes, in fact Imam Mahdi will die too. But the difference is the length of life in this world. In fact Quran and the prophetic traditions tell us that some people have had/are having long life in this world. So it is possible to see this phenomena again.

Are you aware that according to the Quran (see 29:14), Prophet Noah has just been prophet for 950 years? In fact, he was alive even more than that because we should add his age before prophethood to the above number. Who knows how much it was.

Do you agree that Prophet Jesus (AS) is still alive? He is in fact 1,994 years old now. Of course, he is not living on Earth right now; he is living in the Heavens. But according to Muslim's belief, he will come back to Earth, and will pray behind Imam al-Mahdi (AS).

Do you agree that al-Khidr (AS) is still alive? Quran mentions his story with Moses (AS). He existed before the birth of the Prophet Moses (AS), so al-Khidr (AS) is now more than 3000 years old. He lives right here on this Earth, but we can not recognize him (fairly similar to the case of Imam Mahdi). He serves Allah (SWT) as one of His agents.

No doubt Allah has the ability to give a very long life, but He also has assigned a death time for every body (including the above mentioned individuals) which can be so soon or so late.

Moreover, scientifically speaking, there are NO objections whatsoever to the extended life span

assertion. A group of scientists conducted a series of experiments at the Rockefeller Institute in New York in 1912 on certain "parts" of plants, animals, and humans. These scientists included Dr. Alex Carl, Dr. Jack Lope, and Dr. Warren Lewis and his wife, among others. Among the experiments conducted was one that directly treated the nerves, muscles, hearts, skin, and kidneys of human beings. These organs were not in a human body, they were independent organs that were perhaps donated for the experiment. It was concluded by the scientists that these "parts or organs" CAN continue to live almost indefinitely as long as they are nourished properly, and as long as they are shielded from external negative interactions like microbes and other obstacles that might inhibit the growth of these organs; furthermore, the assertion was made that the cells would continue to grow normally under the above conditions, and that the growth is directly related to the nourishment provided. Again, aging had no effect on these organs, and they grew every year without any signs of deterioration or aging. The scientists concluded that these organs will continue to grow as long as the patience of the scientists themselves is not exhausted, causing them to abandon the nourishment process.

Question 3:

Where is Mahdi (AS) right now? Is he in cave?

Answer 3:

Imam Mahdi disappeared in 260/874 when he became Imam. The last time that he was seen, was in the cellar of his father's house in Samarra, Iraq. That is what is rumored regarding Shia that they believe Mahdi is in the cave!!!

Shia do NOT believe that Imam Mahdi is in the Cave or Cellar! He was just seen there for the last time. He can be anywhere Allah wishes. However one thing is clear is that he lives on the earth among people while people around him do not perceive.

Second, with regards to the occultation of al-Mahdi (AS), the Quran does NOT rule out such an occurrence at all. Again, the examples of Jesus (AS) and al-Khidr (AS), who are both in occultation, are worthy of mentioning.

Question 4:

What about his mother? Provided that Shia is right in their assertion that al-Mahdi's (AS) mother was a slave or bondwoman, isn't it shameful that he (AS) should be born to a slave-girl?

Answer 4:

The answer would be in the form of the following questions: Wasn't Hagar (AS), the Prophet Abraham's wife, a bondwoman? Did she not bear Isma'il (Ishmael) (AS), whom the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH&HF) is a direct descendant of? If it is acceptable for the Prophet

Muhammad (PBUH&HF), the Seal of Prophethood, to be a descendant of Isma'il (AS) who was born to a bondwoman, then why not al-Mahdi (AS)?

I need to mention that the birth of al-Mahdi (AS) was an event surrounded with secrecy, because the authorities (The Abbasids) knew that the Mahdi who is to bring about a revolution is going to be the son of Imam Askari, and were awaiting his coming, to capture him for execution. Owing to that, Imam Hasan Askari (AS), the Mahdi's father, could not behave conspicuously by revealing who the mother of the Mahdi (AS) was. The Imam Mahdi's mother was Narjis and was a roman slave who married to Imam al-Askari (AS). Notwithstanding, what has created the confusion among the critics of Shia is the fact that Imam al-Askari (AS) did not refer to her (AS) with one name. A variety of names were used in an effort to fool the authorities, and to prevent them from recognizing who she was. That was part and parcel of the plan to protect the Mahdi (AS). Had the father (AS) been slightly negligent in protecting his son, it is clear that al-Mahdi (AS) would not have survived. The story of birth of Imam Mahdi is like that of the Moses. All the women were being regularly inspected by female specialists of Abbasids to find out if anybody is pregnant. The Imam Mahdi's mother did not have any sign of pregnancy to the last hours, similar to Moses's mother. But no doubt that what Allah wishes will certainly take place.

