

al-Ishhād

By: Abī Zayd

‘Īsā b. Muhammad b. Ahmed b. ‘Īsā b. Yahyā b. al-Hussein b. Zayd b. ‘Alī b. al-Hussein b. ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib

الإشهاد

Translated by: Mohammad al-Sharifi

Prelude by al-Ustādh Jamāl al-Shāmī:

All praise is due to Allāh Lord of the worlds, and peace, and blessing be upon our master Muhammad, his pure progeny, and righteous companions.

When I was reading Kamāl al-Dīn Wā Tamām al-Ni'mah by al-Sheikh Abī Ja'far Muhammad b. 'Alī al-Qomī, famously known as al-Sheikh al-Sadūq among the Imāmīyah, I found through my reading that he transmitted a book called "Naqdh al-Ishhād by Ibn Qubbah ar-Rāzī. It is a response to the book al-Ishhād by Abī Zayd al-'Alawī, I searched for the book, or of a mention of it in the works of history, and biography, and unfortunately I was unable to find anything, except for a remark by al-Imām al-Muayyad-Billāh Ahmed al-Hārūnī (d. 421 A.H) regarding the existence of the book. Wherein he stated in his book "Ithbāt Nubūwat al-Nabī" (upon him and his progeny be peace), during his response to the Bātinīyah: *Although it is not our purpose in this work to mention their sayings, make known their scandals, present their repugnant beliefs, and hidden disasters of that which our Sheikhs - May Allāh have mercy on them - from the Ashrāf, and the scholars have made clear in their works, in exposing their secrets, and making know their indecencies, such as Abī Zayd 'Īsā b. Muhammad al-'Alawī al-Husseinī.*¹ And he - al-Imām al-Muayyad - has a book called "al-Naqdh 'Alā Ibn Qubbah fī al-Usūl" and nothing has remained from the book of Abī Zayd al-'Alawī except that which was transmitted by al-Sheikh al-Sadūq from Ibn Qubbah ar-Rāzī, and by reading the remaining text from it three important indications appear.

1. The strength of the arguments that are present in the book, which led one of the grand scholars of the Imāmīyah - Ibn Qubbah ar-Rāzī - to attempt to refute it with a book titled 'Naqdh al-Ishhād'.
2. Knowing the Imāmī creed at that particular time, and their beliefs, by virtue of the presence of the author among them, and his familiarity with their sources.
3. The reliance of the Zaidīyyah in Irān on the works of Abī Zayd al-'Alawī - including al-Ishhād - in refuting others, and finding that his works are sufficient, as al-Imām al-Muayyad-Billāh mentioned.

All that withstanding, I found that it was important to compile, and share this short remaining text from the great scholar of the Zaidīyyah, al-Sayyid Abī Zayd al-'Alawī. We ask Allāh for His aid, and to make our attempts accurate.

¹ Ithbat Nubuwwat al-Nabi: pg, 52.

The Author

His birth, and lineage:

He is Abū Zayd, ‘Īsā b. Muhammad b. Ahmed b. ‘Īsā b. Yahyā b. al-Husseīn b. Zayd b. ‘Alī b. al-Husseīn b. ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib (upon them be peace).

He was born in al-’Irāq, and I did not find a date for his birth. He moved to the city of Ray in Irān, and remained there until his passing in the year 326 (A.H), al-Bukhārī says: He did not have any sons, and his brother’s son Zayd b. al-Husseīn b. Ahmed inherited him.²

His scholars:

He took from the grand scholars of ‘Irāq: His father Muhammad b. Ahmed, al-Hāfidh al-Zaydī al-Kabīr Muhammad b. Mansūr al-Murādī (d. 290 A.H), Ja’far b. ‘Abdullāh al-Hamdī al-’Alawī, al-Husseīn b. al-Hakm al-Hibrī (d. 286 A.H), al-Husseīn b. al-Qāsim al-Qalaysī, and others.

