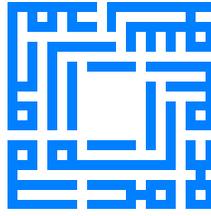




**Advanced Level Topics of Study for:
Monarchy in Islam: The Awaited Mahdi Shall be a King**



Monarchy in Islam: The Awaited Mahdi Shall be a King

By Dr. G.F. Haddad

Q: The question was asked whether there is "such a thing as kingship or princship or royal families in Islam and Shari`a." I said yes, because there are so many texts to that effect.

A revolutionary type ("Thawri" or "Khariji" in Arabic) expressed his profound disapproval without providing proof. Since the way of Ahl al-Sunna is different than theirs in Religion, and since we fear speaking of this Religion without proof, here are the proofs.

If that person fears Allah, he should provide his proofs. Not simply deny each these, as I suspect he will do - for lack of an alternative.

A: Proof-texts for the concepts of malakiyya - "monarchy, kingship, royalty" - and mulûkiyya - "monarchic rule, monarchism, kingship, royalty" - as viable systems in Islam and Shari`a.

These texts are arranged by topic under the following headings:

1. Prophecy that there shall be Kingship in Islam
2. Exalted Status of Righteous Monarchy and Kingship in the Qur'an and the Sunna
3. Every Epoch has a Divinely-Appointed King Reflecting Its People
4. The Awaited Mahdi (AS) Shall be a King
5. Belief in the Mahdi is Obligatory in Islam

1. Prophecy that there shall be Kingship in Islam

1.1 The Prophet said - Allah bless and greet him: "This business began as prophethood and mercy, then mercy and a khalifate, then a voracious kingdom, and then arrogance and tyranny and corruption will enter the community." In Qadi`Iyad's al-Shifa', chapter on the Prophet's (SAWS) knowledge of the Unseen. This is a proof in Islam and Shari`a that kingship is not as good as caliphate but is better than tyranny. Here are some narrations to that effect in their precise wordings insha Allah:

1.2 "Successorship (al-khilâfa) after me shall last for thirty years. After that, there will be kingship." Imam Ahmad declared this narration sound and adduced it as a proof for the caliphate of the four Imams. A sound hadith narrated from Safina by al-Tirmidhi (hasan) with a fair chain according to Shaykh 'Abd Allah al-Talidi who declared it sahîh because

of its corroborative and witness-chains in his edition of al-Suyuti's *Tahdhib al-Khasa'is* (p. 293 #375); also narrated by al-Nasa'i, Abu Dawud, Ahmad in his *Musnad* with two chains; al-Hakim; Ibn Hibban with two fair chains as stated by al-Arna'ut (15:34 #6657, 15:392 #6943); al-Tayalisi in his *Musnad* (p. 151, 479); and al-Tabarani in al-Kabir with several chains. This narration is among the "Proofs of Prophethood" (*dalâ'il al-nubuwwa*) as the sum of the first five caliphates is exactly thirty years: two years and three months for Abu Bakr, ten years and a half for 'Umar, twelve years for 'Uthman, four years and nine months for 'Ali, and six months for al-Hasan as narrated from Safina by al-Suyuti in *Tahdhib al-Khasa'is* (p. 293 #375) and *Tarikh al-Khulafa'* (p. 22, 198-199). Al-Dhahabi cites the saying by Mu'awiya: "I am the first of the kings" (*anâ awwalu al-mulûk*) in the *Siyar* (3:157).

1.3 To the man who said: "O Messenger of Allah! I saw in my dream as if a balance came down from the heaven in which you were weighed against Abu Bakr and outweighed him, then Abu Bakr was weighed against 'Umar and outweighed him, then 'Umar was weighed against 'Uthman and outweighed him, then the balance was raised up." The Prophet ? said: "Successorship of prophethood (*khilâfa nubuwwa*)! Then Allah shall give kingship to whomever He will." Narrated from Abu Bakrah by Ahmad with three chains, Abu Dawud, and al-Tirmidhi who said: *hasan sahîh*, and from Safina by Abu Dawud with a fair chain and al-Bazzar with a fair chain as indicated by al-Haythami. Al-Tirmidhi's narration omits the last statement of the Prophet (SAWS). Al-Hakim narrated it with a chain similar to al-Tirmidhi's and graded it *sahîh*, and al-Dhahabi concurred.

