

A monthly magazine for a better
knowledge about
Imam al-Mahdi, the Twelfth Imam.

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The Final Hope

- * Imamate in the Quran
- * General Deputies of Imam al-Mahdi
- * Question and Answer
- * The signs of Appearance
- * Teenage Corner

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أَبُو سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيُّ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ؟
يَقُولُ الْمَهْدِيُّ مِنَّا أَجْلَى الْجَبْهَةِ أَقْنَى الْأَنْفِ يَمْلَأُ
الْأَرْضَ عَدْلًا وَقِسْطًا كَمَا مَلَأَتْ جَوْرًا وَظُلْمًا وَ
يَمْلِكُ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ.¹

Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī says, “I heard the Messenger of Allah to have said, ‘al-Mahdi is from us (the members of the House). He will have a broad forehead and a narrow nose. He will fill the earth with justice as it is filled with injustice and tyranny and will rule for seven years.’”



The Supreme Leader of Islamic Republic

The outlook of religions towards the destination of humanity's caravan is a very promising outlook. The spirit of waiting and establishing a close relationship with the Imam of the Age and anticipating the day when he appears are really one of the greatest gates of salvation [al-Faraj] for the Islamic community. This anticipation is the gate to salvation. It is promising and revitalizing. It prevents us from feeling desperate, ruined, hopeless and confused about the future. It gives us hope and it provides guidance. This is the issue of the Imam of the Age (Allah's greetings be upon him). I hope that Allah the Exalted the Glorified will make us be among those who wait for his appearance in the real sense of the word and I hope that He will enlighten our eyes by fulfilling this promise.



The Final Hope

*Chief
Director*

Mojtabā Kalbāsī

*Editor in
Chief*

Sayyed Abd-al-Mahdi Tavakol

*Editorial
Board*

*Hamid Sa'adat
Mohammad Mahdi Lotfī
Mohsen Rahīmī*

Translator

Specialized Center of Mahdism

*Graphic
Design*

Hadi Abdulmaleki



Islamic Seminary of Qom
Specialized Center of Mahdism

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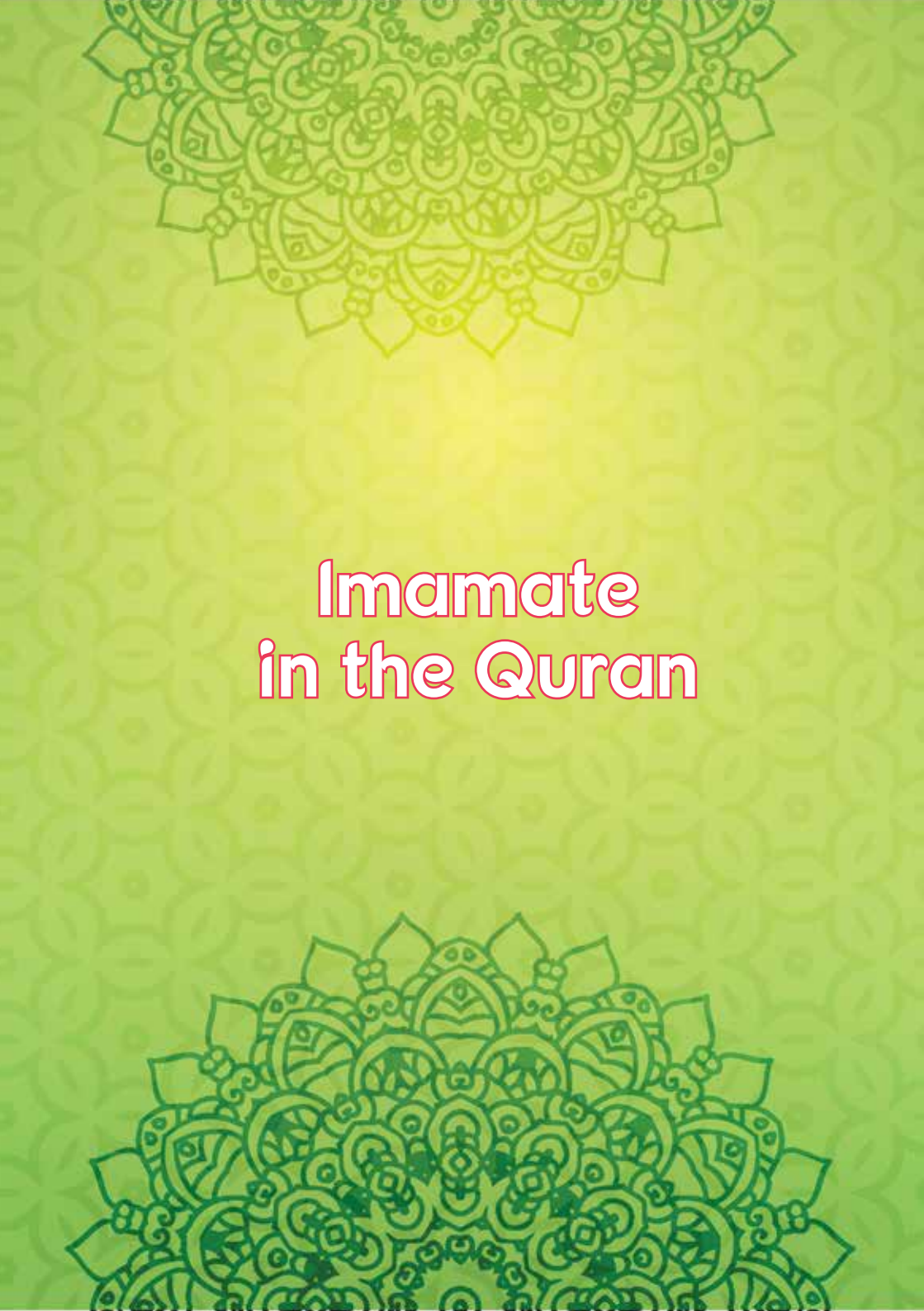
Editorial

Imam al-Mahdi is a Divine Proof that helps people understand Allah and worship Him. He is also the Divine Governor in the earth, though he is not yet allowed to establish his government publicly. We believe that the Imams, like the prophets, are chosen by Allah and people cannot decide who should be the Imam. The reason behind it is that people need the Imam to be guided and it is impossible for them to ascertain who can guide them. We are like a patient who needs to be treated by a very proficient doctor. Of course such a person cannot decide by himself which doctor is more qualified and the knowledge of whom is more accurate. Because the level of a patient's knowledge is much lower than the knowledge of a masterful and specialist doctor. The same is applicable to the Imam. The Imam is like a divine doctor who can cure our physical and spiritual problems, he is the one whose knowledge is the same as the Prophet and knows everything. How people could discover who is liable to undertake these immense responsibilities? How people who need to be trained can qualify their trainer? It is like

a baby who wants to decide which professor in the university can teach better or an illiterate man who wants to determine which text is more eloquent and stylistic.