And in al-Ray he took from their grand scholars, such as al-’Allāmah al-Mūhadith Ahmed b. Sahl ar-Rāzī, and others.³

It was said of him:

The genealogist Abū Nasr al-Bukhārī (d. 341 A.H) said: He is a grand scholar of the Zaidīyyah, a jurist, and Mutakallim.⁴

al-Imām Abī al-’Abbās al-Hassanī (d. 353 A.H) said: He is the Sheikh of the Alawites, and their scholar.⁵

And the genealogist ‘Ali b. Abī al-Ghanā’im al-’Umrī (d. 441 A.H) said: al-Sharīf al-Nasābah.. He was an esteemed personage, and jurist.⁶

al-’Allāmah al-Mū’arikh Muhammad b. Sālih b. Abī al-Rijāl (d. 1092 A.H) said: al-Sayyid al-’Allāmah al-Imām... A grand scholar from the scholars of the Zaidīyyah, a jurist, and Mutakallim.⁷

² Sur al-Silsilah al-’Alawiyah: pg, 63.

³ al-Masabih fi al-Seerah

⁴ Sur al-Silsilah al-’Alawiyah: pg, 63.

⁵ al-Shafi v.1, pg. 85.

⁶ al-Majdi fi ansab al-Talibiyin: pg, 378.

⁷ Mutala’a al-Budur wa Majma’ al-Buhur: v.3, pg. 360.

His works:

He has a heavy presence in the literature of the Zaidīyah, such as *Sharh al-Tajrīd*, *al-Masābīh*, *Taysīr al-Matālib*, and others. I have not found a mention for a particular work of his in the works of Zaydī biography, however, there are indications that he did have publications, without pointing towards their title, other than the one mentioned by Ibn Bābawīyah al-Qomī in his book “*Kamāl al-Dīn Wā Tamām al-Ni’mah*” wherein he states: *Abū Ja’far Muhammad b. ‘Abdul-Rahmān b. Qubbah ar-Rāzī said in his refutation of the book al-Ishhād by Abī Zayd al-’Alawī*. Thereafter, he shared texts from Abī Zayd that he used to argue against the Imāmīyah, and in response to them.

The Remaining Text from the Treatise

al-Sheikh al-Sadūq said: Abū Ja'far Muhammad b. 'Abdul-Rahmān b. Qubba ar-Rāzī said in refuting al-Ishhād, the treatise of Abū Zayd al-'Alawī, the author of the treatise said after mentioning a number of matters which we will not relate, as there is no dispute regarding them:

[Refuting the Consensus]

The Zaidīyyah and the Imāmīyah say: The Hujjah (guide for the Muslims) is from the sons of Fātema, as per the agreed upon saying of the Messenger in the farewell pilgrimage, the day he went for prayer during the ailment that lead to his death: *{O' People, I have left for you, the book of Allāh, and my progeny. Surely, they will not depart until they reach me at the Lake-Fount, you will not go astray as long as you hold onto them.}*... The Imāmīyah have gone against the consensus, and they claimed that the Imāmah is only in one line of the progeny, and they did not deem it to be in both lines of the progeny. Thereafter, they said the Imāmah is exclusively for one man in that line in every era.

The Zaidīyyah said: Imāmah is the right of both lines of the progeny, this is because the indication from the Messenger of Allāh (upon him and his progeny be peace) regarding them is one which is general, he did not specify one line ahead of another, as well as the saying of Allāh - Exalted is He - regarding them collectively *{Then we caused to inherit the Book those We have chosen of Our servants; and among them is he who wrongs himself, and among them is he who is moderate, and among them is he who is foremost in good deeds by permission of Allāh . That [inheritance] is what is the great bounty.}* [35:32]⁸... Why do you claim that Imāmah can not be for so and so, and their sons, and they are part of the progeny according to you?

[The Claim that Imāmah is limited by Wāsiyah and Inheritance]

It is said to the Imāmīyah: What is your evidence that Imāmah is limited to one particular individual (in every era) ahead of anyone else (from the progeny)? If they say "it is due to inheriting Imāmah or "being designated from the previous Imām" it is said to them: al-Mūghīrīyah claim that Imāmah is in the sons of al-Hassan, and that it is exclusive to the line of al-Hassan b. al-Hassan in every era by virtue of inheritance, and designation from father to son - they have contended with your claims in the same manner that you have contended with others.