1.4 "There shall be Prophethood (*nubuwwa*) among you for as long as Allah wishes it to be among you. Then it shall be lifted up when Allah wishes to lift it up. Then there shall be successorship (*khilâfa*) on the pattern (*minhâj*) of Prophethood for as long as Allah wishes it to be. Then it shall be lifted up when Allah wishes to lift it up. Then there shall be a trying kingship (*mulkan 'âddan*) for as long as Allah wishes it to be. Then it shall be lifted up when Allah wishes to lift it up. Then there shall be a tyrannical kingship (*mulkan jabriyyatan*) for as long as Allah wishes it to be. Then it shall be lifted up when Allah wishes to lift it up. Then there shall be successorship on the pattern of Prophethood." Narrated from Hudhayfa by Ahmad with a sound chain as stated by al-Zayn in the *Musnad* (14:163 #18319) and as indicated by al-Haythami (5:188-189): "Narrated by Ahmad, al-Bazzar with a more complete wording, and al-Tabarani partly, in al-Awsat. The narrators in its chain are trustworthy." Also narrated from Abu 'Ubayda by al-Tabarani in al-Kabir (1:157) with the wording "Then there shall be kingship and tyranny" after the mention of successorship. It was pointed out that the sequence of events described in these narrations is strikingly similar to the Christian Eastern Orthodox explanation of the Prophet Daniel's interpretation of the dream of the Babylonian King in Daniel 2:31-43.

2. Exalted Status of Righteous Monarchy and Kingship in the Qur'an and the Sunna

2.1 Allah (SWT) praised monarchy and kingship by making it one of the greatest gifts He gave to a Prophet, making it synonymous with prophethood itself in the verse {And Allah gave him [Dawud (AS)] the kingdom and wisdom} (2:251).

2.2 Greater yet is the kingdom Allah gave to Sulayman (AS). The Prophet said - Allah bless and greet him - in the authentic hadith of Isra' and Mi`raj: "[O Allah!] You have given Sulayman an immense kingdom, and subjected the jinn and men and devils to him, as well as the winds, and You have given him a kingdom the like no one may have after him."

2.3 Kingdom was given to Sayyidina Muhammad (SAWS) also. An angel descended as Gibrîl - upon him peace - was sitting together with the Prophet (SAWS). Gibrîl said: "This angel did not descend on earth since its creation until this moment." The angel said: "O Muhammad! Your Lord told me to ask you: 'Shall I make you a king or a servant and Messenger?'" Gibrîl said: "Humble yourself before your Lord, O Muhammad!" The Prophet (SAWS) said: "A servant and Messenger!" Narrated from Abu Hurayra by Ahmad, al-Bazzar, and Abu Ya'la, the former two with a sound chain as stated by al-Haythami and Ahmad Shakir in Ahmad's Musnad (#7160). Also see al-Mundhiri's al-Targhib. This hadith is a proof that kingship is an honored state, as Allah (SWT) would not propose to His Beloved anything dishonorable or disliked, and Allah knows best.

2.4 The fact that an even greater Kingdom than Dawud's and Sulayman's - a royal family, by the way - was actually given to Sayyidina Muhammad (SAWS) even though he preferred the higher title of Servant to that of King, is established by the foundational hadith in the two Sahihs "I was given the keys to all the riches of the earth" beginning with the words "I was given five things which no Prophet before me was given."

3. Every Epoch has a Divinely-Appointed King Reflecting Its People

3.1 Nor did the Prophet (SAWS) condemn monarchy in itself, as shown by the hadiths already cited. A more specific proof that it is not monarchy but evil rule that is condemned - whether under caliphate or kingship - is the following narration: "Every epoch has a king whom Allah sends in the semblance (ʿala nahw) of the hearts of its people. If He desires their reform He sends them a reformer, and if He desires their destruction He sends them one who shall cause their perdition." Al-Fattini said in Tadhkira al-Mawdu`at (#182): "`Umar said: 'People follow the religion of their kings.' I do not know it as a Prophetic hadith, but ... it supported by what al-Tabarani narrates [and al-Bayhaqi from Ka`b, as stated in Kashf al-Khafa (2:166)] raised [to the Prophet, Allah bless and greet him]: "Every epoch has a king... etc."