Editor in Chief: Sayyed Abd-al-Mahdi Tavakol

Smtavakol@gmail.com



Imamate in the Quran

Surah al-Hūd verse 80

Allah Almighty, in Surah al-Hūd, verse eighty, talks about the prophet Lut when he wished to have enough power and a strong support to refer to,

﴿قَالَ لَوْ أَنَّ لِي بِكُمْ قُوَّةً أَوْ آوِي إِلَىٰ رُكْنٍ شَدِيدٍ﴾

“He said, ‘If only I had the power to deter you or could take refuge in a mighty support’”

An explanatory narration

«أَبَىٰ بَصِيرٌ قَالَ قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَا كَانَ يَقُولُ لُوْطٌ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لَوْ أَنَّ لِي بِكُمْ قُوَّةً أَوْ آوِي إِلَىٰ رُكْنٍ شَدِيدٍ إِلَّا تَمَنِّيًّا لِقُوَّةِ الْقَائِمِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَلَا ذَكَرَ إِلَّا شِدَّةَ أَصْحَابِهِ فَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ مِنْهُمْ يُعْطَىٰ قُوَّةَ أَرْبَعِينَ رَجُلًا وَإِنَّ قَلْبَهُ لَأَشَدُّ مِنْ زُبُرِ الْحَدِيدِ وَلَوْ مَرُوا بِجِبَالِ الْحَدِيدِ لَقَطَعُوهَا لَا يَكْفُونَ سُيُوفَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَرْضَىٰ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ»

It is narrated from Abū Basīr narrating from Imam al-Sādiq (the Shia’s sixth Imam) to have said, “The prophet Lut who said “If only I had the power to deter you or could take refuge in a mighty support’ wisied nothing but to have a power like the power of the Upriser and Lut remembered nothing but the power of the Upriser’s special followers since each of them will have the power equal to forty men and his faith will be strong like pieces of iron. If they face

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 52, p. 372, hadith 44.

a mountain made of iron in their way, they will remove it. They won't put their weapon down (and will continuously fight) up until Allah becomes satisfied with them (and allow them to stop).''

Points

- 1. Having enough power and followers is necessary to implement Islamic laws:** The universe is a place where everything taking place there should follow a certain of natural cause an effect procedures. Hence, if one, even a prophet or an Imam, does not have enough power and followers he cannot accomplish his mission. Imam al-Mahdi also is not excepted. As a result, he will come when he has enough followers and when the world is so prepared to let him fulfill his mission in the best way. The reason, or one of the reasons that his appearance is postponed is this.
- 2. The real followers of the Imam:** Based on the mentioned narration explaining the verse at hand, the companions of Imam al-Mahdi will be like a firm place for others to take refuge. They are strong in their beliefs and possess a kind of physical and

spiritual traits that if others refer to them they will be confident and at ease. During the time of Occultation, those who wish to remain alive till the Imam comes and are hopeful to be accepted by him as his real followers, also should be like this – strong in faith and totally reliable when others refer to them. This is one of the most important traits of real Moslems at the time of Occultation.



General Deputies of Imam al-Mahdi

Ali bin Ibrāhīm al-Qummī

Abū al-Hassan Ali bin Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, was one of the greatest Shiite jurist and commentator scholars in the 10th century (the 3rd century of Hijrī). His father “Ibrāhīm Ibn Hāshem al-Qummī” was a great scholar as well. Ali bin Ibrāhīm’s patronymic was “Abū al-Hassan”, but he was also known as “al-Sheykh al-Aqdam”. The references did not determine the exact date of his birth, but he lived during the time of the eleventh Imam (Imam al-Hassan al-’Askarī). It is said that he became blind at the end of his life. He passed away around the year 329 A.H. (941 A.D.) and he was buried in city of Qum in Iran.

His great status

Ali bin Ibrāhīm is considered one of the most famous and prominent Shiite narrators who has narrated 7140 narrations and many of them, in the famous book al-Kāfī, were transmitted by him because he was one of the masters (Mashāyikh) of the late al-Kulaynī who has reported a lot of narrations from him in his book, al-Kāfī.¹ He was the first to promulgate the “Kufan” traditions (Hadiths) in Qum and collected Hadith from many scholars. He wrote more than 15 books, famously his commentary *Tafsīr al-Qummī* and its narrations are mentioned in Bihār al-Anwār, Wasā’il

1. Al-Zarī’ah ilā Tasānīf al-Shi’ah, vol.4, p. 302.

al-Shi'ah and other hadith books. He is said to have been one of the most important Shiite Quran commentators. His other works include *Akhhbār al-Quran*, *Nawādir al-Qur'an*, *al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh* (Abrogator and Abrogated verses of the Quran), *al-Sharāyi'* (Laws or revealed religions), *al-Tawhīd wa al-shirk* (Oneness of Allah and Polytheism).

Ali bin Ibrāhīm relished with increasing respect and special honor from scholars, and jurisprudents. Concerning him, Najāshī writes, “Ali bin Ibrāhīm, Abū al-Hasaan al-Qummī is a narrator who recorded traditions; he is reliable and of a correct religion; he has heard a lot of narrations and written different books including a commentary book and ...”¹

Sheikh al-Tūsī also writes in his book, *al-Fihris*, “Ali bin Ibrāhīm bin Hāshim al-Qummī has written many books including the book of *Tafsīr* and *al-Nāsikh Wa al-Mansūkh*”.²

About *Tafsīr al-Qummī*

This book is available and some of its narrations are mentioned in some reliable books like *al-Kāfī*. Perhaps the first person who conducted a comprehensive and de-

1. Rijāl of al-Najāshī, p. 260.

2. *Al-Fihris*, researched and edited by Āl-e Bahr al-Ulūm, Seyyid Muhammad Sādiq, p. 266.

tailed research into what is known allegedly as Ali bin Ibrahim's commentary book was Āqā Buzurg Tehrani. He says that in this commentary, Qummī reports most of the narrations on the authority of his father and from Imam al-Sādiq. In fact, he also narrates from the rest of his masters and from Imam al-Sādiq on their authority. In the preface to Tafsīr al-Qummī, the author writes, "What we mention in this book are all from the masters and trustworthy scholars who also narrate from others whose obedience Allah has made obligatory upon all..."¹ As for the authenticity of the content of this book, there is a doubt as to whether or not all the contents can be ascribed to Ali bin Ibrāhīm since there are some evidences proving that some parts of the book are not his commentary, but, among most of the scholars there is no doubt that the major part of this book is attributed to him only. For example, Āghā Buzurg Tihriānī does not consider the whole book to be Ali b. Ibrahim's². In addition, assuming that this book has been authored by him, the authenticity and reliability of all the narrators of this commentary book is not proven. However, there has been much discussion regarding this issue among the scholars.

1. Tafsīr al-Qummī, vol. 1, p. 4.

2. *Al-Dharī'ah*, vol. 4, p. 302.



Question and Answer

Paying attention that Imam al-Mahdi is totally aged, how would he look like when he appears?

Imam al-Mahdi was born in 255 A.H. and till now, he is around 1183 and is in the second millennium of his life. Apparently, he should bear a physical resemblance to a very aged man, but there are some narrations that say otherwise.

Pertaining to Imam al-Mahdi's physical appearance at the time of his advent there are two sets of narration:

- A group of these narrations just state that he will have a similar appearance to a young man:

1. Imam al-Bāqir says:

«هُوَ شَابٌ بَعْدَ كِبَرِ السِّنِّ»¹

“Although he is totally aged, he is still young.”

2. Imam al-Sādiq says,

«لَوْ خَرَجَ الْقَائِمُ لَقَدْ أَنْكَرَهُ النَّاسُ يَرْجِعُ إِلَيْهِمْ شَابًا»²

“When the Upriser appears, some people reject him since he will come to them as a young man.”