⁸ <https://legacy.quran.com/35/32>

Likewise, the Khatābīyah claim the Imāmah to be for Ja'far b. Muhammad as an inheritance, and wāsīyah from his father, and they stop at him believing that he is occult. They disagree with anyone who claims that there is an Imām after him, they claim that you have agreed with them when it comes to the Imāmah of Ja'far (upon him be peace) and they have disagreed with you when it comes to the Imāmah of anyone else after him.

The Shamtīyyah claim that the Imāmah is for 'Abdullāh b. Ja'far b. Muhammad from his father, as per the wāsīyah, and inheritance.

The Fathīyyah claim the Imāmah of Ismā'īl b. Ja'far from his father, as per the wāsīyah, and inheritance. Before that they claimed the Imāmah of 'Abdullāh b. Ja'far, and they are known as the Ismā'īliyyah. This is because those who claimed the Imāmah of 'Abdullāh b. Ja'far went extinct. A group from the Fathīyyah that are called the Qarmatians claimed the Imāmah of Muhammad b. Ismā'īl b. Ja'far, as per the inheritance, and wāsīyah.

Today we have the Waqīfites who claim the Imāmah of Musā b. Ja'far, and believe that he will return, and they await his coming.⁹

Of them is a group which has considered that Musā had evidently died, and after him they went to his son 'Alī b. Musā (upon them be peace) ahead of the remaining sons of Musā (upon him be peace). They claimed that he deserved it by virtue of the inheritance, and wāsīyah, and they continued the Imāmah in his sons until they reached al-Hassan b. 'Alī (upon them be peace) and they claimed that his father had a son¹⁰, and they called him "The Righteous Successor". However, they claim that he died before his father. Therefore, they returned to claiming the Imāmah of his brother al-Hassan, and that which they were confused over regarding Muhammad had become nullified. They said: Bada' had occurred to Allāh from Muhammad to al-Hassan, in the same manner that Bada' had occurred from Ismā'īl b. Ja'far to Musā when Ismā'īl died during the lifetime of Ja'far. When al-Hassan b. 'Alī died in the year 263 (A.H) some of his followers returned to the belief in the Imāmah of Ja'far b. 'Alī, in the same manner that the followers of Muhammad b. 'Alī went back after the death of Muhammad to al-Hassan. Others claimed that Ja'far b. 'Alī earned the Imāmah from his father 'Alī b. Muhammad through inheritance, and wasīyyah, as opposed to his brother al-Hassan. Thereafter, they continued the Imāmah in the line of the sons of Ja'far claiming inheritance, and wāsīyah. All these groups are claiming the Imāmah for themselves, and each is saying that those who oppose them are apostates, and deeming each other to be liars, and each is disassociating from the Imāms of one another; everyone of these sects is claiming Imāmah for their own Imāms by saying it is from the inheritance, the wāsīyah, and matters which pertain to the unseen. Such claims have superseded superstition.

⁹ Speaking in the context of his time considering that the Waqīfiyah had a presence then.

¹⁰ They claimed that 'Alī b. Muhammad al-Hadī had a son by the name of Muhammad who is the brother of al-Hassan al-'Askarī.

There is no evidence for the Imāmah of each group save their claim of inheritance, and wāsīyah, their evidence is their testimony to themselves - statements which are devoid of truth, and claims without evidence. Therefore, if there is any evidence that these groups can provide other than inheritance, and wāsīyah let them provide it. Otherwise, if the only evidence that each group has for their Imāmah is through the inheritance and the wāsīyah, the Imāmah of all these groups becomes null, due to each group claiming a separate form of Imāmah and using equal evidence to reach it. It is impossible to accept one group's claim, and deny the other if their claims are fundamentally equal. Let alone their agreement in deeming each other to be liars, and singularly calling to themselves.