3.2 Al-Tabarani narrated that al-Hasan [al-Basri] heard a man supplicating against al-Hajjaj whereupon he said to him: "Do not do that! Truly you are all the same and were treated accordingly. The only thing we fear, if al-Hajjaj were to be put away or die, is that apes and pigs shall be made rulers over you.* It has been narrated: "Your deeds are your workers (a`malukum `ummalukum) and as you are, so will your leaders be." ... No doubt, "ape rule" includes the lust and advent to power of those who scoff at the encouragement to worship and the power of du`a, dhikr, salat `ala al-Nabi, karamat al-Awliya' etc. believing only in human power, its means and its instruments with little or no knowledge of the Sunna, its fiqh, its adab, and its secrets, wAllahu a`lam.

3.3 Ibn Hajar [al-Haytami] said [in al-Fatawa al-Hadithiyya]: "Al-Najm said that Ibn Abi Shayba narrated from Mansur ibn Abi al-Aswad that the latter asked al-A`mash about Allah Almighty's saying: {Thus We let some of the wrong-doers have power over others because of what they are wont to earn} (6:129) to which he replied: 'I heard them say about it [that it means] that the most evil of people are made to rule over them.'" ...

3.4 Al-Bayhaqi also narrated from al-Hasan that the Israelites asked Musa - upon him peace - saying: "Ask your Lord to show us how we can tell He is pleased with us and how we can tell He is displeased." He asked Him and He said: "Tell them: My good pleasure with them is [seen in] the fact that I make their best govern them, and that my displeasure with them is [seen in] the fact that I make their most evil ones govern them." ...

3.5 [Al-Sakhawi] said in al-Maqasid: "We have narrated from al-Fudayl [ibn `Iyad] that he said: 'If I had one supplication that is answered, I would consider the Sultan more deserving of it. For in his uprightness lies the uprightness of those who are governed by him, and in his corruption lies their corruption.'" This is supported by what al-Tabarani narrated in al-Kabir and al-Awsat from Abu Umama, raised [to the Prophet, Allah bless and greet him]: "Do not curse the governors but supplicate that they be upright. For their uprightness is best for you." ...

3.6 Similarly al-Qasim ibn Mukhaynara's saying: "The epoch in which you live is nothing other than your governor. If your governor is upright then your epoch is upright and if your governor is corrupt then your epoch is corrupt." I mentioned all the narrations in this section in my July 1999 internet post titled "Ape Rule."

4. The Awaited Mahdi (AS) Shall be a King

4.1 When the Israelites were oppressed by Jalut and his forces they went to their Prophet and asked him to ask Allah to raise up for them a King so they could fight in the way of Allah: {Bethink thee of the leaders of the Children of Israel after Moses, how they said unto a Prophet whom they had: Set up for us a King and we will fight in the way of Allah} (2:246) Our Shaykh, Mawlana al-Shaykh Nazim - Allah save and keep him in the best care - spoke to this effect: "Why do you now run to the U.N. and ask for help? Go to the Grave of the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) and ask him to ask Allah, to send al-Mahdi (AS). Indeed, One of the distinguishing traits of Ahl al-Sunna today in contrast to innovators is their belief in Khalifat Allah al-Mahdi (AS) as righteous *King* - as shown by the following narrations - endowed with full Divine support and even reaching a spiritual level higher than the Four Caliphs, as stated by al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi (d. 320) and others.

4.2 Many hadiths mention that al-Mahdi shall actually "rule by Kingship" (yamluku) and speak of "the duration of his kingdom" (muddatu mulkihi) as narrated by Abu `Amr al-Dani in al-Sunan al-Warida fi al-Fitan, Nu`aym ibn Hammad in Kitab al-Fitan, Ibn Hajar al-Haytami in al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar fi `Alamat al-Mahdi al-Muntazar, and al-Barzanji in

al-Isha`a li Ashrat al-Sa`a (cf. p. 225). This indicates that his Caliphate shall be of the nature of a righteous monarchy.