3. In another narration from an infallible Imam we read,

1. Kamāl al-Dīn Wa Tamām al-Ni'mah, vol. 1, p. 327, hadith 7.

2. Al-Ghaybah by Sheikh al-Tūsī, p. 420.

«أَنَّ فِي صَاحِبِ الزَّمَانِ (عج) شَبَهَا مِنْ يُونُسَ رُجُوعُهُ مِنْ غَيْبَتِهِ بِشَرِّحِ السَّبَابِ»^١

“Indeed the Owner of this Time (Imam al-Mahdi) has a similarity with the prophet Jonah – He will appear like a man in the best time of his youth.”

4. Imam al-Ridā also says,

«إِنَّ الْقَائِمَ هُوَ الَّذِي إِذَا خَرَجَ كَانَ فِي سِنِّ الشُّيُوخِ وَ مَنْظَرِ الشُّبَّانِ قَوِيًّا فِي بَدَنِهِ»^٢

“Certainly, the Upriser is a man when appearing, he has as long age as the elderly, but looks like the young and is physically strong.”

- Another group of narrations say that he would look like a young man who is around thirty or fifty.

1. Imam al-Sādiq states,

«إِنَّ وَلِيَّ اللَّهِ... يَظْهَرُ فِي صُورَةٍ فَتَى مُوقِفِ ابْنِ ثَلَاثِينَ سَنَةً»^٣

“The Friend of Allah (Imam al-Mahdi) will appear, totally like a young man who is thirty.”

2. Imam al-Hassan states,

1. Ibid, p. 421.

2. Kamāl al-Dīn Wa Tamām al-Ni'mah, vol. 2, p. 376, hadith 7.

3. Al-Ghaybah by Sheikh al-Tūsī, p. 420.

«يُطِيلُ اللَّهُ عُمُرَهُ فِي غَيْبَتِهِ ثُمَّ يُظْهِرُهُ بِقُدْرَتِهِ فِي صُورَةِ شَابٍ دُونَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً ذَلِكَ لِيَعْلَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ»¹

“Allah will prolong his life during the time of his Occultation, then Allah will make him appear by His power like a young man who is under the age of forty. This is for people to realize that Allah is able to do everything.”

3. Imam al-Sādiq says,

«الْقَائِمُ مِنْ وُلْدِي... يَغِيبُ غَيْبَةً فِي الدَّهْرِ وَيُظْهِرُ فِي صُورَةِ شَابٍ مُوقِفِ ابْنِ اثْنَتَيْنِ وَثَلَاثِينَ سَنَةً»²

“The Upriser who is from my progeny... will become hidden for a long time, then will appear as a sound young man at the age of thirty two.”

4. In a narration, Abū al-Salt al-Harawī says,

«قُلْتُ لِلرِّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَا عَلَامَاتُ الْقَائِمِ مِنْكُمْ إِذَا خَرَجَ قَالَ عَلَامَتُهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ شَيْخَ السُّنَنِ شَابًّا الْمُنْظَرِ حَتَّىٰ إِنَّ النَّاطِرَ إِلَيْهِ لَيَحْسَبُهُ ابْنُ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً أَوْ دُونَهَا وَإِنَّ مِنْ عَلَامَاتِهِ أَنْ لَا يَهْرَمَ بِمُرُورِ الْأَيَّامِ وَاللَّيَالِي حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَهُ أَجَلُهُ»³

“I asked Imam al-Ridā, ‘What are the signs of your

1. Kifāyah al-Athar, p. 226.

2. Al-Ghaybah by al-No’mānī, p. 189.

3. Kamāl al-Dīn Wa Tamām al-Ni’mah, vol. 2, p. 652, hadith 12.

Upriser when he arises?’ The Imam replied, ‘One of his sings is that he is totally aged, but his face resembles a young man. People would assume that he is forty or less than that. One of his sings is that, till the end of his life, he will not become old as the days and nights passes.’”

5. It is narrated from Imam Ali bin Abī Tālib to have said,

«المَهْدَى مَوْلِدُهُ بِالْمَدِينَةِ مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِ النَّبِيِّ... يَبْعَثُ وَهُوَ مَا بَيْنَ الثَّلَاثِينَ وَالْأَرْبَعِينَ»¹

“Al-Mahdi will be born in Medina and he is from the Household of the Prophet... He will arise while he is around thirty or forty.”

6. Abū Basīr narrates from Imam al-Sādiq to have said,

«لَيْسَ صَاحِبُ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ مَنْ جَازَ أَرْبَعِينَ»²

“The Owner of this Matter (Imam al-Mahdi) won’t look like a man over the age of forty.”

It is worthy of noting that although the second group of narration refer to different number of age, there is no contradic-

1. Al-Malāhim Wa al-Fitan, p. 34.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 52, p. 319, hadith 20.

tion between them since they try just to say that the Imam has a similar appearance to a young man who is around thirty or forty and these numbers do not represent the exact age of the Imam. Based on these narrations, also Allah says in the Quran,

﴿وَمَنْ نُّعَمِّرْهُ نُنَكِّسْهُ فِي الْخَلْقِ أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ﴾

“And whomever We give a long life, We cause him to regress in creation.”¹

There is an exception and the Imam is not included in this verse.

A scientific justification

Aging and death is caused by some factors that if we know them and try to keep them at bay, we will remain young and healthy for a long time.

Moreover, some Shiite scholars believe that although practically it looks impossible for a person to have such a long life, but be similar to a young man, it is intellectually possible. All we can say is that, so far the current science is unable to discover the secret of it, nonetheless there is no reason to reject the plausibility of it and because of it, scientists look for some techniques to extend the life span of people and anticipate to find out some strategies.

For about three hundred years ago, a new branch of

1. The Quran, 36:68

study was added to biology which is called “*Gerontology*”. This is the scientific study of old age and the process of aging, and the particular problems of old people. Based on the research on this field, aging is caused by three main factors:

1. Chronic diseases, such as the diseases of the stomach and the diseases of malnutrition.
2. Mental illness that destroys the freshness of vital cells.
3. External factors such as the environment, climate, cold, heat, and humidity.

Then, the scientists have come to the conclusion that if they work on these factors they will be able to postpone the process of aging for a long time.

For instance, they realized that by adding vitamin B6 and Nucleic acid and pantothenic acid to the food of some animals they can lengthen the life of them for 46 percent and also rejuvenate them for a much longer time.

In addition, there are some creatures that will never get old as long as they live. An instance of it is the snail. It remains young till it dies due to an accident or special illness.

Furthermore, we know, for example, that wheat would remain in good condition for at least one or two years in good condition and in the moist environment it will not

last for more than six months. But the prophet Joseph knew how to help it remain sound for seven years and as the Quran says he advised people of Egypt at the time of the famine to store the wheat in its ear. Now it is proved that if we leave the wheat in its cluster it would continue being undamaged for approximately eight years.

Additionally, some biologists believe that the Stem Cells of the body or the genes would not be destroyed at all and it may open the door to find a way to live for a considerably long time.

Consequently, the Imam whose knowledge is emanated from the knowledge of Allah, is entirely aware of the details of this secret and would meticulously apply them in his life.