If it was permitted to establish the Imāmah through inheritance, and wāsīyah without any agreed upon proof then the Mūghīrīyyah would have the most plausible claim, for they have a consensus from all these groups when it comes to the Imāmah of al-Hassan b. ‘Alī who is deserving of the Imāmah from his father through inheritance, and wāsīyah and thereafter, negating the claims of all the other groups who reached a consensus regarding the validity of their claim.

Taking all that into consideration, one also needs to note the differences that the Imāmīyah have in their own creed. For, there are those of them who believe in anthropomorphism,¹¹ and there those who believe in reincarnation; while there are those who went against monotheism, and others maintaining divine justice, and the eternal promise.¹² Others believe in free will, and simultaneously negate the eternal promise. There are those of them who believe that they will see Allāh, while others do not hold to such a belief, while also believing in Bada’, and other matters which are too extensive to mention in this treatise. Each one of these groups deem each other to be disbelievers, and disassociate from one another, out of all these groups (within the Imāmīyah) each group claims that they have their own reliable men who narrated to them that which they hold onto in terms of belief from their Imāms.

If such was permitted, then other matters similar to such would be permitted. These are matters which are not permitted among us, and we did not list them for the sake of mere storytelling. Therefore, there is no need to make the treatise longer by mentioning that which does not carry a definitive proof, or benefit.

¹¹ Such as Hishām b. al-Hakam: al-Hur al-'lyn, pg.148.

¹² The eternal promise is the promise of Allāh, whenever Allāh says that He will do something, He will do it. For example, when Allāh promises that those who commit major sins, and do not repent will receive eternal chastisement then He will fulfill His promise. Therefore, anyone who goes against the explicit promise of Allāh and says that those who commit major sins, and die upon that state can enter heaven have negated the divine promise, etc.

[Differences Among Themselves]

Moreover, the dispute among themselves has not ceased. Was he born among them, is his birth according to those who have informed them of it, or is it according to their Imāms?

If their differences stem from their Imāms, then we say that the Imām is the one who unifies the word, not someone who causes further confusion in the Islamic Community, they are his supporters, not his enemies. Therefore, there is no need for the engaging of Taqiyya (precautionary dissimulation). Otherwise, what is the difference between the Imāmīyah, and the remainder of the Muslims who they rebuke for not having an Imām, if they have Imāms who are the proofs of Allāh on earth, yet have such differences in their creed, and deem each other to be disbelievers.

Considering that their differences are stemming from those who have transmitted their creed for them, what makes them sure that their position on Imāmah is the correct one? Moreso, due to the one who they claim to be the Imām is someone who is absent from the eyes, and physically unseen. They claim that he is the proof of Allāh on them, saying that he has knowledge of the unseen, yet his closest confidants from the Shi'a who relay his teachings are such, between some who attribute lies to him, and others who have no knowledge of his true teachings.

If the differences of the Imāmīyah in their creed stem from themselves, and not their Imāms, then why do the Imāmīyah need Imāms if they are resorting to themselves? For, he is behind their backs and he does not guide them, isn't he the interpreter of the creed for them, and the proof of Allāh over them?

This is one of the soundest proofs for his non-existence, and the invalidity of the claim of him having knowledge of the unseen. For, if he existed he wouldn't leave his Shi'a without clarification, as Allāh - Exalted and Glorious is He - says: ***{We have revealed to you the Book only to clarify for them what they differed about}*** [16:64]¹³ In the same manner that the Messenger (upon him and his progeny be peace) clarified to his nation, it is an obligation upon the Imām to do the same for his Shi'a.

¹³ <https://quran.com/16>

[The Reason for the Occultation of the Imām from those who seek him]

It is said to them: Why is your Imām occult from those who seek his guidance?

If they say: Out of Taqiyyah, due to fear for his life.

