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### Question:

Who is Imam Mahdi? Is Imam Mahdi an imam or a khalifah? There have been distinctions in the sunni and shia versions of imam mahdi and I wanted an Islamic clarification on this issue. Also how would we know he is the Mahdi and not the Dajjal?

Assalamu Alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh

Thank you for your question.

Imam Mahdi's primary position is that of a leader who will lead and govern Muslims before the end of time. Having said that, Imam Mahdi can be called both an 'Imam' and also 'Khalifah'.

Imam Mahdi will easily be recognized by the traits the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings upon him) described for us.

Kindly refer to the narrations below:

"If there was only a day left of this world, Allah would extend it until He would send a man who is from me; or from my family. His name will be the same as my name and his father's name will be the same as my father's name (i.e. Muhammad ibn Abdullah). He will fill the world with fairness and justice just as it will be filled with tyranny and injustice. (Sunan Abi Dawud)

"The Mahdi is from my progeny; from the descendants of Fatimah." (Sunan Abi Dawud)

"The Mahdi is from me. He will have a high forehead and a curved nose. He will fill the world with fairness and justice just as it will be filled with tyranny and injustice and he will rule for seven years." (Sunan Abi Dawud)

"There will be a dispute following the death of a ruler (khalifah). A man from the residents of Madinah will emerge and run to Makkah. [Once in Makkah] some Makkans will approach him and bring him out against his will. They will then pledge their allegiance to him between the [Black Stone] corner and the Maqam [of Ibrahim]." (Sunan Abi Dawud)

"...Thereafter a man from the Quraysh will arise, whose maternal uncles will be from [the tribe of] Kalb. He will send an army against them (i.e. the Mahdi and those who have pledged their allegiance to him) [to destroy them] however [the Mahdi and his followers] will prevail against them. That [defeated army] will be the forces of Kalb. The true loss will be for he who will fail to witness the spoils of Kalb. The Mahdi will distribute the wealth [acquired from the battle] and will govern the people in accordance to the practice (Sunnah) of their Prophet. Islam will become established on the earth and the Mahdi will remain for seven years. He will then die and the

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Muslims will offer his funeral prayer.” (Sunan Abi Dawud)

And Allah knows best.

Answered by Shaykh Yusuf Badat

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Imam of the Islamic Foundation of Toronto and Director of Mathabah Institute

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