A miracle demonstrating the might of Allah

Allah's power is absolute and He is able to do everything that is intellectually possible. The Quran is replete with examples in which Allah presented His wonderful power. For instance, He makes the fire cool and convenient for Abraham to save his life and splits the sea apart for Moses and his followers to save them from the Pharaoh.

Ibn Athīr in his book *Usd al-Ghābah* narrates that a man namely 'Amr bin Hamq al-khuzā'ī who gave water to the Prophet and the Prophet prayed for him saying, "*O Allah!*

Help him enjoy his youth.” Then the man lived for eighty years and his beard was still black without any white hair.¹

This hadith indicates that if Allah wills, He can maintain the youthfulness of someone just like those who will enter the heaven that they will remain young forever.

Also in the Quran there are some instances that the passing of time did not cause any physical change in the body of some people.

One of these examples is Ezra the Prophet. He passed by a town riding on his donkey and the town was totally dilapidated. He said by himself that how Allah would ever bring the dead people of the town back to life. When he made this statement in his mind, Allah caused him to die and he remained dead for 100 years. Then Allah brought him back to life and asked him how long he had stayed there. Ezra who did not know what happened to him assumed that he was asleep for one day or lesser. But Allah told him that he had remained there for one hundred year.

Here Ezra after one century did not felt any sings of oldness in his body. Moreover, Allah told him, to look at his food and drink and Ezra witnessed that they remained intact and were not rotten. But his donkey was totally decomposed. Then Allah revived the donkey in

1. Usd al-Ghābah, vol. 3, p. 714.

front of his eyes to show him how He would resurrect people in the Day of Judgment.¹

Here Allah by his power remained Ezra and his food and drink safe for one century. So if He wills He can do the same to His Agent Imam al-Mahdi.

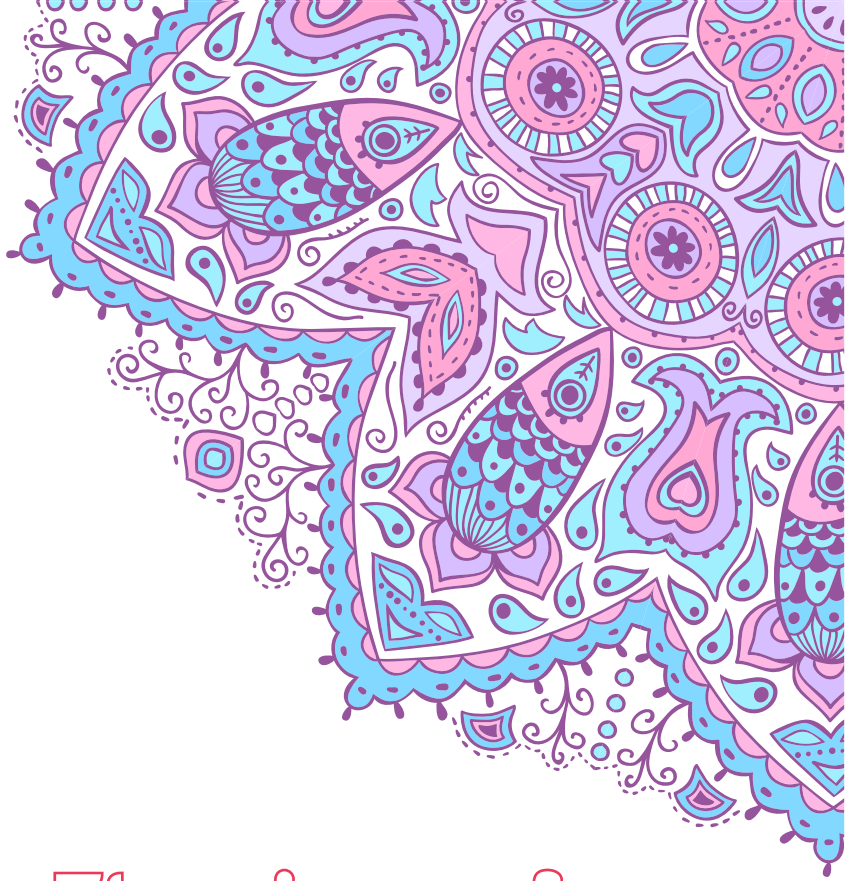
The second example is about the People of the Cave who slept in the cave for three hundred and nine years. But when they woke up they supposed that they just had taken a nap or slept for a day or part of a day. However, their body was just the same as before they went to sleep so they did not realize the passing of that long time.²

In philosophy, they say that the best reason for the possibility of an event is that it takes place. When something occurs it shows that it was not intellectually impossible to happen. Likewise, when we see that sometimes some of the natural laws of nature would no longer be efficacious, we realize that there is a supernatural power above them that is able to put them aside and this is the power of Allah.

In addition, there are so many narrations that some people accidentally come across the corpus of a righteous man who died many years ago, but still his body was fresh and not decomposed.

1. The Quran, 2:259

2. The Quran, 18: 19 and 25



The signs of Appearance



The martyrdom of al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah

Among the signs of the appearance, some of them possess a special importance and particularly, those that will take place in the year of the appearance. One of these significant and definite signs is the murder of al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah (Pure Soul) that will occur a little prior to the advent of the Imam. This sign, in a number of Islamic narrations, is referred to as an indispensable sign that must take place.

Mojāhid narrates from one of the companions of the Prophet who heard from the prophet to have said,

« لا يخرج المهدي حتى تقتل النفس الزكية، فإذا قتلت النفس الزكية غضب عليهم أهل السماء و أهل الأرض، فأتى الناس المهدي و زفّوها إليه كما تزفّ العروس إلى زوجها ليلة عرسها، فيملاً الأرض قسطاً و عدلاً، و تمطر السماء مطراً، و تخرج الأرض نباتها، و تنعم أمّتي في ولايته نعمة لم تنعم بمثلها قط »¹

“Surely, Imam al-Mahdi will not come until al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah has been killed. When this occurs those in the heaven and those on the earth will become angry. So people will come in a procession to the Mahdi; like the procession of a bride to her husband on their wedding night, and the Imam will fill the earth with fairness and justice and the earth

1. Al-Tashrīf Bilminan by Sayyed bin Tāwous, p. 275.

will produce its plants and the heaven will pour its rain and my nation will enjoy his government and favors never before enjoyed.”

At any rate, al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah possesses an apocalyptic position and his name has been combined with the future fate of the Shia. Based on Islamic narrations, he is a person by the name of Muhammad bin al-Hassan who is a descendant of Hussein bin Ali. It is said that he will be murdered in Mecca in the ambit of the Ka’bah in Masjid al-Harām. What is important about this character, is his role in the appearance of the Imam since it is said that after his is killed, it would last no longer than a fourteen of fifteen days till the advent of the Imam.

Pertaining to the meaning of al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah there are two possibilities:

1. It means *the pure soul* since the man is very pious and devout and totally pure and sinless. Therefore, al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah is spiritually a trained and a prefect man and because of this, his martyrdom is regarded as a signs of the appearance.
2. The second reason for his nickname is that he will be slain without committing any sin and crime. This meaning is also referred to in the Quran about a sinless man as Moses says to the Prophet Khidr,

﴿أَقْتَلْتَ نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ﴾^١

“Did you slay an innocent (and pure) soul without [his having slain] anyone?”