It is said to them: The one who seeks his guidance can also engage in Taqiyyah, especially if he is in a state of fear, longing, and does not know that which will befall him.¹⁴ If Taqiyyah is permissible for the Imām, then it is certainly permissible for the follower of the Imām, and how can the Imām be in a state of Taqiyyah from guiding them, but he is not in a state of Taqiyyah from hoarding their wealth?¹⁵ And Allāh says: *{Follow those who do not ask of you [any] payment, and they are [rightly] guided.}* [36:21]¹⁶ And He said: *{O believers! Indeed, many rabbis and monks consume people's wealth wrongfully and hinder 'others' from the Way of Allāh.}* [9:34]¹⁷ This is what indicates that the people of falsity seek the world in its vastness, and the people who hold onto the book do not ask their followers for any compensation, and they are guided.

If they say such, then such is said to them, and only an ignorant, and impaired individual would say such.

[The Invalidity of the Imāmah of the Non-Existent]

It is said to them: We do not believe in the Imāmah of the one who is unknown, therefore, is there a means that you can guide us to so as to know your companion? So that we can adhere to his Imāmah in the same manner we have legitimized the Imāmah of the other members of the progeny, otherwise, there is no way to deem the Imāmah of someone who is non-existent as legitimate.¹⁸ Everyone who is not present, is non-existent, and therefore, legitimizing the Imāmah of the one you claim is nullified.

Ibn Qubbah said: The author of the treatise - i.e Abū Zayd al-'Alawī - returned to refuting us by what the Waqifites claimed for Musā.

And ibn Qubbah said: He said regarding us that we would say to the Waqifites: The Imām is someone who ought to be present, and seen. He then said: If they say such, such is said to them.

¹⁴ Whereas, the Imām has knowledge of the unseen, so he can know if the person who is seeking guidance from his shī'a is sincere, and not a spy.

¹⁵ Referring to those who would gather Khums from the Shi'a on behalf of the Imām.

¹⁶ <https://quran.com/36>

¹⁷ <https://quran.com/9>

¹⁸ The purpose of the Imām is to guide in matters of Halāl and Harām, teach, and physically lead, and these can only be done by someone who is present.

[al-Imāmah in Banī Hāshim]

The matter is not as you have misconceived regarding Banī Hāshim, because the Prophet (upon him and his progeny be peace) guided the Muslim community towards his progeny (‘itra), and this is in line with our consensus and yours. They are his nearkin who none can be closer to him than them (upon them be peace), therefore, it is for them ahead of the freed-slaves, and the sons of the freed-slaves. And it is the right of anyone from them, in every era if the Imām is holding to the book, and calling to establish its rule, by virtue of the saying of the Messenger (upon him and his progeny be peace): ***They will not separate from the book until they reach me at the Lake-Fount.*** This is a matter of consensus, and as for what you mentioned regarding Banī Hāshim, they are not from the progeny of the Messenger (upon him and his progeny be peace) even though they are born from the same tree, because all the sons of a daughter go back to the line of their father, except for the sons of Fātema. For, the Messenger of Allāh (upon him and his progeny be peace) is their father, and their line extends from him, and the progeny are the sons as per the saying of Allāh - Exalted and Glorious is He -: ***{I seek Your protection for her and her offspring from Satan, the accursed} [3:36]***¹⁹ If Imāmah was permitted for the entirety of Banī Hāshim, with the sons of al-Hassan, and al-Hussein (upon them be peace) then it would be permitted Banī ‘Abd Munāf with Banī Hāshim, and if it permitted for Banī ‘Abd Munāf, then it would be permitted for the entirety of the sons of Qusay.

If they say: What do you say regarding ‘Alī (upon him be peace), is he from the progeny (‘itra), or not?

It is said to them: He is not from the ‘itra, he exceeds the need to be listed among them, due to the evidence mentioned on the day of Ghadīr which are accepted by consensus.

We ask those who claimed Imāmah for some, ahead of others, they need to bring proof for their claims. If they seek to use superstitions like knowledge of the unseen, and similar fables which they have no evidence to support, save their own claims to such beliefs then it is permitted to say that the Imāms from the progeny can be wrongdoers, if the only means to establish their Imāmah is through claiming it.