Given these adverse conditions and hardships, the birth of the Imam (AS) was kept in utmost secrecy, that even the closest people to Imam al- Askari (AS), the father of the Mahdi (AS), did not know of the time of his (AS) birth. Only VERY FEW close associates were notified. The obvious contention is that the birth of al-Imam al-Mahdi (AS) constitutes a direct threat to the continuance of the corrupt government to rule. This situation is best understood when we refer back to the first few days of Islam when the Prophet (PBUH&HF) preached the religion in utmost secrecy among a few loyal followers. The Prophet (PBUH&HF) feared for the lives of these believers, and, as such, forbade them from revealing any information that might jeopardize the entire mission.

Question 5:

Who was his father?

Answer 5:

Shiats along with some Sunni scholars believe that his father was Imam Hasan al-Askari (d. 260/874). Below I have included the name of 31 Sunni scholars who confirm this fact. The overwhelming majority of prophetic traditions about Imam Mahdi (some of which I mentioned in the previous part) state that the name of Imam Mahdi is the same as the name of Prophet (i.e., Muhammad). However there exists a single Sunni report that has an additional phrase

concerning that his father's name is also similar to that of Prophet's father (i.e., Abdullah). This extra phrase does NOT exist in all other reports by Shia and Sunni who narrated the Hadith. Moreover, the extra phrase in some Shi'i traditions is in the form of (that his nickname is the same as Prophets nickname, i.e., Abul Qasim) which is correct.

The single report which has the additional phrase (that his father's name is the same as that of Prophet's father) has been probably fabricated by Abdullah Ibn al-Hasan (Muthanna; the second) Ibn (Imam) al-Hasan (AS). Abdullah (d. 145/762) had a son named Muhammad who called him "Nafs al-Zakiyyah" and the al-Mahdi. (See Ibn Taqtuqa, al-Fikr fil-adab al-Sultaniyyah, PP 165-166). Abdullah used all his power and wealth to support the revolt of his son. Abdullah concealed his son several times in Umayyad period when there was still no danger for him. When he was asked why he did this, he said: "What an idea, their time has not come yet." (Muruj al-Dhahab, by al-Masudi, V6, PP 107-108). The first time Muhammad wrote a letter the Abbasid Caliph, al-Mansur, he wrote: *"From Muhammad Ibn Abdillah, the Mahdi, ..."* (Tabari, V3, P29, Ibn Kathir V10, P85, Ibn Khaldun, V4, P4).

Muhammad Ibn Abdillah started his claims at the end of the rule of Umayyad caliphs. Muhammad became powerful and tried to gain the support of the last Umayyad Caliph who was Marwan Ibn Muhammad (132/750), but the Caliph did not pay attention to him. Abul Abbas al-Falasti said to Marwan: "Muhammad Ibn Abdillah is striving to gain the power for he is claiming to be al-Mahdi". Marwan replied: *"What does he have to do with me? (the Mahdi) is not him, nor any of his father's descendants. He will be the son of a slave woman."*

When Marwan said that Mahdi (AS) is not one of his father's descendants, he meant the descendants of Imam Hasan (AS), for Mahdi (AS) is the descendant of Imam Husain (AS) and is son of a slave woman (umm walad). Even Marwan was aware of these traditions because of which he did not pay attention to Muhammad Ibn Abdillah. This shows that the true versions of traditions from Prophet were wide-spread.

There is also a very small possibility that the fabrication of that extra phrase was done the Abbasid Caliph, Abdullah al-Mansur, who called his son the Mahdi. Muslim Ibn Qutaybah said: *"Mansur called me and said: Muhammad Ibn Abdillah rebelled and he called himself the Mahdi. By Allah he is not. I will tell you something else which I have told no one before, and will tell no one after you. By Allah my son is not the Mahdi either,... but I did so to make a good future for him."*

From all above it can be seen that the fabrication of the single report which includes that extra phrase, could be reconciled on Muhammad Ibn Abdillah and/or the Abbasid Caliph, al-Mahdi. This is not the place to examine the Hadith critically, but merely to point out the historical

.background of it