Based on any of the two mentioned meanings, it is certain that the man is especially prominent and outstanding. Because the killing of an ordinary man could not be rendered as one of the substantial signs of the appearance.

His titles

In addition to the title of al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah, there are a bundle of other titles given to him in narrations such as “al-Nafs al-Harām” (a soul that should not be killed), “al-Dam al-Harām” (a blood that should not be shed) and “a young man from the Prophet’s Household.”

For instance, it is narrated from Imam Ali bin Abī Tālib to have said to some of his people in an authentic narration,

«أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِآخِرِ مُلْكِ بَنِي فُلَانٍ؟ قُلْنَا: بَلَى يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ. قَالَ: قَتَلُ نَفْسٍ حَرَامٍ فِي يَوْمٍ حَرَامٍ فِي بَلَدٍ حَرَامٍ عَنِ قَوْمٍ مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ وَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ وَبَرَأَ النَّسَمَةَ مَا لَهُمْ مُلْكٌ بَعْدَهُ غَيْرُ خَمْسٍ عَشْرَةَ لَيْلَةً.»^٢

“Do you want me to inform you of the last govern-

1. The Quran, 18:74

2. Al-Ghaybah by al-No’mānī, p. 258, hadith 17.

ment of so and so people? We replied, 'Yes O the Commander of the Faithful.' The Imam said, 'It will be when 'al-Nafs al-Harām who is from Quraish be killed in a month that no one should be killed in that month and in a place where no one should be killed in that place. By Allah Who splits the seed (to become a planet) and creates people, those people of the government will not have authority after it, but for fifteen nights.'"

In another narration from Imam Ali we read,

«لَا يُطَهِّرُ اللَّهُ الْأَرْضَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ حَتَّى يُسْفَكَ الدَّمُ الْحَرَامُ»^١

"Allah won't purify the earth from the oppressors, but when the blood of al-Dam al-Harām be shed."

It is quoted from Imam al-Bāqir to have said about the signs of Appearance,

«وَقَتْلُ غُلامٍ مِنْ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ ص بَيْنَ الرُّكْنِ وَالْمَقَامِ اسْمُهُ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْحَسَنِ النَّفْسُ الزَّكِيَّةُ»^٢

"When a young man from the Household of the Prophet whose name is Mohammad bin al-Hassan al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah will be killed between the Corner of the Ka'bah and the Station of Abraham."

1. Ibid, p. 275, hadith 55.

2. Kamāl al-Dīn Wa Tamām al-Ni'mah, vol. 1, p. 331, hadith 16.

From this latter narration we realize that the man is a descendent of the Prophet's Household.

The time and the place of his martyrdom

In accordance to Islamic narrations the man will be killed fifteen days before the advent of the Imam.

Sālih Moulā Banī al-‘Azrā’ says that he heard from Imam al-Sādiq to have said,

«لَيْسَ بَيْنَ قِيَامِ قَائِمِ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَبَيْنَ قَتْلِ النَّفْسِ الزَّكِيَّةِ إِلَّا خُمْسَ عَشْرَةَ لَيْلَةً»^١.

“There will be no more time gap than fifteen nights between the rising of the Household of the Prophet's Upriser and the martyrdom of al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah.”

As we mentioned earlier, he will get murdered in the city of Mecca in Masjid al-Harām. Regarding this matter, Imam Ali states,

«وَلِذَلِكَ آيَاتٌ وَعَلَامَاتٌ... وَ الْمَذْبُوحُ بَيْنَ الرُّكْنِ وَالْمَقَامِ»^٢

“And for the coming of Imam al-Mahdi there are some signs: ... and when the man is slayed between the Corner of the Ka'bah and the Station of Abraham.”

1. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 649, hadith 2.

2. Mokhtasar al-Basāer, p. 469.

The envoy of Imam al-Mahdi

In Islamic narrations, there is not enough knowledge about the reason why al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah will be killed and who are his slayers. But in accordance to some narrations when Imam al-Mahdi realizes that people of Mecca don't accept his appearance he will send al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah as an envoy to convey his oral message to people of Mecca, but after imparting the Imam's message they will assault him and have him killed.

Accordingly, Abū Baṣīr narrates from Imam al-Bāqir to have said,

«يَقُولُ الْقَائِمُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لِأَصْحَابِهِ يَا قَوْمَ إِنَّ أَهْلَ مَكَّةَ لَا يُرِيدُونَنِي وَ لَكِنِّي مُرْسِلٌ إِلَيْهِمْ لِأَحْتَجَّ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمَا يَنْبَغِي لِمَثَلِي أَنْ يَحْتَجَّ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَدْعُوا رَجُلًا مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ فَيَقُولُ لَهُ امْضُ إِلَى أَهْلِ مَكَّةَ فَقُلْ يَا أَهْلَ مَكَّةَ أَنَا رَسُولُ فَلَانِ إِلَيْكُمْ وَ هُوَ يَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنَّا أَهْلُ بَيْتِ الرَّحْمَةِ وَ مَعْدِنِ الرِّسَالَةِ وَ الْخِلَافَةِ ... فَنَحْنُ نَسْتَنْصِرُكُمْ فَانصُرُونَا فَإِذَا تَكَلَّمْتَ هَذَا الْفَتَى بِهَذَا الْكَلَامِ أَتَوْا إِلَيْهِ فَذَبَحُوهُ بَيْنَ الرُّكْنِ وَ الْمَقَامِ وَ هِيَ النَّفْسُ الزَّكِيَّةُ»¹

“The Upriser tells his companions, ‘O my followers! Indeed the people of Mecca do not welcome us, but I dispatch to them an envoy to argue with them in a way that is appropriate to my status.’ Then the Imam calls one of his companions and commands

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 52, p. 307, hadith 81.

him, 'Go to the people of Mecca and tell them, O Meccan people! I am sent to you by Imam al-Mahdi and he tells you that we are from the House of Mercy, we are the container of prophethood and his succession... we ask you to assist us so help us.' When the man who is young conveys this message to them, they come to him and chop his head off between the Corner of the Ka'bah and the Station of Abraham and he is al-Nafs al-Zakīyyah."



Timeline

On Saturday, the 1st of August 2015 (the 15th of Shawwāl 1436 A.H.)

The demise of Sayyed ‘Abd al-‘Azhīm al-Hasanī

His Lineage

Abū al-Qāsim ‘Abd al-‘Azhīm al-Hasanī was born in 173 A.H. (790 A.D.) he was one of the descendants of the second Shiite Imam (al-Hassan bin Ali) only by four generations. The great Shiite scholar and biographer, Sheikh al-Najāshī (d. 450 A.H / 1058 A.D) has recorded ‘Abd al-‘Azīm al-Hasanī’s lineage at the beginning of his biography as: “ ‘Abd al-‘Azhīm bin ‘Abdullah bin ‘Ali bin al-Hassan bin Zayd bin al-Hassan bin ‘Ali bin Abī Tālib and this is his correct lineage”.