¹⁹ <https://quran.com/3>

[The Zaydī Proof for Imāmah]:

We now return to establishing the proof of the Zaydīs for Imāmah and we begin by mentioning what Allāh - Blessed and Exalted is He - said: *{Then We granted the Book to those We have chosen from Our servants. Some of them wrong themselves, some follow a middle course, and some are foremost in good deeds by Allāh's Will. That is truly the greatest bounty.}* [35:32]²⁰... Allāh - Exalted and Glorious is He - said in mentioning the general, and particular from the nation of His Prophet: *{And hold firmly to the rope of Allāh}* [3:103]²¹ Here the addressing of Allāh to the people in general has ended, and then He began addressing the particulars saying: *{Let there be a group among you who call 'others' to goodness}*²² until He says to the particulars *You are the best community ever raised for humanity}* [3:104-110]²³ They are the progeny of Ibrahim (upon him be peace) ahead of the entirety of the people, then the Muslims ahead of those who associated partners with Allāh from the progeny of Ibrahim (upon him be peace) before his submission to Allāh, and Allāh made them witnesses over the people, He said: *O believers! Bow down, prostrate yourselves, worship your Lord* until He said *That you may be witnesses over humanity.* [22:77-78]²⁴ And this is the particular case for the progeny of Ibrahim (upon him be peace).

Ibn Qubbah said: He then used other verses from the Qur'ān similar to these to support his argument.

Not equal are the ones who call to goodness from the progeny, who enjoin good, forbid evil, and fight for the sake of Allāh and the remaining members from the progeny who did not call towards enjoining good, and fighting for the sake of Allāh.²⁵ This is like those who Allāh did not make equal from the members of the book in the face of others, even though those who do not engage in enjoining good, and forbidding evil can be ascetic worshippers, because ascetic worship is a recommended act, and enjoining good, and forbidding evil is an obligation like the remaining obligations. Its companion treads from sword to sword, while fear permeates false claimants.

²⁰ <https://quran.com/35>

²¹ <https://quran.com/3>

²² <https://quran.com/3>

²³ <https://quran.com/3>

²⁴ <https://quran.com/22>

²⁵ *Those who stay at home—except those with valid excuses—are not equal to those who strive in the cause of Allāh with their wealth and their lives. Allāh has elevated in rank those who strive with their wealth and their lives above those who stay behind 'with valid excuses'. Allāh has promised each a fine reward, but those who strive will receive a far better reward than others—{4:95}*

Ibn Qubbah said: He then read Sūrat al-Wāqī'ah, and mentioned the verses which Allāh - Exalted and Glorious is He - revealed regarding Jihād, and he followed these verses with claims, and he did not provide any proofs, so we ask that he vindicates his position, and we also ask him to present us with that which we requested of him in terms of evidence.

Know - may Allāh be merciful to you - is not the one who is a witness for the people in the eyes of Allāh, he who calls to goodness, as he was ordered to do so; repels evil, enjoins good, and fights for the sake of Allāh until he is martyred?! Or, is it he whose face we have not seen, and his person we have not known?! How can Allāh make him a witness over the people? Over people who he did not see, reprimand, or order them so that if they follow his command he would have done that which was obligated of them, and if they were to kill him then he would go to Allāh - Exalted and Glorious is He - as a martyr. If a man were to hold a people to acknowledge a right that is his, but they could not see him, nor witness him, can he be considered a witness over them? Is it truly obligated of them to testify for that which they can not perceive, so that they are liars, and in the eyes of Allāh falsifiers?! If such is impermissible among the slaves of Allāh, then it is impermissible for Him the Just, and Wise who does not oppress.