4.3 For example: The Prophet - Allah bless and greet him - said: "The Hour shall not rise until a man from the People of my House [again the concept of royal family] shall rule by kingdom (yamluk), named after me, his father named after mine, and fill the earth with justice and equity just as it had been filled with oppression and injustice." Narrated from Ibn Mas`ud by Abu Dawud in his Sunan (book of al-Mahdi), al-Tabarani in al-Mu`jam al-Kabir (10:165 #10219), al-Hakim in al-Mustadrak (4:442) where al-Dhahabi said it is sound (sahih). Cf. al-Dani (5:1040, 1041, 1047,1048, 1051 ["Rule by kingdom over the earth"], 1052 ["Rule by kingdom over the Arabs"]).

4.4 From Abu Sa`id al-Khudri: The Prophet (SAWS) said: "Al-Mahdi shall rule by kingdom for seven, eight, or nine years." Nu`aym ibn Hammad (2:689). He cites several similarly-worded reports with variant durations (1:376-378).

5. Belief in the Mahdi is Obligatory in Islam

5.1 It should be remembered also, that belief in al-Mahdi's coming and in his God-sanctioned reformative functions is an obligatory tenet of belief in Islam. The opening lines of Shaykh al-Islam, Ibn Hajar al-Haytami's book on the Mahdi entitled *Al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar fi`Alamat al-Mahdi al-Muntazar* ("The Brief Discourse on the Portents of the Awaited Mahdi") are:

It has been related that the Prophet, blessings and peace upon him, said: "Whoever denies belief in the Dajjal, has certainly committed disbelief (man kadhhaba bi al-dajjali fa qad kafara), and whoever denies belief in the Mahdi, has certainly committed disbelief (wa man kadhhaba bi al-mahdi fa qad kafara)."

Abu Bakr al-Askafi narrated it in *Fawa'id al-akhbar*, and also [the hadith master] Abu al-Qasim al-Suhayli in his book *Sharh al-Sira*. End of Haytami's words.

The hadith mentioned above is also narrated by the hadith master Ibn Nasir al-Din al-Dimashqi in his book *Uqud al-durar fi`ulum al-athar* (The pearl necklaces in the science of tradition) p. 156 and the hadith master Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti in his monograph *al-'Arf al-wardi fi akhbar al-mahdi* (The roselike fragrance in the reports of al-Mahdi) in his collected fatwas entitled *al-Hawi li al-fatawi* 2:161.

5.2 Under note #18 Dr.Suhaib Hasan in his book *An Introduction to the Science of Hadis* wrote:"Although the Mahdi is not mentioned explicitly in the collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim, numerous sahih ahadith which are mutawatir in meaning speak of the coming of the Mahdi, a man named Muhammad bin 'Abdullah and a descendant of the Prophet s.a.wassalam through Fatimah who will be the Leader (Imam ,Khalifah) of the Muslims , rule for seven years and fill the world with justice and equity after it had been filled with tyranny and oppression.He will also fight along with Jesus son of Mary.The author, in his" *The Concept of the Mahdi among the Ahlul Sunnah*" has named 37 scholars who collected ahadith about the Mahdi with their own isnads and 69 later

scholars who wrote in support of the concept compared to 8 scholars who rejected the idea. (page 62 of An Introduction to the Science of Hadith published by Darusalam, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia)

The author he means seems to be `Abd al-`Alim `Abd al-`Azim who wrote a Master's thesis titled al-Ahadeeth al-Waaridah fi al-Mahdi fi Meezan al-Jarh wa al-Ta'deel in which he states that there are thirty two authentic (hasan or sahih) Hadiths about Mahdi. Of these, nine of them mention the Mahdi explicitly while the others simply give a description of him. This quantification, of course, is unreliable as the man is obviously not a hadith master and is using a computer to reach his conclusion. However, he and Hasan can be cited insofar as they confirm what actual hadith masters and the Ulema of Ahl al-Sunna have long since established.

Wallahu Ta`ala A`lam wa Ahkam.

Blessings and peace on our Master Muhammad, his Family, his Companions, and all those loyal to him until the end of Time.

Wal-Hamdu Lillahi Rabbi-l-`Alamin.

Hajj Gibril