His Great State

‘Abd al-‘Azhīm was one of the defenders of the true beliefs by his speech and conduct and he was one of the sources of reference in matters of the faith. A fleeting glance at the traditions transmitted by him tells us firstly of his close associations with the two Imams and secondly, of his close links with the prominent authorities of the Hadith who numbered thirty-three. Also, among those who narrated from him, are identified a group of great and erstwhile scholars of hadith who were well-known for their proficiency in the narration of traditions

and for being firmly established in this field.

In fact, he was from the companions of the ninth and the tenth Imams (Imam al-Jawād and Imam al-Hādī) on the basis of the many traditions which he transmits from them. This is evidenced by the directive of the tenth Imam to his Shi'ites to turn to him (i.e. sayyed 'Abd al-'Azhīm) in respect of religious matters, which appeared ambiguous and complex to them.¹

Ibn Qūlawayh narrates from Ali bin al-Husayn bin Mūsā bin Bābwayh, who narrates from Muhammad bin Yahyā al-Attar, who narrates from some of the natives of Ray, (one of whom said), "I visited Abū al-Hasan al-'Askari. He asked me, 'Where were you?' I replied, 'I was visiting the grave of Imam al-Husayn bin Ali.' He said, 'However, if you had visited the grave of 'Abd al-'Azhīm which is situated near you, then your status would have been similar to the one who visited al-Husayn'"²

The prevailing policy in the ruling court was that of deception, enmity and oppression against the 'Alavids and the Shi'ites. Thus in such circumstances, the Imam may have advised the Shi'ites to content themselves by visiting the grave of 'Abd al-'Azhīm al-Hasanī in order

1. Refer to Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 36, p. 412.

2. Mīzān al-Hikmah, Hadith no. 7984.

to protect their lives and belongings from destruction and loss. Nevertheless, this does not mean that there is a reduction in the status of Imam al-Husayn or an exaggeration in the status of ‘Abd al-‘Azhīm.

His Death

That in what date ‘Abd al-‘Azhīm died there is no written document. Some writers say that by the narration from the tenth Imam about the virtues of ‘Abd al-‘Azhīm, it can be gathered that he died during the imamate of Imam Ali al-Nagī and the Imam was martyred in 254A.H. On the other hand, according to sheikh al-Sadūq it took place in the year 252A.H. (866 A.D) at the age of 79. It has been said that he became sick and died. He was buried in the city of Ray, Iran. Some say that he was killed by his enemies and he did not die a natural death. However God knows things better.

On Thursday, the 11th of August 2015 (the 25th of Shawwāl 1436 A.H.)

The martyrdom of Imam Ja'far al-Sādiq

«اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى جَعْفَرِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ الصَّادِقِ»

O Allah, send blessings on Ja'far bin Muhammad, the truthful.

Imam al-Sādiq, the sixth Imam of Shia was born on the 17th of Rabī' al-Awwal, 83rd year of Hijrah (702 A.D) in Medina. His honorable parents are Imam al-Bāqir (the fifth Imam) and lady `Umm-e farwah. The most famous title of him is *al-Sādiq* meaning “The Truthful” because he never speaks unless the truth. Imam al-Sādiq lived until 65 years. He had the longest life amongst the other eleven Imams (except for Imam al-Mahdi). Thus, he is also called as the *Sheikh al-`Aimmah*.

His Noble State

Whole of the life of the Imam, like the other Imams, was the enlightened lesson of the real and true Islam. He himself was considered to be the example and specimen of the Islamic ethic, moral and conduct. As the sixth Imam lived in a time when the Umayyad Dynasty was losing control of power to the Abbasid Dynasty, this opened the avenue for the formation of Abbasid govern-

ment. The gap in between these two powers opened the way for the propagation of Shia ideology and school of thought. The Imam utilized this golden opportunity in the revival of the Prophetic customs, the dissemination of the Islamic culture and trained students who created epics in the Shiite history. Sheykh al-Mufīd says, "The narrators among all different sects with different views who are considered to be trustworthy and have narrated Hadith from Imam al-Sādiq were four thousand people."¹ So, one of the well-known Muslim schools of thought, also known as the Twelver Shia school of thought, is the Ja'farī school of thought because the major parts of the Islamic legal regulations were enacted by this great man.

His Martyrdom

Towards the end of his life, the Imam was subjected to severe restrictions by the Abbasid caliph al-Mansūr, who ordered such persecution and merciless killing of many of the descendants of the Prophet. On his order, they were arrested in groups, some thrown into deep and dark prisons and tortured until they died, while others were beheaded or buried alive or placed at the base of or between walls of buildings, and walls were constructed over them.

Although the caliph did his best to bring the Imam

1. Al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 179.

close to himself or make him silent by threatening him, he failed. So he decided to martyr the Imam. Consequently, the Imam was poisoned and martyred on 25th of Shawwāl, 148 A.H. (765 A.D). His pure body was buried in the graveyard of al-Baqī' in Medina, a place where later on was ruined by Wahhabi people.

On Sunday, the 16th of August 2015 (the 1st of Dhū al-Qa'dah 1436 A.H.)

The auspicious birthday of Lady Fātima al-Ma'sūmah

Lady Fatima al-Ma'sūmah, the honorable daughter of the seventh Imam (Imam al-Kāzhim), was born on the 1st of Dhū al-Qa'dah, 173 A.H. (790 A.D) in Medina and died in Qum in the year 201 A.H. (817 A.D). Her real name was Fatima al-Kubrā (the greatest Fatima). It was due to the high respect that the Imams would name their children by the holy name *Fātima* (the name of the Prophet's daughter), and usually more than one child had the fortune to have such a noble name. So, Imam al-Kāzhim, named some of his daughters Fatima. Also the title of al-Ma'sūmah (infallible) was given to this noble lady by her brother, Imam al-Ridā. It is worth noting that this title was awarded to her after her death and she was not referred to by this name during her lifetime.

The respected mother of Lady Fatima al-Ma'sūmah was Najmah Khātūn. Lady Najmah was a slave from North Africa and was bought by Lady Hamīdah, the mother of Imam al-Kāzdim. After she came into the house of the Ahl al-Bayt, she reached a high level of intellectual and spiritual excellence. She was also the mother of the 8th Imam (Imam Ali al-Ridā) and she had no children other than these two.

Her great state in Imam's words

Some traditions that are indicative of her status are mentioned below:

«تَقْبُضُ فِيهَا امْرَأَةٌ مِنْ وُلْدِي، اسْمُهَا فَاطِمَةُ بِنْتُ مُوسَى، وَتَدْخُلُ بِشَفَاعَتِهَا شِيعَتِي الْجَنَّةَ بِأَجْمَعِهِمْ»^١

Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq says, "A lady from my children whose name will be Fatima, daughter of Mūsā, will die in Qum. On the day of Judgment this lady will intercede for all my Shia to enter Heaven."

Also Imam al-Sādiq says,

«وَسَتُدْفَنُ فِيهَا امْرَأَةٌ مِنْ أَوْلَادِي تُسَمَّى فَاطِمَةَ، فَمَنْ زَارَهَا وَجَبَتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ»^٢

"A lady from my children, by the name of Fatima will be buried in Qum. Whoever visits her [shrine],

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 60, p. 228.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 48, p. 317 & vol. 60, p. 216 & vol. 102, p. 266.

will certainly be admitted to Heaven.”

It is interesting that the Imams foretold the birth of this noble lady and her presence in Qum many years before her birth. Imam al-Sādiq gave these glad tidings even before the birth of his son, the 7th Imam, the father of Lady Fatima al-Ma'sūmah.