If he did reveal himself to a group who saw, heard, and witnessed him, and the case is consistently such then he would be truthful, and those who deny him would be liars. For, the witnessing would be clear, and the judgment would be passed, and as such Allāh - Exalted is He - said: *{Except those who testify to the truth knowingly} [43:86]*²⁶ Do you not see that testifications do not occur in the realm of the unseen, as they necessitate perception, and such is the saying of 'Īsā: *{And I was witness over them as long as I remained among them} [5:117]*²⁷

...As Allāh had ordered the progeny to call to goodness, described the foremost in good deeds of them, made them witnesses over the people, and ordered them to be just, He said: *{O believers! Stand firm for Allāh and bear true testimony} [5:7]*²⁸

Ibn Qubbah said: After that he shared certain interpolations, and mentioned verses from the Qur'ān which he claimed to be referring to the progeny, and he did not provide any evidence more than merely listing claims.

...Allāh - Exalted is He - obligated his Prophet (upon him and his progeny be peace) to leave the act of enjoining good, and forbidding evil until he had supporters, He said: *{And when you come across those who ridicule Our revelations Until He said So perhaps the ridiculers will abstain} [6:68-69]*²⁹ Therefore, he who is not one who is foremost in good deeds, fighting in the way of

²⁶ <https://quran.com/43>

²⁷ <https://quran.com/5>

²⁸ <https://quran.com/5>

²⁹ <https://quran.com/6>

Allāh, nor from those who take the middle course who seek to enjoin good, and forbid evil through proper admonishment when there are no supporters, then he is from those who wrong themselves, and such is the case of those who preceded us from the progenies of the Prophets (upon them be peace) - he then recited some verses from the Qur'ān -.

al-Sheikh al-Sadūq mentioned in his aforementioned book a number of the contentions that the Zaydī raise against the Imāmīyah, and perhaps some, or all of them stem from the writings of Abī Zayd al-'Alawī , and we will mention them here for the sake of benefit, and they are as follows:

[The Lie of the Report of the Twelve]:

Some Zaydīs have said: The narration which mentions that the Imāms are Twelve, is a narration which was fabricated by some of the Imāmīyah recently, and they concocted fake Hadīths with it.

[The Confusion of the People Regarding the Imāms]:

The Zaidīyah said: If the Messenger of Allāh (upon him and his progeny be peace) had informed his nation of the names of the Twelve Imāms, why did they go left and right [in confusion] and become mixed in such a grand matter?

[Designating Ismā'il with Ignorance]:

The Zaidīyah said: That which indicates the falsity of what the Imāmīyah claim, is that they say Ja'far b. Muhammad (upon them be peace) designated Ismā'il for them, and that he indicated during his lifetime that he is the Imām after him, thereafter, Ismā'il died during his lifetime, so [they claim] he said: *Allāh did not have a Bada' in anything in the same manner He had a Bada' in my son Ismā'il* So, if the report of the Twelve was true, at least Ja'far b. Muhammad (upon them be peace) would know it, and his Shī'a would know it as well, so that he and them would not make such a grand mistake.

[The Proof of Refusing the Imāmah of Ismā’īl]:

The Zaidīyah said: In what manner do you refuse the Imāmah of Ismā’īl, and what is your proof against the Ismā’īliyah who believe in his Imāmah?

[The Invalidity of the Report of the Twelve due to Confusion]:

The Zaidīyah said: If the report of the Twelve Imāms was true, the people would not have been confused as to who the Imām was after al-Sādiq Ja’far b. Muhammad (upon them be peace) in terms of Imāmah. There were Shī’a who held to the Imāmah of ‘Abdullah [b. Ja’far al-Sādiq], others held to Ismā’īl, and others were left confused. To the extent that some of the Shī’a tested ‘Abdullah b. Ja’far al-Sādiq (upon him be peace)³⁰ when they did not find that he possessed what they sought they said: Where shall we go? To the Murjī’ah, or the Qadrīyyah? Or to the Hurūrīyyah, and Musā b. Ja’far heard them say this and said: Not to the Murjī’ah, nor to the Qadrīyyah, nor to the Hurūrīyyah, but to me.³¹

Perceive from how many angles the report of the Twelve is nullified:

Firstly: ‘Abdullāh’s claim to Imāmah.

Secondly: The Shī’ah going to him, and testing him.