And according to a tradition Imam al-Ridā says,

«مَنْ زَارَ الْمَعْصُومَةَ بِقُومٍ كَمَنْ زَارَنِي»¹

“Whoever visits al-Ma'sūmah in Qum is like the one who has visited me.”

From this tradition, as mentioned previously, we get the title of al-Ma'sūmah that was given to this noble lady by the Imam himself.

The Ziyārah to Lady Fatima al-Ma'sūmah that we *have in our hand today has been narrated from Imam al-Ridā through a reliable tradition. Interestingly, no other non-Ma'sūmah has had an Imam dictating the text and manner of their Ziyārah other than her. Some extracts from her Ziyārah are discussed here as an example. In this Ziyārah, we salute her many times like:*

«السلام عليك يا بنت رسول الله»

1. Nāsikh al-Tawārikh, vol. 3, p. 68.

“Peace be upon You, O Daughter of the Messenger of Allah!”

«السلام عليك يا بنت فاطمة و خديجة»

“Peace upon you, O Daughter of Fatima and Khadījah!”

Also in this Ziyārah, Imam al-Ridā refers us to her as an intercessor, due to her nearness, status and special esteem in the eyes of Allah:

«يا فاطمة أشفعي لي في الجنة فانّ لك عند الله شأناً من الشأن»

“O Fatima! Intercede for me, so that I enter Heaven, for indeed you have a great status in the eyes of Allah.”¹

On Wednesday, the 26th August 2015 (the 11th of Dhū al-Qa’dah 1436 A.H.)

The auspicious birthday of Imam al-Ridā

The eighth Imam (Imam Ali bin Mūsā al-Ridā) was born in 148 A.H. (765A.D) in Medina and martyred and buried in 203A.H. (819 A.D) in the city of Tūs (Iran). His respected parents were Imam al-kādhim and Lady Najma Khātūn. The Imam was divinely entitled *Al-Ridā* (meaning that Allah Almighty and His Holy Messenger were deeply pleased with him and he as well). He also consid-

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 102, p. 267.

ered as the 'Ālim-u `Āl-e Muhammad (the greatest erudite of the Holy Ahlul Bayt). However, he was 35 years old when his honorable father martyred in prison of Hārūn al-Rashīd in Baghdad and the responsibilities of the Imamate devolved on him for 20 years. The period of his Imamate coincided with the caliphate of Hārūn and then his sons Amin and Ma'mūn. After the death of his father, Ma'mūn fell into conflict with his brother Amin and finally ended with the assassination of Amin, after which Ma'mūn became caliph. He considered the caliphate to be far from the sacred authority of Shiite Imam, so he thought of finding a new solution for this difficulty. Therefore, he asked the Imam to come to Marw from Medina, hoping in this way to overcome two difficulties: first of all to prevent the descendants of the Prophet from rebelling against the government and secondly, to cause the people to lose their spiritual belief and inner attachment to the Imam. This event occurred in 200 A.H. (816 A.D.) But soon Ma'mūn realized that he had committed an error, for there was a rapid spread of Shiism, a growth in the attachment of the populace to the Imam and an astounding reception given to the Imam by the people and even by the army and government agents. Ma'mūn sought to find a remedy for this difficulty and had the Imam poisoned and martyred.

The Rituals of the Month

From the 15th of Shawwāl to the 16th of Dhū al-Qa-
'dah (August 2015)

Dhū al-Qa'dah

The month of Dhū al-Qa'dah is the first of the Prohibited Months which Allah Almighty has referred in the holy Quran.¹ Sayyed bin Tāwūs defines this month as the month of responding to the prayers in the hardship.

The holy Prophet is reported as having mentioned a great reward for those who offer a special prayer on Sundays in this month, adding that their repentance would be accepted, their sins forgiven, their rivals made pleased with them on the day of Resurrection, caused to die on true faith given the true religion, granted expansion and light in the grave, the parents made pleased with them, their parents and offspring and their sins forgiven, provided with expansive sustenance, and granted lenience of the Angels of Death (Ezrāil) and easiness of their souls leaving their bodies.²

The method of this prayer is that one should make Major ablution (Ghusl) on Sunday, do the minor ablu-

1. The Quran, 9:36

2. Eqbāl -al-A'māl, vol. 1, p. 308.

tion (Wudū), and offer a four-unit prayer in each unit of which Sūrah al-Fātiha is recited once, Sūrah al-Tawhīd repeated three times, and Sūrahs al-Falaq and al-Nās recited once each. After that, the statement of imploring for forgiveness (أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ) is repeated one hundred times, and finally, the following statement is said:

«لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ»

“There is no power and no strength except with Allah the most High the All-Great.”

After that, the following supplicatory prayer is said:

«يَا عَزِيزُ يَا غَفَّارُ إِغْفِرْ لِي ذُنُوبِي وَ ذُنُوبَ جَمِيعِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ»

“O Almighty! O All-Forgiving! Forgive my sins and the sins of all believing men and women; for none can forgive sins save You.”¹

It is worth mentioning that according to a hadith observing fasting on three consecutive days in a Prohibited Month; namely Thursday, Friday, and Saturday brings about the reward of nine hundred years of worship.

The 15th Night of Dhū al-Qa’dah

This night is a blessed night at which Allah Almighty observes His faithful servants with the eye of mercy.

1. Ibid.

According to a tradition reported from the Prophet, one who practices acts of worship at this night will have the reward of one hundred fasters who confine themselves to mosques and who have never disobeyed Allah Almighty.