Thirdly: Their confusion after testing him.

Fourthly: They did not know that their Imām was Musā b. Ja’far until Musā called them to himself, and during this time their jurist Zūrārah b. A’yūn died, and he would say while the Qur’ān is on his chest: *“O Allāh my Imām is he who this Qur’ān establishes”*.³²

[The Hujjah Remaining until the Day of Judgement]

The Zaidīyah said: It is not permissible for the Prophets to say: *“The Imāms are Twelve”* Because, the Hujjah (proof) remains upon the people until the day of judgement, and from the Twelve who came after Muhammad (upon him and his progeny be peace) Eleven have passed, and the Imāmīyah claim that the earth does not become free from a Hujjah.

³⁰ Of them are al-Ahwal al-Taḳ, and Hisham b. Salim.

³¹ Refer to al-Kafi v.1, pg. 352 on Shiaonlineibrary.com

³² In Mashra’at Bihar al-Anwar Sheikh ‘Asif Muhsini also records that Zurarah did not know the Imām after al-Sadiq (a.s).

[The Dispute Regarding al-Hassan al-'Askarī]

The Zaidīyah said: The Imāmīyah have disputed after the death of al-Hassan b. 'Alī (upon them be peace), of them are those who claim that he had a seven year old son, and of them are those who said: He was a young boy, or infant. Regardless of which of them he was, in such a state he is not fit for the Imāmah, the leadership of the Muslims, and the vicegerency of Allāh on earth. He cannot organize the affairs of the Muslims during a state of warfare, he cannot fight their battles, defend them, their women, and children. This is because, the young boy, or the infant are not capable of such matters, and this has never been the case in the near, or very distant past; a child does not know how to ride a horse, or remain stable on a saddle. He does not know how to unsheath a sword, rise with his armor, and strike. He cannot charge at his foes in a battle that is fierce, and of the necessary qualities of the Imām is that he is the bravest of the people.³³

[Uncertainty Toward al-Hassan al-'Askarī Having a Son]

The Zaidīyah said: The people have been doubtful in attributing a son to him, as most of the people deny that al-Hassan b. 'Alī (upon them be peace) had a son.³⁴

[The Arguments of the Waqifites and Other Groups Against the Twelvers]

Some of the Zaidīyah have said: The Waqafites, and others can challenge your claim that Musā b. Ja'far (upon them be peace) had died, for you claim that he has died due to witnessing his death, hearing of his passing, and taking it from the proclamation of others. However, Allāh - Exalted and Glorious is He - said regarding the Messiah (upon him be peace): *{They neither killed nor crucified him—it was only made to appear so}* [4:157]³⁵ The people only judged as they could, and that is through perception, they saw that he was crucified, and killed. Therefore, the same can be said regarding the other Imāms who certain sects have said that they are occult, and you claim that they are dead.

al-Sheikh al-Sadūq al-Qomī said in concluding that which he shared: We have mentioned these arguments in the beginning of this book, because this is the crux of that which pertains to the Zaidīyah in terms of their arguments, and they are the severest of sects against us.

³³ In the case of 'Īsā speaking in the cradle, that is a miracle particular to him, and in the case of Yahya being a Prophet he did not assume leadership ahead of his father, and he led the people when he was of age.

³⁴ Among them is the great Imām al-Nasir al-Utrush who is his cousin, and one of the great Imāms of the Zaidīyah. He is al-Hassan b. 'Ali b. Hassan b. 'Ali b. 'Umar b. 'Ali b. al-Hussein b. 'Ali b. Abi Talib. Refer to Mu'jam rijaal al-Hadīth by al-Sayyid al-Khoe'i and see what he transmits regarding him from al-Sharif al-Radhi in terms of his justice, and trustworthiness, this brings two conclusions in mind either he (upon him be peace) did not have a son, or he hid this matter from his cousin, and companion which goes against the Qur'ān in informing the believers to protect their nearkin, and family from the fire, and to give them precedence in admonishment, and in warning.

³⁵ <https://quran.com/4>