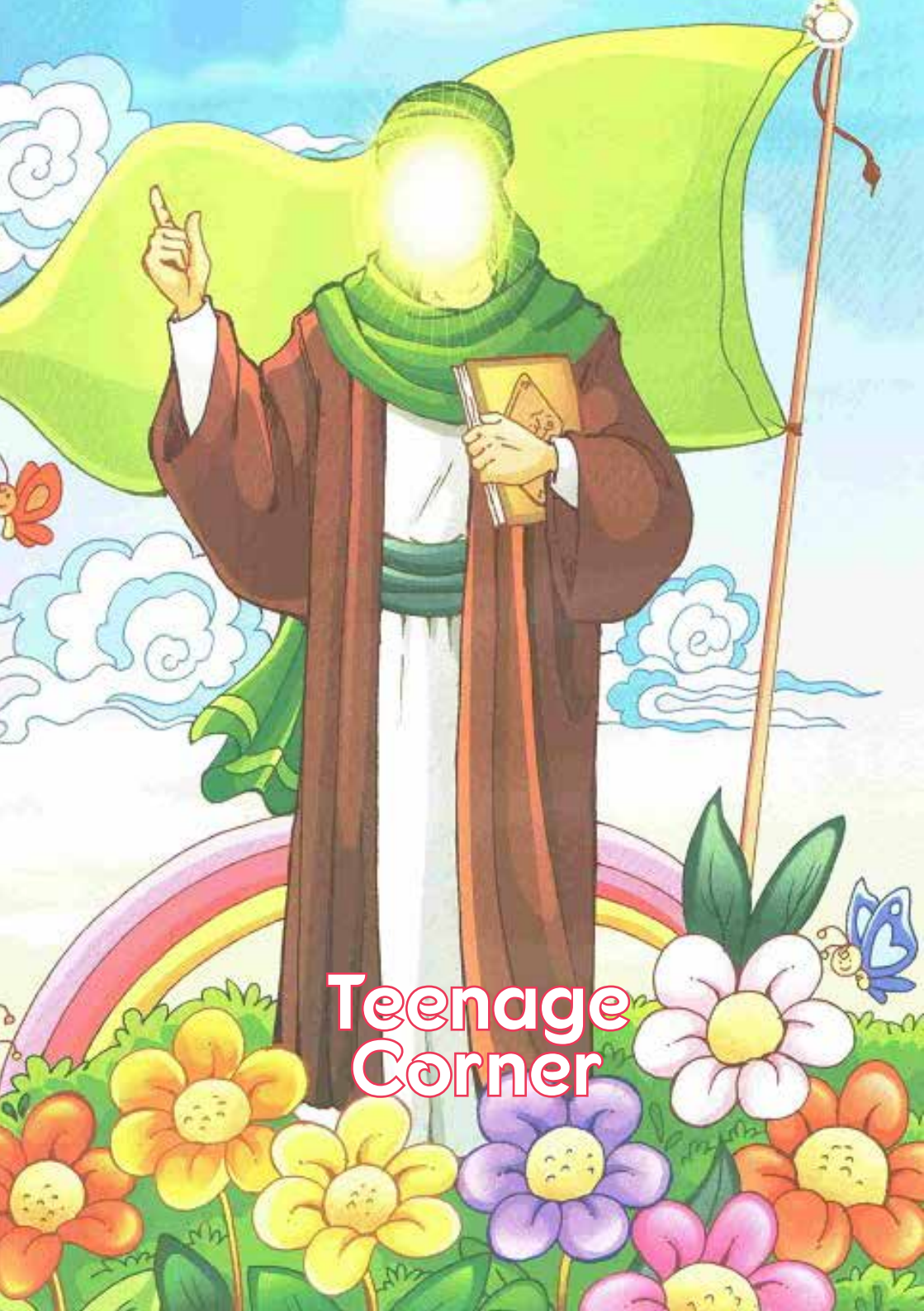
The 25th Night of Dhū al-Qa'dah

One of the great nights of this month is the night of the 25th. According to a narration by al-Hassan bin Ali bin al-Washshā' he says,

«كُنْتُ مَعَ أَبِي وَ أَنَا غُلَامٌ فَتَعَشَّيْنَا عِنْدَ الرُّضَاعِ لَيْلَةَ خَمْسٍ وَ عِشْرِينَ مِنْ ذِي الْقَعْدَةِ فَقَالَ لَيْلَةُ خَمْسٍ وَ عِشْرِينَ مِنْ ذِي الْقَعْدَةِ وُلِدَ فِيهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ وَ وُلِدَ فِيهَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَ فِيهَا دُحِيتِ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ تَحْتِ الْكَعْبَةِ وَ أَيْضاً خَصَلَةٌ لَمْ يَذْكُرْهَا أَحَدٌ فَصَامَ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ كَانَ كَمَنْ صَامَ سِتِّينَ شَهْرًا.»

“I was a teenager when along with my father went to see Imam al-Rizā on the night of the 25th of Dhū al-Qa'dah. We has our dinner with the Imam then he said, “Abraham was born on the 25th Night of Dhū al-Qa'dah and Jesus the son of Maryam was born at this night as well. On this night the earth was expanded form the Ka'bah. There is a special property for this night that no one has referred to, one who fasts the next day, his reward is parallel with the one who has fasted sixty months.”¹

1. Thawāb –al-A'māl, p. 79.



Teenage
Corner

Poetry

By: Dr. Hassan Najafi

No safety to property,

No worth to humanity;

Law is his who mighty.

Under the rule of the dirty,

When such will become the vogue of life

For the Savior's coming man will strive.

You are the Authority of God over the world;

No one can deny God's Authority and His Word.

Islamic laws will run

Let Imam Mahdi return

Muslims will raise their head

Downcast will go the guilty head.

Today is the day of your birth,

To you we look for pious mirth.

Hearty words

“O my Imam! I remember you hoping that you also remember me and if you do so I will be filled with the mercy of Allah since by this way Allah also remembers me.”

“I am so sorrowful since I know that your appearance has been delayed because of our sins and our failure to act properly. We are not ready enough to assist you otherwise you would have come much earlier.”

“Sometimes I talk to you at the middle of nights when everyone are asleep, but again I get busy with worldly materialize and forget to remember you for a while. It makes me to be unhappy so much. How negligence I would be to forger my master, my Imam and my guardian. Ask Allah to help me always remember you.”

“O my dear Imam! I know that my sinful heart is not a proper place for you. How can an absolute pure man like you reside in a place that is sullied by transgression from Allah’s rules? I want to be like you as much as possible, but many time I make a mistake. Please take my hand and help me get closer to Allah more and more.”

O my master! You are not absent, rather this is us who have gotten lost and are not able to see you. We are like a child who lets go of his father's hand and gets busy with looking at the shop's showcases in his way then thinks that his father got lost. His father is still there, but this is the child who cannot find him. O my Imam! You are always present, but we got busy with our worldly materials and missed you. We are absent from you not you from us.

A letter to the Imam

I want to write to you about these oppressive days and about the pervasive corruption of the time. I want to do something in reaction, but my time of life is short and my power is little. Here, I know no other way pacify myself, but to talk to you about what is going on my heart then you would realize how sick and tired I am.

I start my letter with the name of Allah the Owner of the world and the Master of the Day of Judgment.

O my Imam! Do you know how long I have waited for your appearance? Since the time I started to talk and realize the meaning of the word “*waiting*” I expect you to come sooner. When will you put an end to my wait?

How long people should endure the oppression of the world and how long I would listen in the news that again some innocent children are killed by unjust people and still have no other choice, but to listen and remain silent? Please come and terminate the blackness of the world and make it a place to live happily.

Do you know how many teenagers of the same age as mine are homeless and helpless, and how many of them lost their parents or their relatives in wars? Of course you know, then come and shelter the powerless people.

I sometimes see in my dream that you have come and I become totally hopeful, but as soon as I wake up, again I see that nothing has changed.

I am afraid that you would come so late when I am no longer alive, the same things that happened to my grandmother. She always prayed to see you and be alive when you come, but she died while she was still regretful and expectant.

Your hiding lasted so long that many people has forgotten you and think there would be still a long time for you to come.

O the savior of the world! Your remembrance is still alive and fresh in my heart. Nonetheless, I am afraid that I would, like others, forget you or become disappointed. Please come sooner and put an end to this nightmare.

You still have many lovers who, like me, sometimes are choked with tears and are still waiting. A kind of waiting that no one knows when will terminate.

In the evening of every Friday I feel a arheavy sadness in my heart and know it is because you are also sad of being unable to come.

I feel sorrowful because of the days I forgot to remember you, but was sure that you were not unaware of me.

When will it be to cry out from the depth of my heart

that the waiting has come to an end and the promise of Allah has been fulfilled? On that day, the oppressors will be repressed, a kind of strong hope will come to the heart of the oppressed, we will cry for joy, the rain will fall and the nature, like our hearts, will become green.

I still wait and ask Allah to permit you to come. In-shāAllah

